



MENTAL HEALTH IN THE
WORKPLACE:
CHRO Insights Series



SEPTEMBER 2019

INTRODUCTION

One Mind at Work is a global coalition of leading employers dedicated to collaborating to transform workplace approaches to mental health. We have developed a set of evidence-based principles and built consensus within and between businesses to bridge the implementation gap and drive widespread adoption. Changing the global workplace mental health landscape requires the commitment of dedicated leaders to sharing their expertise, which led us to the development of the *One Mind at Work CHRO Insights Series* capturing how organizations and its leaders view mental health, why mental health is an organizational priority, current best practices, and opportunities for future integration of support and services.

The *One Mind at Work CHRO Insights Series* has been developed through interviews with a diverse selection of employers to gather key activities and actions in support of workplace mental health. Within this report, we have described mental health practices, how they are implemented and perceived throughout the organization, and opportunities for or barriers to advancing their implementation.

Through the *One Mind at Work CHRO Insights Series*, we are building an understanding of the current environment for workplace mental health programs, especially the perceptions and efforts of the senior leaders directing them. They are the global leaders in a robust employer response in mental health. They provide the impetus for adopting and improving mental health programs, collaborating to create a multi-stakeholder response, and addressing key challenges to implementation and utilization.

With this project, we hope to inspire leadership and action by employers no matter where they are in their workplace mental health journey. We are proud to bring you the third edition of the series, with key insights and best practices from CHROs and other executives at a range of employers facing diverse workforce needs. I would like to thank all of the individuals and companies who participated in the interviews for sharing their expertise and time. We are grateful to you for sharing your efforts, and we look forward to working together in the future.



Signed:
Garen Staglin
Co-Founder, One Mind at Work

CURRENT LANDSCAPE:
THE GLOBAL MENTAL HEALTH CRISIS

Why focus on workplace mental health?

72%

The percentage of workers that **want to see their employers advocate** for mental health and well-being in the workplace.ⁱ

14%

The percentage of workers that actually **hear senior leaders** discussing the importance of mental health.ⁱⁱ

\$2,650

The amount **absenteeism costs employers per salaried employee** annually; this cost jumps to \$3,600 for each hourly employee.ⁱⁱⁱ

\$6 trillion

The **projected global cost** of mental disorders by 2030.^{iv}

400 million

The **number of workdays lost** each year due to depression alone.^v

1:3-5

Studies estimate that **every \$1 spent** on improving treatment for common mental disorders **generates a return of \$3-5 in improved health and productivity**.^{vi}

KEY INSIGHTS:

INTERVIEWS WITH HR AND BENEFITS LEADERS AT MAJOR GLOBAL EMPLOYERS

What did we learn?

This third report in the *One Mind at Work CHRO Insights Series* draws on interviews with a range of employers to highlight best practices, key insights, and main challenges in addressing workplace mental health. We spoke with representatives from insurance companies, healthcare providers, information and technology consultants, and pharmacy companies that support over 1 million employees throughout the U.S. and around the world. Although they face diverse workforce needs, each organization expressed similar priorities and obstacles in their efforts to support employees' mental health. This year we have seen companies shift their focus to refining existing programs and increasing access, utilizing data to identify gaps, and using employee networks to take a grassroots approach to developing new initiatives. At the heart of these efforts is the desire to create a supportive company culture and ensure employees know how to access resources. Companies are looking to build out their programs in the future, and there remains opportunity for vocal leadership commitment and use of internal networks to embed support for workplace mental health at all levels of the company.

Top priorities for employers:

- **Reducing stigma** – Reducing stigma remains a central priority for employers. Programs are designed with an eye on increasing employees' knowledge of mental health disorders to create an accepting work environment and encourage employees in need to seek help.
- **Taking a holistic approach to wellness** – Shifting away from the emphasis on physical health, companies are redefining their approach to wellness by prioritizing mental health as an essential element of total well-being.
- **Leveraging data analytics** – Companies are employing quantitative assessment methods to identify gaps in services and access and inform the design of future programs.
- **Encouraging buy-in** – Employers are looking to publicize leadership support, internally and externally, and use existing networks to facilitate employee involvement to create buy-in at all levels of the company.

