

## 5 strategies to improve your organization's mental well-being initiatives and outcomes

Across the country, we're seeing higher levels of stress and burnout, more individuals expressing loneliness, and an increase in substance use disorders. 2 in 5 adults report symptoms of anxiety or depression. More than half of Americans don't seek professional help for mental health issues due to stigma, access and affordability issues, and lack of awareness about services available. Poor mental well-being can contribute to diminished productivity and increased risk for chronic conditions, absenteeism and health care costs. Implementing workplace initiatives that foster resilience can help employees handle stress better and increase happiness.

### 1. Talk about it

Education is key. When employees are knowledgeable about behavioral health conditions, they feel more empowered to take action for their own well-being. Mental well-being literacy also increases compassion for others - which helps to destigmatize - so folks are comfortable asking for the support they need.

- + Encourage leaders to talk about mental health openly and back up that talk with significant action.
- + Offer leaders training on how to recognize and address mental health and stress-related issues in the workplace.
- + Survey employees to understand mental well-being interests and needs.
- + Use digital and print communications to educate employees about the mental health resources that are available.



#### Tips for HR Teams:

- + Talk about it
- + Offer robust mental well-being benefits
- + Create a mentally healthy workplace environment and culture
- + Encourage healthy habits
- + Develop community partnerships



## 2. Offer robust mental well-being benefits

It's important to recognize that different employee groups may benefit from different mental well-being services. Offering resources across the behavioral health continuum ensures equitable access and allows employees to get the care they need, at the right time and place.

- + Promote health insurance benefits, such as yoga and massage discounts, health coaching, virtual visits, digital apps, in-network behavioral health providers, and 24/7 crisis support.
- + Offer paid time off for mental health days.
- + Offer an employee assistance program or consider expanding your EAP offerings.
- + Encourage utilization of digital offerings, such as sleep and meditation apps.
- + Create an easily accessible place that contains information on all well-being resources.

## 3. Create a mentally healthy workplace environment and culture

Identifying and addressing risks in the workplace that lead to stress, anxiety and depression allows your employees to work productively and promotes a culture of well-being – better for your population and your business.

- + Provide opportunities for employees to participate in decision making for the organization. Create employee committees or task forces that foster continuous improvement.
- + Allow work-life integration through flexible scheduling, child and elder care assistance, financial well-being resources, and flexible leave options.
- + Foster growth and development through mentoring, continuing education, skills training, and tuition reimbursement.
- + Promote health and safety by offering health insurance, health screenings, programs that encourage healthy habits, and programs that address life challenges. Create policies that address workplace safety and security issues.
- + Create a diverse, equitable, and inclusive culture through policies and collaboration.
- + Recognize employee contributions and milestones. Offer competitive benefit packages.
- + Design a work environment that promotes well-being by including collaborative spaces and quiet spaces.



## 4. Encourage healthy habits

Your employees are diverse – in age, ethnic background, gender identity, and more – which means their well-being interests and needs vary greatly as well. By taking a whole self-care approach, you can address underlying issues affecting the mental well-being of your workforce, which may concurrently promote improved health outcomes.

- + Incorporate a mix of programs, policies, environmental supports, and other perks that support whole self-care. Offer benefits such as flexible scheduling, remote or hybrid options, and tuition reimbursement. Promote social peer groups, like a diversity council, wellness champions or a running club.
- + Implement activities that support physical, financial, purpose, social, and community well-being. Offer programs such as fitness challenges, cooking classes, financial advisor sessions, professional development courses, and social events.

## 5. Develop community partnerships

Engaging with local and national organizations allows employees easy access to trusted information on topics that matter to them. This also provides new opportunities to collaborate and be part of the solution.

- + Leverage resources available through local health departments and parks and recreational agencies.
- + Encourage volunteering and allow paid time off for events during the workday.
- + Promote resources from trusted mental and health well-being organizations, such as Mental Health America or National Alliance on Mental Illness.

**Want to learn more about how you can support workplace mental well-being?  
Our team will be glad to help!**

[WorkplaceWellness@providence.org](mailto:WorkplaceWellness@providence.org) | [ProvidenceHealthPlan.com](https://www.providencehealthplan.com)

