

APRIL 26-28, 2026

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2026

# AAOHN NATIONAL CONFERENCE



ORLANDO, FLORIDA

ROSEN SHINGLE CREEK

**2026**

# **AAOHN NATIONAL CONFERENCE**

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**Contact hours: 0.75**

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# Improving EAP Utilization: Using the IOWA Model

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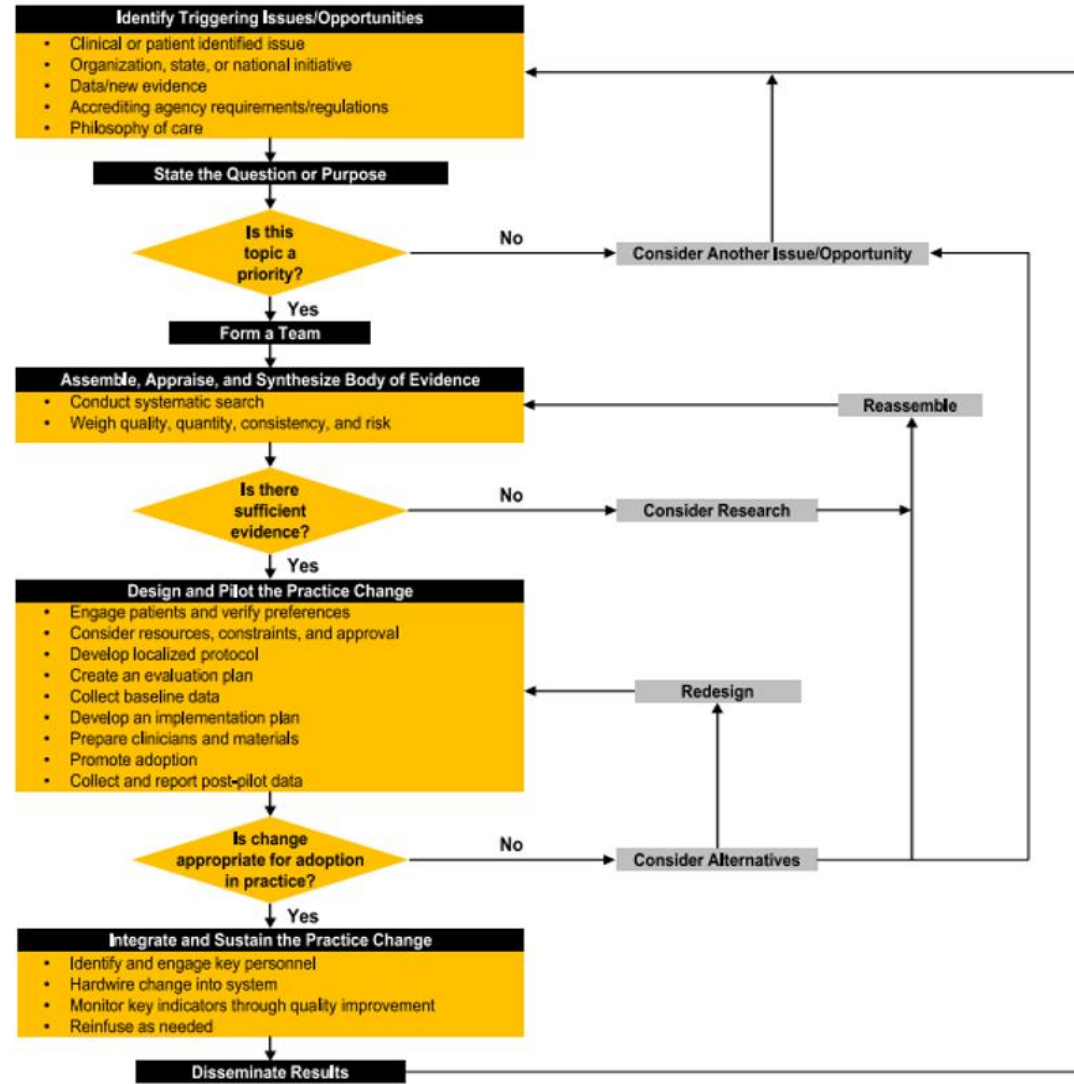
Occupational Health Nursing Program

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DNP Project Team: Dr. Amy Thornberry DNP, APRN, FNP-C, COHN-S