Employer-based solutions:

Existing programs in the field include:

- Company-wide campaigns to reduce stigma and raise awareness
- Expanding EAPs
- Using data to assess employees needs
- Accommodating work environments

Targeting costs and burdens like:

- Lack of awareness of employer-provided benefits
- Drivers of stress, such as caregiving
- Comorbid mental health issues
- Making workplace mental health an executive priority

EMPLOYER ACTIONS:

MENTAL HEALTH POLICIES, BEST PRACTICES, AND INNOVATIONS

How are leading employers taking action?



Accenture draws on its existing networks and strong peer support systems to make all employees mental health aware.

Overview

Accenture is embracing a company-wide approach to mental health that seeks to create a culture of openness and understanding in the workplace. Driven by an “it’s about all of us” philosophy that views mental health as an issue that touches everyone in some way, whether personally or through a friend or family member, Accenture aims to not only take away the fear of talking about mental health but also provide employees with resources to receive help.

Its mental health program is part of a broader drive to champion a workplace culture of equality, where people feel able to express their authentic selves without fear of judgment. Accenture’s research has shown that a culture of equality is in fact a powerful multiplier of innovation and growth. It drives creativity, inspires a sense of belonging and empowers people to be their best, both professionally and personally.

Leadership support is a cornerstone of Accenture’s efforts to establish an overarching culture of acceptance and support. This includes access to professional counselors and using existing employee engagement opportunities to expand its initiatives and bring all populations in Accenture’s workforce into the conversation about workplace mental health.

Programs

- **Top-down approach:** Leadership buy-in drives Accenture’s efforts to support and improve workplace mental health. Every managing director on the Accenture UK leadership team has been personally trained to address mental health challenges in the workplace.

As the next level of management receives training, mental health awareness trickles down throughout the company and across geographical locations.

- *Open lines of communication* – The C-suite regularly meets to discuss current programs, how they can be improved and expanded, and what resources will be needed to successfully advance Accenture’s efforts to support workplace mental health.
- *Routine Training* – Accenture provides mental health training at orientation, when an employee has been promoted, and for all senior managing directors.
- **Professional support:** Accenture employees receive immediate access to mental health support through a third-party healthcare provider. Employees can make an appointment, talk to an accredited counselor in-person or over the phone, as well as contact an anonymous web-based chatroom designed for those not ready to talk.
- **Peer support:** As part of its efforts to create a work environment where people feel safe to open up about their mental health, Accenture has implemented different activities for employees to serve as a resource for their colleagues.
 - *Mental Health Allies program* – Over 2,000 employees in the UK have volunteered to become a resource for colleagues seeking help for themselves or someone else.
 - *Confidential support* – Monthly confidential calls, facilitated by a therapist, allow small groups of employees to find support.
 - *Continuous training and available resources* – Accenture organizes workshops and webinars to highlight different mental health-related issues. Mental Health Allies participate in monthly calls that serve as continuing education opportunities, and the content from the discussions is available for anyone in the organization to use as a resource. In all of its activities, Accenture seeks to include every population in the conversation around mental health, including Accenture’s LGBT+ community and people of color.

Metrics

Accenture takes a top-down approach to establishing a culture that supports workplace mental health, and the company uses various metrics to assess its program and determine what areas for improvement remain.

- **Monthly reports:** Accenture uses monthly data reports from its health provider to assess the company’s use of the service and overall workplace mental health climate.
- **Baseline survey:** Accenture conducted an employee survey in early 2018 to create a benchmark for its mental health initiatives. The company is preparing to conduct a second survey to measure where progress has been made, determine what gaps need to be addressed, and identify what populations need to be reached. This employee feedback is an essential element of the organization’s understanding of how they are meeting workplace mental health needs.

Future steps

Workplace mental health remains a priority for Accenture moving forward. The company's goal is for everyone in the 11,000+ member UK workforce to be "mental health aware," meaning they have been provided with some mental health training, by 2020. Commitment at the executive level allows Accenture to expand the company's activities and further entrench a culture of openness and acceptance around workplace mental health.

Accenture's mental health program has also expanded into markets beyond the UK. The company now has more than 4,000 trained Mental Health Allies in 17 countries and plans to add networks in 12 additional countries this year.



