



Benefits Insights

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Brady, Chapman, Holland & Associates

Mental Health Care Benefits Strategies

In today's work environment, employees are increasingly grappling with common mental health challenges such as burnout, stress and anxiety, as well as other diagnosable mental health disorders and conditions. These issues not only affect personal well-being but also impact workplace productivity and morale. While creating a healthy workplace culture, equipping managers to support workers and expanding awareness of mental health can help overcome these challenges, benefits offerings also play a key role in addressing the mental health needs of employees.

Many employers offer mental health-related benefits, such as employee assistance programs (EAPs), wellness programs, access to mental health services through health care plans, and sick or mental health leave. Offering benefits that support employee mental health can provide workers with access to the resources they need. Furthermore, choosing proactive strategies to educate employees, improve utilization of these benefits and reach employees effectively can help achieve positive outcomes.

THE IMPORTANCE OF MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

The modern workplace presents numerous stressors, including heavy workloads, tight deadlines, and the pressure to balance professional and personal responsibilities. A recent survey by Work in America highlighted that 74% of employees report experiencing moderate to high stress levels, with financial concerns, job insecurity and excessive workloads being primary contributors.

Burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, general fatigue and a lack of sense of accomplishment, has become prevalent across various industries. Factors such as long working hours, lack of control over tasks and insufficient support contribute to this condition. For instance, professionals in high-demand sectors like law and health care often face intense pressure, leading to severe burnout and associated health issues.

It should be noted that not all mental health conditions are a result of the workplace; diagnosed mental health conditions have been on the rise around the globe — regardless of the cause.

Employers play a crucial role in mitigating these workplace challenges. While they can create a supportive environment that fosters employee well-being, they can also implement specific benefits strategies that can improve mental health outcomes. Such initiatives enhance individual health and can lead to increased productivity, reduced absenteeism and improved employee retention. Studies show that employees who feel supported in their mental well-being are more likely to stay with their employer and experience greater job satisfaction.

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EMPLOYER STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT MENTAL HEALTH

As workplace stress and burnout continue to rise among employees, employers must adopt more effective and sustainable mental health solutions.

The following strategies can maximize how employees use available benefits to improve mental health outcomes:

- **Enhance digital mental health solutions.** Technology-driven tools should be personalized, evidence-based and engaging to ensure employees receive the right support when they need it.
- **Improve accessibility.** Mental health programs should be accessible and designed for employees of all backgrounds. Employers can consider how employees can access mental health resources through digital tools or in-person offerings.
- **Provide seamless integration.** Digital mental health solutions should connect with existing resources, guiding employees to appropriate care through EAPs, crisis support or virtual counseling.
- **Educate employees about available mental health resources.** Many employees may not be aware their employer offers resources to support their mental health. Employers should consider how to better communicate with employees so they know about these benefits and train managers on how they can relay this information to their teams.
- **Offer clear and empathetic communication.** Employers can provide detailed information about how these benefits enhance well-being.

CONCLUSION

Addressing employee mental health is more than just offering the right benefits. Deploying initiatives to boost enrollment and utilization can be a strategic business decision. By implementing sustainable mental health benefits and fostering a supportive work environment, employers can enhance overall productivity, reduce turnover and create a resilient workforce poised to thrive both professionally and personally.

Contact us today for additional employee health plan guidance.