

FAQs Regarding CCN:

1. Our denomination has or is considering an Employee Assistance Program, why would we need to be part of the CCN?

Employee Assistance Programs are of benefit for church denominations. If your denomination is already using an EAP and your are satisfied with it, we certainly don't encourage you to stop using it. That being said, the CCN would augment a sound EAP program. There are Christians who work for EAP organisations, however, there is no guarantee that a Christian counsellor will answer an EAP organisation's help line. And although some EAP organisations allow their callers to request Christian counsellors, it may be one to four days until a caller can actually get in to see the assigned Christian counsellor. Additionally, there is no guarantee that the Christian counsellor assigned is experienced in dealing with the unique needs of clergy families. With the CCN, not only can the CCN counsellor assess the situation and help determine the best course of action (including encouraging a caller to access his/her EAP), but since our counsellors are Christians who are experienced in working with people in ministry, they add a whole new layer of understanding and help for the caller. The CCN counsellors also have their finger tips on an abundance of ministry specific resources and referral information. Perhaps most importantly, the CCN counsellors can take time to pray with and for each caller.

2. Our denomination has or is considering an EAP. Involvement in the CCN is far less expensive. Should we quit our EAP program and just join the CCN?

Similar to an EAP, the CCN supplies an initial free phone counselling session for the caller and if necessary we refer callers to their nearest source of help, but unlike an EAP, extensive follow up counselling is not provided for our callers. and at that point any fees for a service or counselling is the responsibility of the caller. There is no doubt that EAPs have done an excellent job in reducing many H.R. expenses in organisations. Most studies indicate that for every dollar spent on an EAP, an organisation can expect to save anywhere from two to seven dollars. An interesting fact, however, is that EAPs make their money by counting on the fact there will be minimal usage by the employees of any given organisation. Most organisations only have about a 2-3% rate of usage. Usage of 8-10% would be considered outstanding. A good solution might be for your organisation to join the CCN but also have counselling funds available for employees or their family members on an "as need" basis. In most cases this combination would be less expensive than an EAP. You would need to set up a confidential system to administer those funds. The CCN would be happy to advise your denomination if you wanted to go this route.

3. We already have excellent mentoring programs and qualified people helpers within our denomination. Why would we really need the CCN for our pastors?

There are two basic reasons why it would be advantageous to be part of the CCN. Firstly, from our statistics, about 25% of our callers don't give their names or denominational affiliation when they call us. If they are hesitant to let us know who they are because of their situation, they are probably much less likely to inform their own denomination of their situation. The question is, can we afford to let these hardworking servants slip between the cracks? Secondly, although your denomination may be well equipped to handle ministry families in pain, other smaller churches and denominations may not have these resources. Being part of the CCN is a practical way to reach beyond our own borders and ensure all clergy are helped.

4. I understand that pastors or their family members who's denominations are not currently sponsoring may still use the CCN's services. If our pastors can already use the service why would we pay for it? OR if we pay for it, why should others benefit from it?

Some background to this question may be helpful. Before any sponsors came on board, two anonymous donors, upon hearing of the vision for the CCN, collectively put up \$250, 000 for the program. They were very clear that, until the program could be self sufficient, we help any pastor who calls. Since the CCN is really an inter-denominational effort, we want to continue in this spirit in that we want pastors and their families to thrive. Healthy pastors help build healthy congregations which in turn help build stronger families and society as a whole is helped. That being said, we do ask callers their affiliation and do our best to ensure that sponsoring denominations' pastors receive priority care as much as possible.

5. What if one of our pastors has had significant moral failure--how will we ever know about this? Not knowing about the problem could catch us off guard and cause a lot of problem in the local church and within the denomination.

Legally and ethically we cannot disclose information like this to anybody. The obvious exceptions are if the moral failure involves physical harm or threat of physical harm to a caller, or someone a caller knows, or with suspicion of harm to a child. Even in these cases a counsellor would only report such disclosure or suspicion to the appropriate agency. That being said, our counsellors and our referral counsellors within our screened network, are skilled in walking through these situations with the caller/client. If disclosure to the denomination would be the best solution, the counsellor would help empower the caller/client to make an appropriate decision. Ultimately, however, it would need to be the caller/client's decision to disclose.

6. Focus on the Family (Canada) is known as being an evangelical conservative organisation. Our denomination is not nearly as conservative as Focus on the Family (Canada) and many of the sponsoring denominations. Why would we join this group?

Although we make no apologies for our conservative evangelical stance as an organisation, the nature of counselling is one of respecting where individuals are at physically, spiritually, psychologically, and emotionally. Our trained counsellors have worked both in the Christian and secular fields and respect the spectrum between these areas. Our counsellors also respect the ethical tenants of counselling in that we work within the comfort zone of each caller/client.

7. The CCN requests that each church within the denomination take a Clergy Appreciation Offering and gives a portion of it to the CCN. How will this be promoted and administrated and do we have the option of opting out?

Of course we would appreciate it if every sponsoring denominational church would join us in this effort. Pastors who's churches take a special Sunday to express their love and appreciation ride a high for weeks after. We've received letters from many of these pastors and they report that such acknowledgement invigorates them afresh in their ministries. It is up to each individual church or denomination how they want to split up the offering. We would appreciate some of the offering to keep the program running well, but we really want the local church to keep a significant portion so as to bless the lives of their ministry families. The CCN has tools available to help promote a Clergy Appreciation Sunday for your churches. If it is determined by your denomination that this concept won't work, for what ever reason, then you may choose to opt out.

8. Besides being a part of a larger collection of denominations/fellowships concerned about clergy care, what other benefits would our denomination/fellowship and our clergy families experience from our sponsoring the CCN?

In addition to collectively caring for the pastors of Canada, your participation in the CCN would enable you to have a voice in our clergy care network advisory committee by providing a representative who would be an integral part of helping to set direction for the CCN. By letting your pastors and their families know that you are providing another level of help and support, you empower your pastors to be confident in their ministries, knowing that ,should they have any problems or need information, they have another trusted source of help to which they can turn. Finally, the CCN has now begun professional development workshops for pastors across Canada. Sponsoring denominations' pastors can access these workshops for 50% off of the regular fee. In time it is very likely that there will be other benefits to sponsoring denominations and their clergy families, but this is what is already available.

9. Who is the best person in my organisation to respond to the CCN's request for us to become sponsors?

There may be one or many who would want/need input. Besides a conference minister and/or district superintendent, a suggestion that has helped some denominations is to have a benefits coordinator process the request. These individuals are usually up to date with the value of programs and have a tested methodology to handle such requests.

10. Who do I call if I have additional questions?

Please call Geof Cornelsen the director of Clergy Care at:

1-604-539-7940 or e-mail him at geofc@fotf.ca