Auticon's unique workforce means support for mental health, and an autism-positive work culture is part of the company's DNA.

Overview

auticon's mission – to help autistic adults build careers in the tech industry – inherently ties the nature of the company's business model to supporting workplace mental health. auticon, an international IT service provider, exclusively trains and hires adults on the autism spectrum to support clients in roles that include application development, data analysis, quality assurance testing, business intelligence analysis, and more. The company has 15 offices in Europe and the United States and around 70 percent of its workforce is autistic. Although many adults on the spectrum are highly qualified, this population of the labor force is collectively overlooked, including some 90 percent of autistic adults who are unemployed or underemployed. Seeing how the strengths and talents of those on the spectrum are suited to the field of information technology, auticon taps into this segment of the population and creates an autism-positive work culture where autistic adults receive the training and support needed to build a career in a neurodiverse environment.

Recognizing that many on the autism spectrum also suffer comorbid mental health issues, auticon actively monitors its employees' mental health to ensure the company is living up to its mission of creating an accommodating workspace for people on the autism spectrum. Through the collaborative nature of company projects and close relationships between employees and leadership, auticon is able to provide an exceptional level of support. Flexible work schedules, individualized support, compassionate leadership, and an accommodating work environment are all cornerstones of auticon's workplace mental health actions.

Programs

Individualized support underscores auticon's efforts to accommodate each employee's needs and create an autism-positive environment. This support extends from the services auticon provides employees to the physical work environment to the makeup of its leadership.

- **Individualized support for people with autism:** auticon's ability to accommodate each employee based on their needs begins during recruitment. A free four-week training program for potential job candidates gives auticon the opportunity to begin a relationship that includes medical and mental health information related to each participant. Once a candidate successfully completes the training and is hired, auticon continues to closely monitor how each employee is doing and tailor its support to the individual.
 - *Professional and personal support* – Job coaches with a background in autism provide daily professional and personal support. auticon's peer mentorship program provides each new hire with a mentor, an employee also on the spectrum. The company's flexible scheduling allows employees to work the number of hours they are capable of working.
 - *Tailored management approaches* – Other accommodations may include relying on written instructions, task lists, or other management instruction techniques that promote success for individuals according to their needs.
- **Support for the entire auticon workforce:** Every employee at auticon has access to the same services and support system, reflecting the emphasis auticon places on creating a welcoming and accommodating work environment where all workers can thrive.
 - *One-on-ones* – Every employee has regular one-on-one meetings to assess how they are doing at work, identify any challenges they are having or anything that they need, and set goals. Some employees benefit from meeting with different people while others prefer to have one-on-ones with the same person, and either option is accommodated by the leadership team.
- **An accommodating workspace:** auticon's work environment has been thoughtfully designed to promote focus and give employees the flexibility to work in the way that works best for them. Given that sensitivity to light and noise is a commonality for those on the spectrum, there are no fluorescent lights in auticon's offices, and employees listen to music or wear noise-canceling headphones to aid their focus. There are comfortable break rooms with couches for anyone who needs to take a break. Employees feel comfortable using these elements of the office due to auticon's supportive culture, leading to a positive work environment where all employees can do their best work.
- **Educated and supportive leadership:** Leadership is understanding of the daily challenges those on the spectrum face – if an employee is unable to come in, leadership lets them stay home, no questions asked. Leadership plays a crucial role in reducing stigma, creating an autism-positive environment, and integrating support for mental health into the company culture. Leaders advocate on the consultants' behalf. Because employees work an average of 20 hours per week, auticon negotiated with the insurance company to offer medical insurance to all employees working at least 20 hours rather than the standard 30 hours per week.

- Hiring compassionate people – Leadership is comprised of managers with a tech background, not an autism background. auticon focuses on educating leaders on autism and hiring compassionate people who are able to adapt to their team members' needs. Leadership is fully invested in their employees' success. The company implemented tools to guarantee no employee misses a one-on-one and trained managers on how to structure the one-one-ones to help employees open up.
- *Balancing support with meeting deadlines* – Managers must balance offering this unique level of support with delivering on deadlines and meeting client needs and expectations. This responsibility is a potential driver of stress and reflects the need for mental health support at all levels of the company. auticon's leadership has its own one-on-ones and has access to the same services and support system as the autistic staff.