# The Iowa Model Revised: Evidence-Based Practice to Promote Excellence in Health Care

## IOWA Model



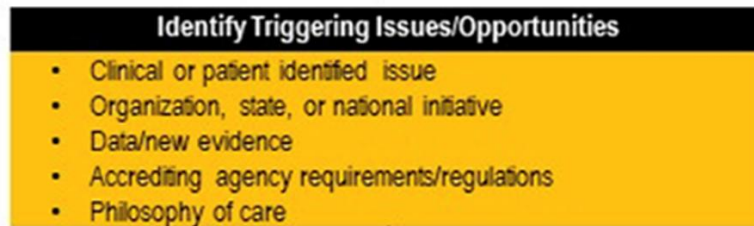
◆ decision point

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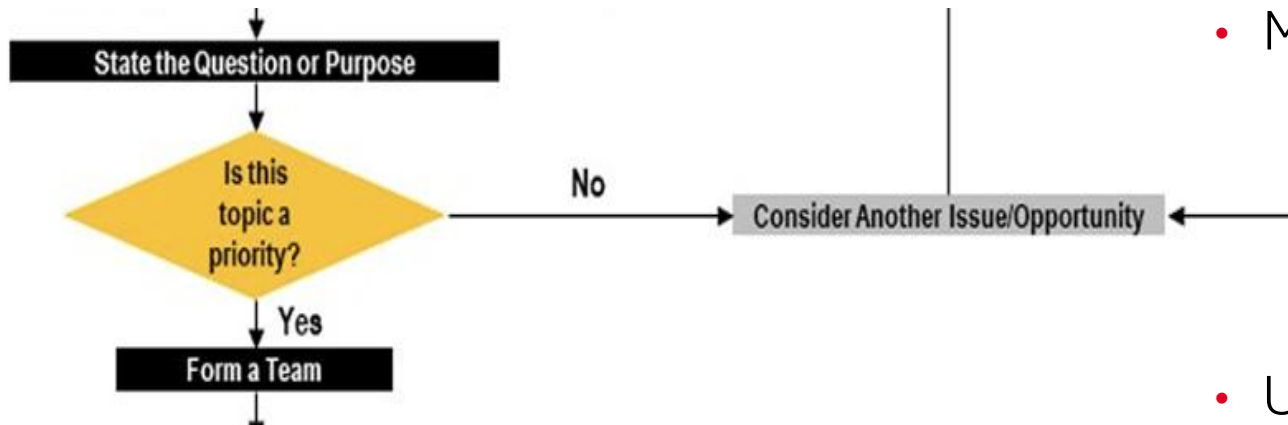
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# Step 1: Identification of Triggering Issue



- Supporting worker health
- Increase in mental health illness
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP) utilization rates are low
  - Inability to recognize the EAP can help with their current situation
  - Lack of awareness and accessibility
  - Stigma related to mental health

# Step 2: State the Question or Purpose



- Occupational health professionals support worker health
- Suicide is considered preventable
- Mental health and suicide is a critical issue
  - Males in blue- and white-collar professions are most at risk due to a known lack of seeking help (Matthew et al., 2021.)
- Use of Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) are beneficial but are underutilized (Doran, 2022)
- Purpose: implement an educational support group of lay workers to help educate about EAP and its benefits

# PICO(T) Question

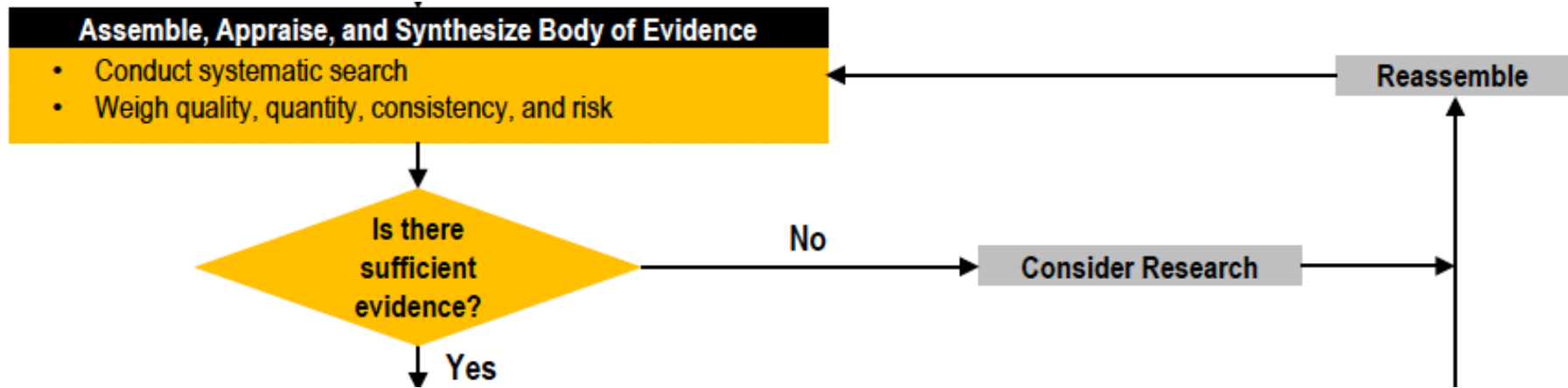
**P**opulation/problem: adult workers

**I**ntervention: educational support leader

**C**omparison: no educational support leader

**O**utcomes: increase utilization of EAP's

# Step 4: Assemble, Appraise and Synthesize Body of Evidence



# Step 4: Assemble, Appraise and Synthesize Body of Evidence

**Table 1: Grading of Evidence: Problem (n=5 )**

**Table 2: Grading of Evidence: Intervention (n=6 )**

Citation	Design/Data Collection	Findings	Level/Grade of Evidence
<u>Attridge (2023)</u>	Literature Review	Access to EAP programs and their success was looked at in 8 different ways. Using EAPs to support employee mental health issues may be improved by the way it's presented.	V- High
Beaujolais et al. (2024)	Cross-sectional, retrospective pretest/post test	Employers can develop responsive interventions to reduce healthcare provider disparities if barriers regarding supportive service utilization are known.	IV- High
Doran (2022)	Literature Review	Employee assistance programs can offer value and make an impact on nurse well-being and emotional health	V- Good
<u>Kateme &amp; Hapunda (2024)</u>	Descriptive/causal research study Literature review	Lack of information about EAPs are negatively correlated with EAP use. Stigma, confidentiality, trust, and peer influence also influenced EAP usage.	V- High
Moore et al. (2023)	Qualitative Study	Outcome of this study was that EAP utilization was <u>low</u> and organizations can help employees by allowing workers to take time off, create a positive and supportive culture, regularly assess the worker needs, clearly communicate employer-offered benefits and encourage the workers to use the benefits..	VI- High

