

Wellness & Care of Presbyters (EAP)

A teenager is causing concern, for his parents who are at their wits end, not knowing what to do, not sleeping well. One of the parents is a Presbyter, feeling a sense of isolation, wanting to keep the family situation separate from the church. Furthermore it is extra hard when the concentration required to write a good sermon is not there when you can hardly stay awake and the emotional and spiritual reserves for work are running on empty.

For some time, the Board of Administration has been concerned about how personal issues may be impacting on the health and wellbeing of Presbyters. Issues of finance, family and relationships, or personal matters that don't fit in supervision (which focuses on work). Issue where there might be a hesitation to take them up with Synod Superintendents, Parish Stewards or the President.

Some of the Board Members are part of organisations which make an Employment Assistance Programme ("EAP") available to their staff. The Board at its July meeting resolved to investigate such a programme for the Methodist Church. This programme would not replace supervision. The purpose would be to provide a safe, confidential, professional place where any Presbyter could go to discuss personal issues.

Access to the service would be via an 0800 free phone, and the services provided would be free of charge to the Presbyter. Up to three sessions would be available. A Synod Superintendent or General Secretary or President may also refer a person.

The service would be totally confidential, no names or content of conversations would ever be disclosed. The service is available in most towns and cities in New Zealand.

Funding from a bequest is available for the projected use of such a service and it would be the Board of Administration's intention to make this service available at the earliest opportunity.

In the Auckland area, professionals who speak Samoan and Tongan are available, if requested.

In referring this to August Synods, the Board of Administration is inviting comments and feedback.

Responses to:

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By: 22 August 2009