Metrics

auticon measures health benefits usage and employs a biannual survey to provide a quantitative assessment of how the company is meeting employee needs. As part of its emphasis on looking at each employee as an individual, the company uses individual development plans and benchmarking to measure how employees are doing and communicate how they can move up to the next level in the company, as well as identify any challenges employees are having at work.

Future steps

The company seeks to move beyond job creation to support employees as they build their careers in the tech industry. Although there are currently no autistic adults in leadership and management, auticon's goal is to have employees on the spectrum move into leadership roles as employees grow. The company is also looking to explore how it could employ innovation practices and technology to expand the support it offers employees. Support for those on the spectrum is ingrained into auticon's DNA, and the company uses its platform and success as a business to champion other companies to hire more neurodiverse people.



Farmers Insurance takes a grassroots approach to starting a conversation around workplace mental health and publicizing available resources.

Overview

The workplace mental health program at Farmers Insurance centers around raising awareness of mental health issues and helping educate employees about the benefits and services Farmers offers. The organization is focused on building out its program in a way that can be effectively and sustainably expanded in subsequent years. Farmers' initiatives are characterized by considerable leadership support including signing onto the One Mind at Work Charter for Workplace Mental Health and leveraging it as a framework for the organization's commitment to supporting workplace mental health policies.

Farmers utilizes established channels of communication and employee networks to facilitate conversations about mental health, circulate educational information, and publicize the mental health services available to employees. As Farmers scales up its initiatives, it looks to tailor its services to help suit the needs of its approximately 20,000 employees across different positions and locations.

Programs

Farmers promotes a culture of openness and helps support workplace mental health through a comprehensive Employee Assistance Program (EAP), Teledoc for Behavioral Health and healthcare plan, easily accessible resources in a centralized one-stop-shop, and by engaging employees directly using established communication networks.

- **Bottom-up engagement:** Farmers implements a grassroots approach to workplace mental health by tapping into existing employee networks to bring a wide audience into its workplace mental health programs.
 - *Internal social network* – Farmers has an internal social network (Workplace) with a specific page for employees to connect around mental well-being. Through this page, employees can access information on relevant webinars, resources, articles and internal events all related to positive mental health. This not only allows Farmers to publicize available resources and circulate educational materials but also serves as a space where conversations around maintaining positive mental health can emerge organically.
 - *Employee Resource Groups (ERG)* – Farmers partners closely with various ERGs to further the conversation about mental health issues and reach diverse populations within the organization's workforce. A few of Farmers ERGs include the Disability Inclusion Group, Veterans and Advocates, the Women's Inclusion Network, Farmers Fit, and many more.
 - *Employee survey feedback* – Farmers monitors the monthly employee survey results for themes related to mental health. For example, recently a series of webinars were held on work-life balance and stress in response to themes which became apparent from survey results enterprise-wide.

- **Leadership support:** Support from the executive level is a key driver of the organization's headway into workplace mental health. Leadership plays an active role in shaping policies and identifying opportunities for expansion, as well as putting the organization's commitment to the One Mind at Work Charter into practice. Meeting with frontline managers throughout the country has provided Farmers with valuable feedback on how to grow its initiatives and refine its resources.
- **Raising awareness through multiple avenues:** Farmers holds panel discussions and streams webinars to disseminate educational information on different mental health issues, provides employees with tools and resources to help cope with mental health challenges, and brings team members at all levels of the Farmers organization into the conversation on workplace mental health.
 - *EAP awareness campaign* – The enterprise-wide campaign is focused on ensuring all employees are aware of the services covered under the organization's EAP and know how to access available resources. This is done through multiple communication channels including a purpose-made educational video, dedicated resource page on Farmers Today (intranet), and digital signage screens around the organization. A bespoke QR code was also created to help employees easily access and download the contact details of the EAP straight to their mobile phones.
 - *Teledoc for Behavioral Health* – Farmers recently expanded Teledoc services to include behavioral health. All Farmers employees and their dependents have access to Teledoc for Behavioral Health, which provides counseling support for anxiety, eating disorders, depression, grief, family difficulties and more.
 - *Direct communication with management* – Internal communication channels with managers allows Farmers to effectively communicate relevant information and updates on workplace mental health programs between leadership and employees.
 - *VIP Benevity Program* – Farmers Benevity program allows employees to earn dollars based on their logged volunteer hours in Benevity and then give to approved non-profit organizations. Mental health related charities that employees have volunteered with include Family Outreach Center, Pine Rest Christian Mental Health Success, and Shatterproof.
 - *Fitness programs* – Multiple office locations have free on-site gyms with various classes like yoga and Zumba. The Grand Rapids location also provides an on-site walking track for employees to support physical and mental well-being.
 - *Generous PTO* – Farmers introduced in 2019 a newly increased PTO rate for full-time new hires to 19 days per annum, furthering an already competitive PTO package.