Citation	Design/Data Collection	Findings	Grade of evidence
<u>Bejan et al. (2020)</u>	Cohort	A safety and health educational intervention improved safety and health practices after graduation. However, in this study, there was a lack of instruction time which inhibited sustainability.	IV- Fair
Gregg et al. (2021)	Literature Review	Most consistently found to influence the family-focused practice of adult mental health practitioners were personal attitudes, beliefs about job role, and perceptions of workplace support.	V- Fair
Loveday et al. (2022)	QI project	Use of electronic resources improved referrals to community health resources	V-high
<u>Mohammadi &amp; Chakeri (2020)</u>	Pre/post test	The awareness of students can be enhanced through providing practical training with the aid of materials such as PowerPoint, instructional videos, pamphlets and oral explanation.	IV-High
Payne (2022)	Qualitative Study	Training for awareness, literacy, skills, knowledge/understanding improved perceptions for both students and staff's mental health concerns	IV- High
Silver et al. (2020)	Qualitative Study	Automated notification system helped to increase awareness and scheduling time with an EAP provider.	IV- Good

(Dang et al., 2022)

# What Does the Evidence Show?

## Positive Impact of EAPs

- Significant decrease in suicidal ideation and depression among workers who chose to utilize their EAP program (Matthews et al., 2021)
- Provides education about the importance of speaking out and getting help (Matthews, et al, 2021)
  - An online EAP based in Australia called Man UP
- Increased worker awareness of resources(Gilgoff et al, 2023)
  - A program called “Man Therapy” produced successful results

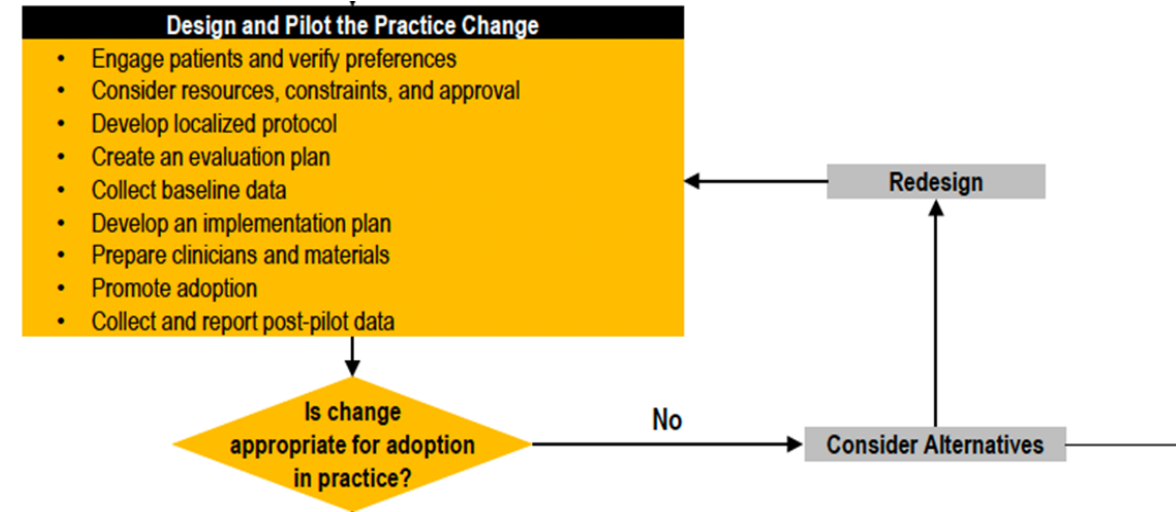
# What Does the Evidence Show?

