

USE MENTAL HEALTH MONTH TO EVALUATE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH OFFERINGS

Nationwide, the [average wait time](#) for getting behavioral services is now 48 days. Long wait times pose a problem not only for employees who need the help to feel better but also for employers whose businesses may be suffering from a stressed-out workforce.

In a recent [Paychex survey](#), business leaders said the growing trend of mental health issues is having negative effects on their operations, including:

- Lower revenues and profits
- Loss of customers and employees
- Lower productivity
- Damage to their brand

However, when employees are able to get the behavioral or mental health services they need, when they need it, things can improve.

40%

OF U.S. WORKERS CURRENTLY SUFFER FROM A COMBINATION OF MENTAL HEALTH CONCERNS, PERFORMANCE ISSUES, AND STRESS, BUT IT CAN BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO GET HELP.

66%

OF EMPLOYEES REPORT FEELING BETTER ABOUT THEIR EMPLOYER AFTER USING A BENEFIT.

86%

NEARLY 86% OF EMPLOYEES IMPROVED WORK PERFORMANCE AND LOWERED RATES OF ABSENTEEISM AFTER RECEIVING TREATMENT, PARTICULARLY FOR DEPRESSION.

WHAT CAN EMPLOYERS DO TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO CARE?

Take advantage of Mental Health Awareness month to evaluate the mental health offerings in your benefits program. Here are a few questions that can help you start the process.

DOES YOUR EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP) OFFER A ROBUST RANGE OF SERVICES, SUCH AS:

- Available counseling to employees and families
- Free counseling sessions - how many and for how long
- Unlimited phone or virtual access to services
- Education and training sessions provided both in-person and online
- Counselors and specialists to treat substance use disorder - with referrals to rehab centers
- Access to personal financial coaches
- Educational workshops or webinars about prevalent mental health issues, like: stress management, parenting, managing difficult relationships, budgeting, and crisis counseling/response
- Virtual access to meditation exercises or mobile apps that can help employees relax and manage stress throughout the workday
- Suicide risk assessment and treatment - support for long-term recovery
- 24/7 crisis counseling

WHAT TYPE OF SUPPORT IS OFFERED BY YOUR EAP PROVIDER TO INFORM AND ENGAGE EMPLOYEES?

Although EAPs can be effective at helping employees address issues affecting their work performance, they have been underutilized over the years often due to the stigma attached to using it. So, employees who can benefit from it, instead, suffer in silence.

Ongoing communications (beyond open enrollment) and other efforts to encourage engagement could help stop the stigma and facilitate greater access. Check to see if your EAP provider offers things like:

- A monthly newsletter about the value, benefits, and services offered by an EAP
- Incentive programs that motivate employees to register for a webinar or download an app, for example
- Organization-wide training about how to access services
- Messages from senior leadership about why the EAP is important to the workplace

ARE TELEHEALTH SERVICES AVAILABLE TO EMPLOYEES?

Not only can telehealth provide easier access to care, but it can also reduce the hassles of getting to appointments (e.g., arranging for transportation, childcare, time off from work, etc.), ensure privacy, and make it easy to stick with treatment over time. Even better, a wide array of services can now be delivered virtually, so check to see if your telehealth offering provides:

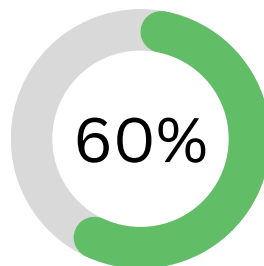
- Mental health screening
- Individual, group, or text therapy options
- Addiction counseling and treatment
- Medication prescribing and monitoring
- Referrals to other mental health professionals, programs, or facilities
- Anxiety and depression monitoring



ARE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES COVERED UNDER YOUR HEALTH PLAN?

Given growing demand, many health insurance plans now:

- Include access to mental health services through primary care physicians
- Provide telehealth visits
- Have more mental health professionals in its network - does yours?



OF AMERICANS SAY THEIR MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT WAS FULLY COVERED BY THEIR HEALTH INSURANCE.

WHAT, IF ANY, MOBILE APPS ARE PART OF YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS OFFERINGS?

These apps can provide supplemental resources to:

- Help overcome obstacles to getting care, such as cost, access, and stigma
- Offer daily mindful techniques, guidance, and even sessions without therapy appointments
- Provide convenient, immediate, confidential, and very often, free, access through a cell phone, with no wait time
- Help those who may live far from medical/wellness facility, clinic, or doctor offices
- Offer on-demand service during a natural catastrophe (e.g., Hurricane) or traumatic event (e.g., mass shooting.)

IMPROVING ACCESS TO CARE IS KEY TO ADDRESSING MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES IN THE WORKPLACE.

TO GET HELP EVALUATING YOUR BENEFIT OFFERINGS AND STRUCTURING A PROGRAM THAT TRULY OFFERS THE BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES YOUR EMPLOYEES NEED, CONNECT WITH A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM TODAY.



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