Metrics

Farmers uses its employee survey and user engagement with its mental health resources to assess the success of its workplace mental health programs. Measuring the number of people accessing mental health resources, streaming online events, attending panels, and contributing to peer groups provides valuable insight into the number of employees who are and are not utilizing each available service. The EAP awareness campaign will allow Farmers to quantify the difference in engagement with EAP resources before and after the campaign and serve as a key metric for the organization's workplace mental health initiatives.

Future steps

Looking to the future, increasing awareness of and access to available resources is a central goal for the workplace mental health initiatives at Farmers. The enterprise plans to continue using employee engagement, leadership support, and feedback gleaned from its metrics to grow its mental health initiatives. Farmers has approximately 20,000 employees working in diverse roles, from call centers to management to those on the catastrophe response teams. As Farmers scales up its mental health programs, it is focused on providing its employees with even greater access to resources and support depending on their role and individual needs.



Kaiser Permanente prioritizes mental health in its framing of total wellness and equips managers with the tools to support employees' mental health needs.

Overview

As a healthcare provider and an employer, Kaiser Permanente has made workplace mental health a cornerstone of its health and wellness programs for its employees. The company seeks to create an environment where employees feel safe to seek support and know how to access available resources. Receptive to employee feedback and developments in the mental health space, Kaiser Permanente has redefined its approach to health and wellness by prioritizing mental health in its framing of total health.

Motivated by its belief that a thriving organization requires thriving people, Kaiser Permanente ensures employees have access to comprehensive mental health resources and support networks. Reducing stigma is at the core of Kaiser Permanente's workplace mental health practices; outspoken leadership, public service campaigns, and internal programs reflect the company's commitment to a workplace that supports employees' mental health needs. As Kaiser Permanente continues to champion workplace mental health, the company has found that connecting mental health to other elements of well-being complements its holistic approach to total health.

Programs

Nearly one hundred percent of benefits-eligible employees are members of Kaiser Permanente's healthcare network, meaning they have access to a growing number of mental health professionals, online tools for those looking to cope with lower level stressors, and classes and workshops on mental health-related issues ranging from depression to trouble sleeping. In addition to the robust mental health resources within its network, Kaiser Permanente employees are able to take advantage of dedicated workplace mental health services.

- **Employee Assistance Program:** Kaiser Permanente's EAP connects employees seeking mental health support with the appropriate resources. It is the first stop for employees who are looking for additional tools, including short-term counseling, advice to improve their mental well-being, or a referral if needed.
- **THRIVE BOSS program:** In response to managers wanting to learn how to better support their employees' mental health needs, Kaiser Permanente created its THRIVE BOSS training to help leaders find their own style to support workplace mental health. The program focuses on building relationships among team members to create a resilient work environment where all employees feel comfortable discussing their mental health needs, thereby reducing stigma. The program emphasizes leading by example: as more leaders implement practices that support workplace mental health, other leaders follow suit and healthy practices spread throughout the company.
- **Leadership support and public advocacy:** Eliminating stigma is the heart of Kaiser Permanente's efforts to support workplace mental health. Through outspoken leadership and public campaigns, Kaiser Permanente encourages employees to take care of their mental health at work and at home.
 - *Outspoken leadership* – Leadership and senior staff are vocal about their own mental health challenges and their connection to mental health issues through family and friends. This top-down approach helps shape a culture that destigmatizes mental health in the workplace and creates an environment where employees feel safe to access support.
 - *Public Campaigns* – Kaiser Permanente's public service campaigns to raise awareness of mental health issues resonate within the company and demonstrate the commitment to reducing stigma and improving access to available tools and resources for those who need support.
- **Healthy Workplace Activities Policy:** Kaiser Permanente incorporates all elements of health and wellness – mind, body, and spirit – in its view of total health. Whether it is a short meditation at the start of meetings or using office celebrations to discuss the intersection of eating and mental health, the Healthy Workplace Activities Policy connects different aspects of wellness with mental health to provide employees with a holistic framework of well-being.