## Challenges with EAPs (Katema & Hapunda, 2024)

- Confidentiality
- Lack of information
- Stigma
- Misinformation

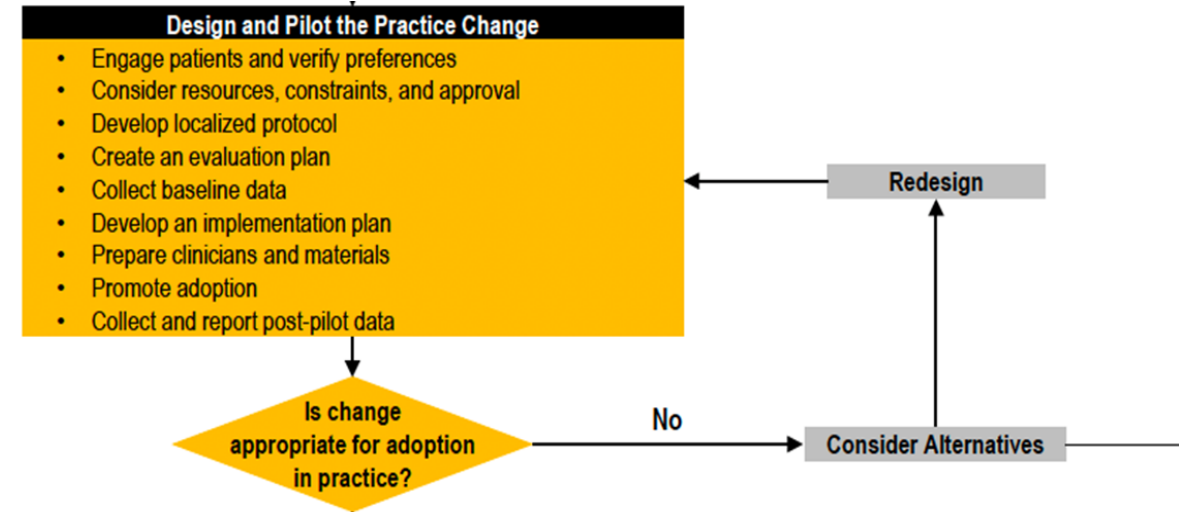
# Step 5: Design and Pilot Practice Change

1. Volunteers from the manufacturing area were recruited to be a 'wonder worker' (WW).
2. Inclusion criteria is that WW is of the same level as their co-workers on the manufacturing floor
3. Exclusion criteria: WW was not a superior, supervisor, or anyone in leadership.
4. WW was presented with a 20-30 min presentation about EAP covering the following topics:
  - EAP is free for all household members
  - How to access EAP
  - Confidentiality standards
  - EAP services and how they can help our everyday lives



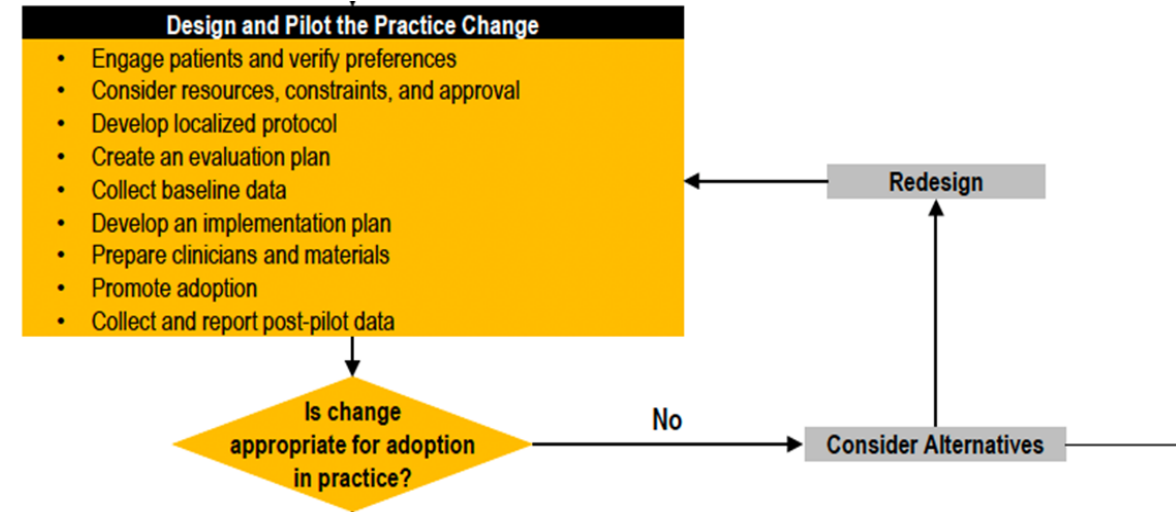
# Step 5: Design and Pilot Practice Change

5. Manufacturing workers were given a pre-survey with 6 questions around knowledge, accessibility, confidentiality, stigma and trust.
  - Survey indicated that participation was optional
  - De-identifying factors: favorite sports team and number
6. WW presented the information learned about EAP to their co-workers
  - WW chose the best way to disseminate information.
  - WW also provided flyers to distribute to their teams, and hung them around common areas



