

Trends/Highlights (continued)

high, confirming our observations that more people are using our services earlier (that is, before a crisis develops or before their problems become very serious) and that the vast majority of our clients are very functional individuals experiencing a temporary difficulty in a specific area of their life. The increase in referrals from personnel officers is an indication of a better understanding of our services by our colleagues in personnel.

- The percentage of management referrals (1.6 percent) has continued to decrease over the last three years (from 3 percent last year and 5.5 percent the year before). As long as management referrals continue to decrease, the percentage of clients experiencing drug/alcohol abuse problems will also continue to decrease (it went from 5 percent last year to 3 percent this year). Indeed, employees experiencing the most serious kinds of personal problems, such as alcohol/drug abuse, usually need to be actively encouraged by management to use our services.
- The percentage of employees from missions who use our services (24.7 percent) has been steadily increasing over the last three years (up from 21 percent last year and 12.2 percent the year before). The utilization rate of our services abroad is directly correlated to the number of field trips we make. Indeed, the low percentage observed in 1993-94 was a result of not visiting missions abroad, due to fiscal restraints.
- This year, the percentage of personal problems (70.2 percent) was almost back to its 1993-94 level (71.2 percent). Last year's percentage (60.8 percent) was closer to the 1992-93 figure (63.3 percent). Conversely, this year the percentage of work-related problems (29.8 percent) was almost the same as in 1993-94 (28.8 percent). Last year's percentage (39.2 percent) was very close to what it was in 1992-93 (36.7 percent). These categories represent both sides of the same coin: Work problems affect the quality of one's personal life, and personal problems have an impact on our behavior and performance at work. Also, stress and change are cumulative, so that it is often a combination of both which ends up causing major problems, either mostly at home or mostly at work. As in other years, the most common problems for which

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employees used our services were family/marital difficulties. The next most common problems were emotional/psychological, substance abuse, health-related and financial problems, in that order.

As for work-related problems, the percentage this year of employees using our services for harassment (2.1 percent) was down from last year (3.5 percent). This year, the percentage of employees using our services for interpersonal problems/conflicts (5.5 percent) also dropped from last year (9.8 percent). This meant a lower incidence of the "short fuse" syndrome which causes more interpersonal conflicts due to ever-increasing levels of organizational stress. The percentage of employees using our services for career reorientation (7.8 percent) was almost back to its 1993-94 level (6.8 percent). It dropped to almost half what it was last year (13.4 percent).

For additional information on counselling statistics, please refer to the section entitled "Frequency Distribution Analysis for Counselling Clients" on page 10.

2. Consultations

This year, the number of managers, assignment and other personnel and administrative officers who sought advice on how to manage difficult employees or difficult situations (259) was almost back to what it was in 1993-94 (281), and was down from last year's all-time high of 335. Even though the numbers are down from last year, they are still more than double what they were in 1991-92 (102), a continuing indication that we are fulfilling our mandate as it relates to assisting individual managers and the organization as a whole to better manage our human resources. The number of sessions conducted was 297, for an average of 1.1 session per client.