Metrics

Kaiser Permanente's recently revised quarterly People Pulse survey serves as a baseline for how employees perceive the company's efforts to support workplace health and well-being. After examining previous survey responses, the company refined the questions to expand the focus from physical health to include mental health. This in-depth report, along with quarterly reporting to the Board of Directors, receives visibility at the executive level and helps inform Kaiser Permanente's workplace mental health initiatives. Kaiser Permanente also uses demand for EAP, therapists, and other services as a measure of its how mental health services are being utilized and to identify where there are opportunities for improvements.

Future steps

Kaiser Permanente continues to utilize existing channels of communication and incorporate feedback to improve access, create a stigma-free work environment, and foster a thriving and resilient workforce. In addition to expanding its THRIVE BOSS program to new hires and all employees over the next two years, Kaiser Permanente looks to leverage opportunities for synergy between mental health, inclusivity, diversity, and equity to bolster its workplace mental health initiatives.



MetLife uses empirical evidence and top-down support to integrate its "culture of care".

Overview

As an insurance company, MetLife offers its life insurance to its customers along with many other insurance products such as disability, critical illness, accident, etc. The company's front-line employees who work with customers are often dealing with individuals and their families at life's most delicate moments. So as a company, MetLife needs its employees to be fully present and there for the critical moments in the lives of its customers.

Susan Podlogar, MetLife's Chief Human Resources Officer, explained, "I feel a profound responsibility to create an environment where all our employees have confidence that they are in an environment where they can thrive. They need to be at their best, because our purpose is noble, and their work matters." Thus, MetLife is committed to helping its employees realize their potential by implementing programs that support employee physical and mental health – both inside and outside of work. The idea of creating a "culture of care" is what shapes the company's view of its employees as people and what drives its support for them at every stage of health, from preventative action to treatment. By encouraging practices that promote workplace mental health, no matter how small, MetLife is making strides to build a resilient workforce by improving employees' overall health and happiness.

Fundamental to the success of the programs are:

- **A top-down commitment** from the executive level that underscores the importance of MetLife's mental health and wellness initiatives.
- **A global center of excellence (COE) on wellness that provides guidance**, while **local offices have the autonomy** to adapt programs as they see fit, resulting in greater relevance, employee buy-in and impact.
- **A focus on data and analytics** to measure the effectiveness of current practices and use data-led approaches to inform future programs as part of a **long-term commitment** to workplace mental health and wellness.

Programs

MetLife's wellness programs are designed to create an integrated system inclusive of the physical environment, programmatic offerings and cultural support. The foundation of design is based on research, data analysis and employee needs and feedback. The presence of physical elements, such as mindfulness rooms, healthy food choices, stretch breaks, workout facilities, standup desks, and desk treadmills in certain locations, sends the message that it is important for employees to engage in self-care in the workplace. Programmatic elements, such as a network of country wellness champions, provide the structure to embed workplace mental health into the company culture.