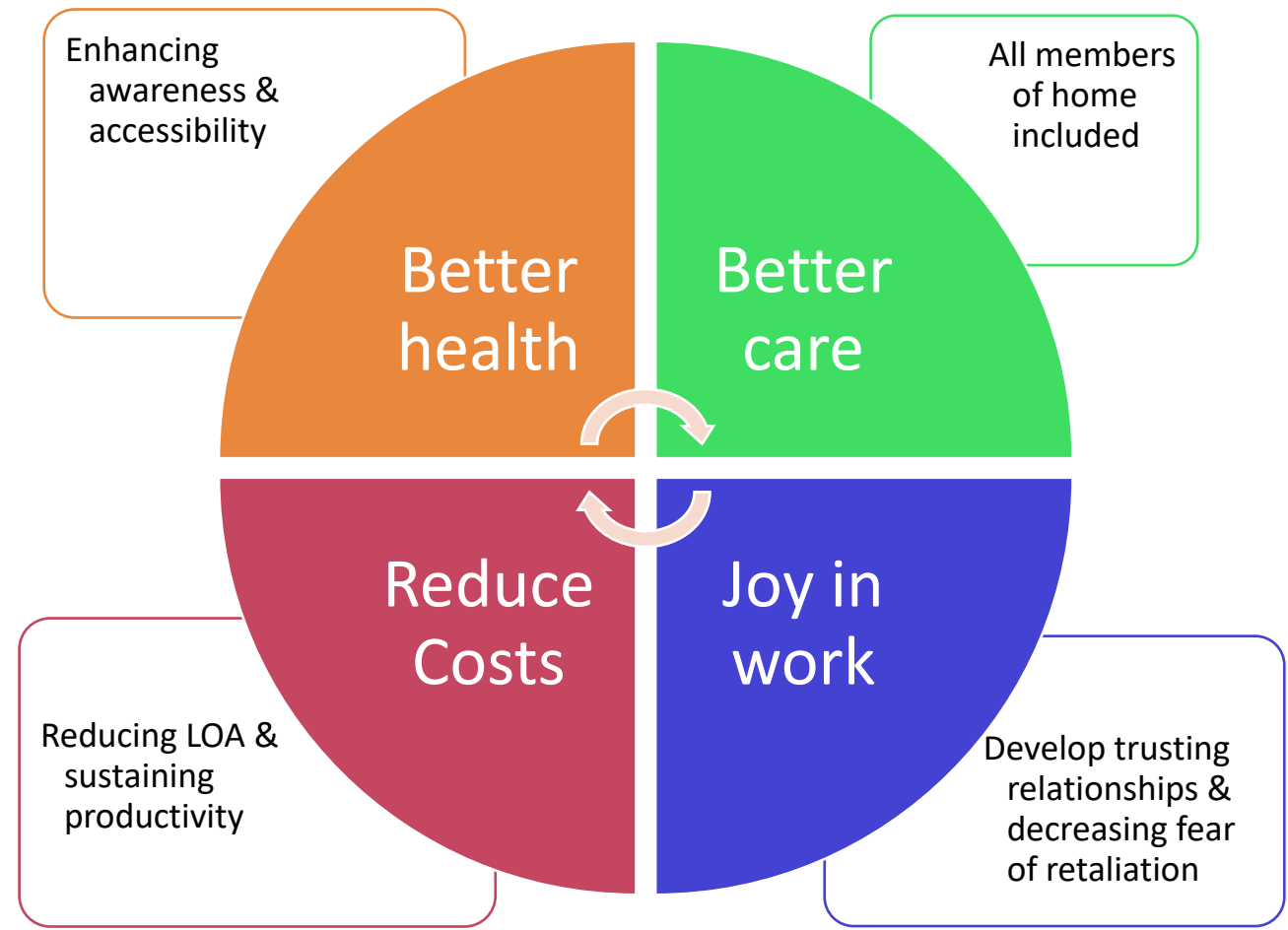
# Step 5: Design and Pilot Practice Change

7. WW's presented the information they were trained on to the manufacturing workers once per month over 3 months.
8. Each manufacturing worker also received a handout with the following:
  - EAP is free for all household members
  - How to access EAP
  - Confidentiality standards
  - EAP services and how they can help our everyday lives
  - Saying something saves lives
9. Manufacturing workers then took a post-survey answering the same questions as the pre-survey.



# IHI Quadruple Aim

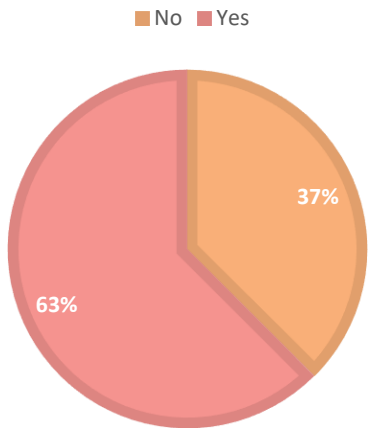
Figure 1



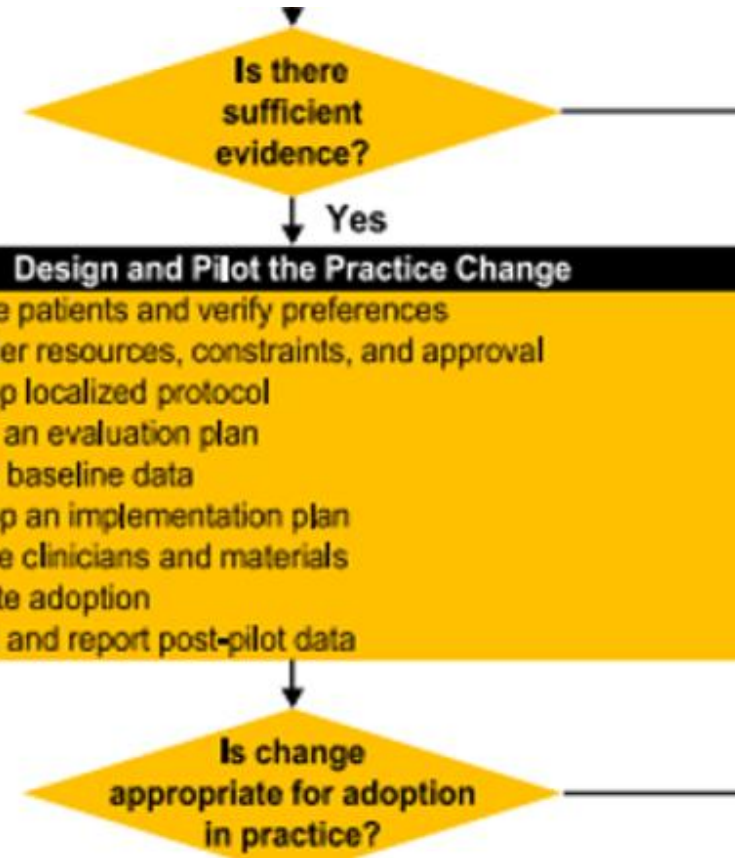
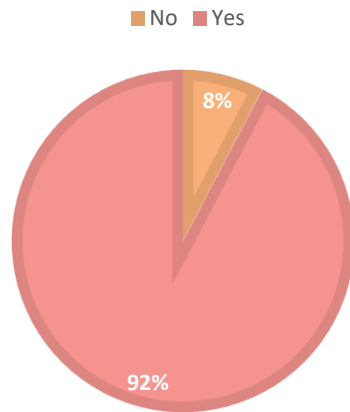
(Institute for Healthcare Improvement, 2021)

# Step 6: Design and Pilot the Practice Change

DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR EMPLOYER OFFERS EAP? (BEFORE)

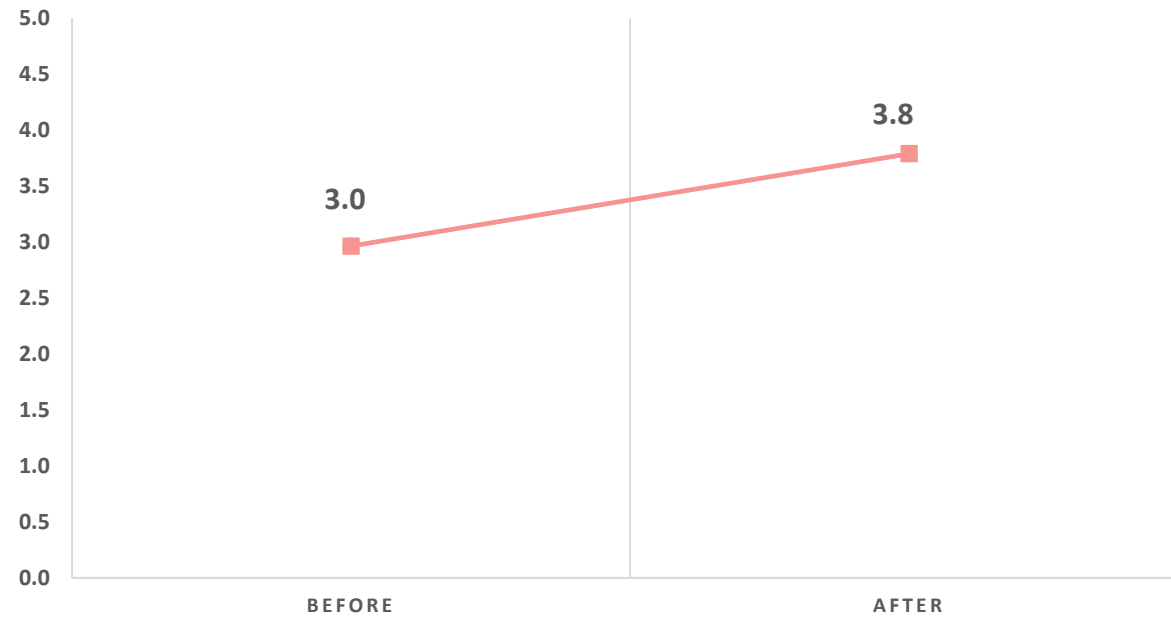


DO YOU KNOW IF YOUR EMPLOYER OFFERS EAP? (AFTER)



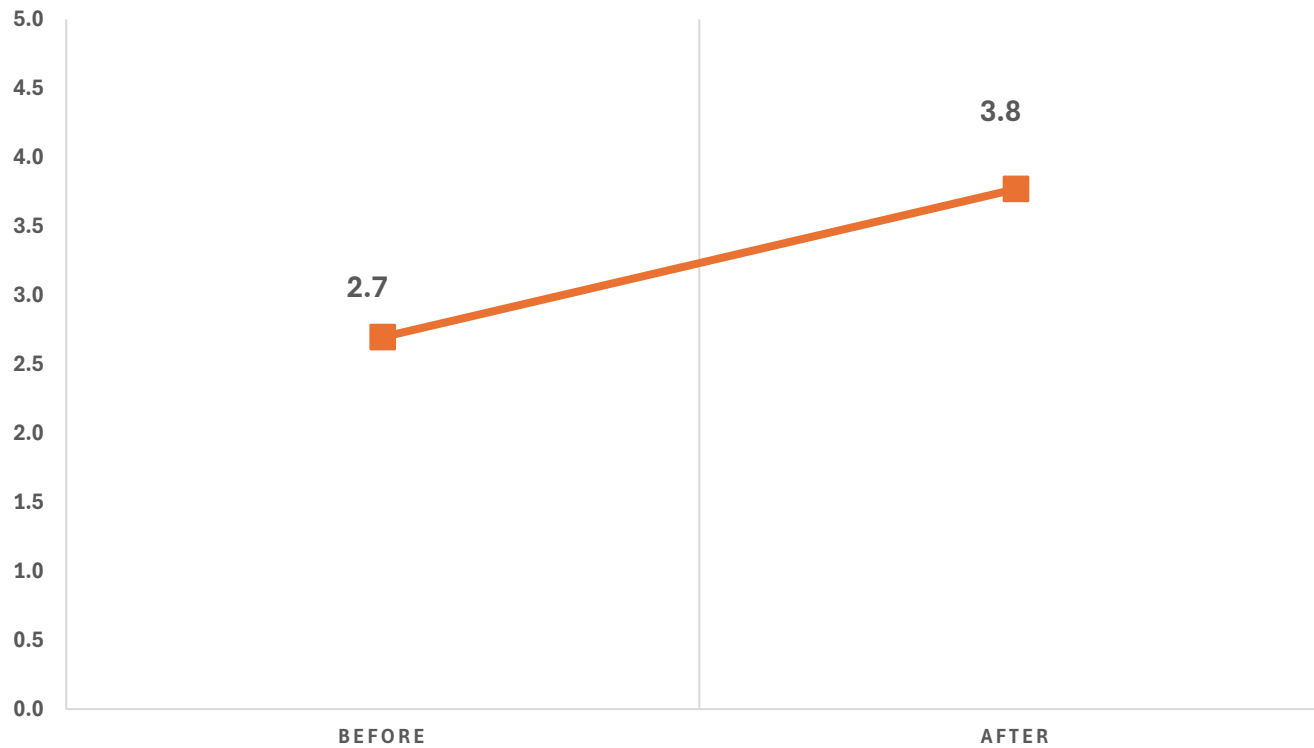
# Results

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO USE EAP?



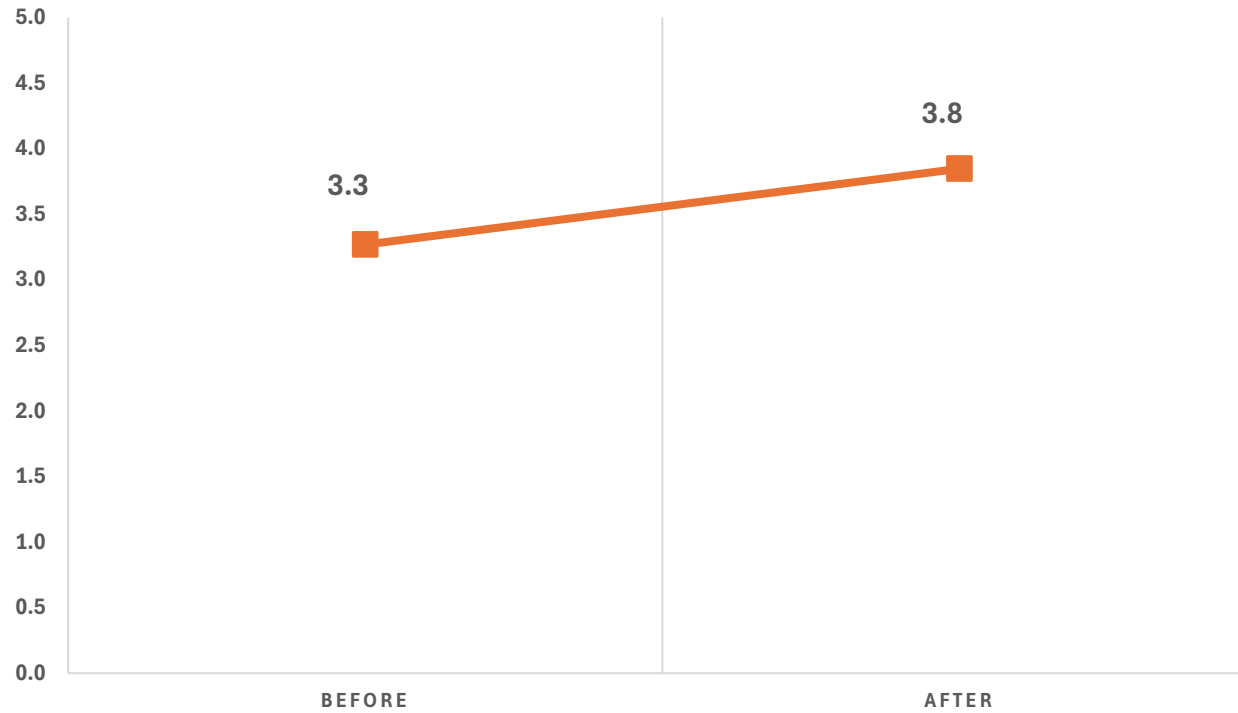
# Results

HOW CONFIDENT ARE YOU IN ACCESSING EAP?



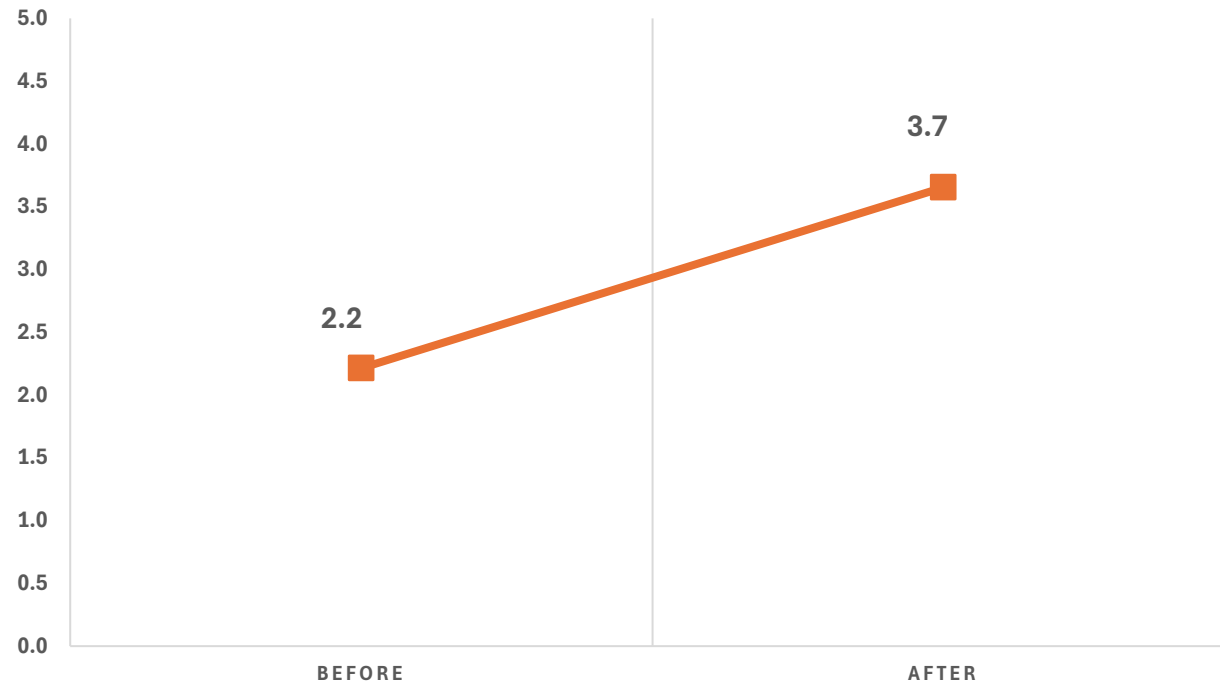
# Results

HOW MUCH DO YOU TRUST EAP TO MAINTAIN  
CONFIDENTIALITY?



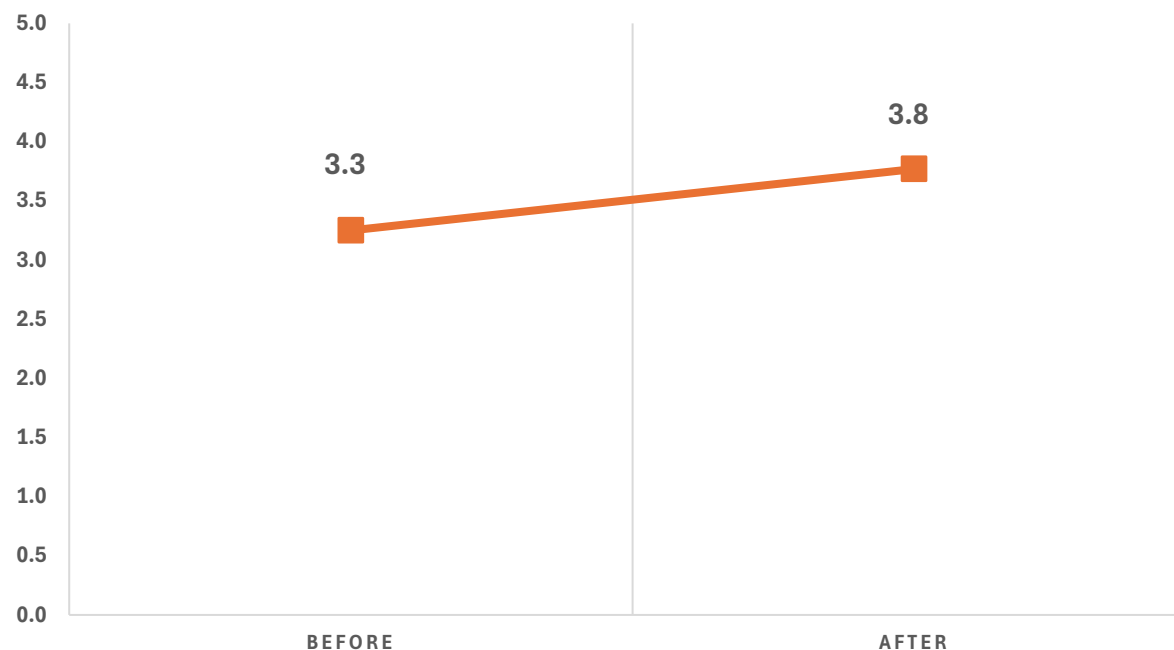
# Results

HOW FAMILIAR ARE YOU WITH SERVICES EAP PROVIDES?



# Results

HOW LIKELY ARE YOU TO REPORT A CRISIS TO  
YOUR SUPERVISOR/CO-WORKER?



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