- **Global programs with local autonomy:** Programmatic elements receive centralized support from a leadership team that encourages local offices to make the programs their own by tailoring them to their workforce needs. This freedom to adapt programs to suit the local context increases employee buy-in and program success.
 - *Local discretion* – Although programs such as the company's Health & Happiness initiative are global efforts, they are not prescriptive. While the COE provides the construct and tools, participating offices are able to implement the program in a way that is most relevant to the local office. Regional offices often build on a program's energy and momentum to extend and expand the program to have the greatest impact.
 - *Leadership endorsement* – MetLife's mental health programs are promoted at the executive level, with demonstrated leadership in taking the initiative to openly discuss mental health challenges. This role modeling acts as a catalyst for dialogue at all levels of the company. This endorsement has helped encourage employee dialogue on internal collaboration sites, where employees, in turn, have taken a grassroots approach to create a safe space to discuss these issues.
- **Data and insight:** MetLife uses empirical evidence to establish what policies and programs have the potential for greatest impact. Research, thought leadership, and white papers from expert organizations are applied in carefully designed workplace mental health programs. In addition to programmatic elements such as the global Wellness for Life Program, this approach has led to comprehensive healthcare plans, Employee Assistance Program improvements, mental health-friendly workplaces, flexible work schedules, and diversity and inclusion efforts.

- **Integration:** MetLife looks for ways to integrate mental health programs to ensure employees benefit from the policies and plans. The company leverages the strong mental health infrastructure in the U.S. and connects employees with tools and resources across departments and geographic locations. This helps employees navigate the complex world of healthcare and ensures no resource is overlooked.
- **Timely response:** MetLife prioritizes addressing mental health issues in a timely manner. Whether it is in response to external current events or a department request to talk about a specific issue, MetLife is ready to start a conversation, provide resources and create toolkits to further support employees. By staying up-to-date on relevant mental health developments inside and outside the company, MetLife uses these opportunities to confirm that available services are meeting demand. This helps advance a culture where all feel comfortable talking about mental health.

Metrics

MetLife draws on quantitative and qualitative assessment methods to design programs that will reach the broadest audience. Data and research are at the core of MetLife's workplace mental health initiatives. The company looks at the latest research, program utilization, clinical outcomes, differences in productivity, and employee survey results to gain insight into what programs are having the greatest impact. Qualitative metrics, such as program satisfaction data, take employee feedback into account and allow MetLife to further tailor design program offerings that will resonate with employees.

Future Steps

Recognizing that people experience mental health disorders differently, MetLife is looking to utilize its empirical evidence to create programs with the greatest probability of reaching the most people. In the future, MetLife is considering taking its quantitative analysis a step further by carrying out internal pilot studies to measure program impact before scaling to the entire employee population. MetLife seeks to dispel the perceived cost barrier by showing how low-cost or free programs and practices can be effective, as well as demonstrate to employees that the company is invested in their mental health, perpetuate a culture of care, and build employee resiliency to stress and other drivers of mental health challenges.

A Letter from the CHRO

In the face of multiple, high-profile celebrity suicides in the news in June of 2018, MetLife CHRO Susan Podlager took the extraordinary step of addressing the entire organization on mental health. Her letter below reflects MetLife's commitment to supporting its employees' well-being, connecting employees to resources, and creating a discussion around mental health in the workplace. In addition to starting a conversation within the company, the letter prompted leadership to check in and ensure the services and support the company provides are meeting employees' needs.

**Susan M. Podlogar**

Executive Vice President and
Chief HR Officer

Dear Colleagues,

A wise friend of mine once said, “People often don’t look like their story,” meaning how someone appears on the outside may not be reflective of the personal struggles he/she is facing or has faced.

The recent public attention on several unfortunate struggles with mental health issues reminds us to pause and reflect on mental health and total well-being. According to the World Health Organization, depression is the leading cause of disability worldwide¹ and suicide the 17th leading cause of death globally.² In the U.S., there has been a nearly 30% increase in suicide since 1999 according to the Centers for Disease Control.³

We live in incredible times but with an accelerating pace of change. Stressors are a natural element of our daily lives, especially as we seek to effectively integrate our work lives and personal lives, all while transforming this great company.

Some of you have heard me say that we need to take time to manage our energy and our own well-being. We each have different ways that we choose to manage our physical and mental health. Many of us find the hardest part is being consistently intentional about building this into our daily routine. Socializing with family and/or friends, exercising, meditation, sleeping more, and enlisting professional help are all good ways to sustain long-term personal and professional performance and wellness.

Managing our well-being is easier when there is support. Please do take advantage of the wellness programs offered by MetLife as well as the mental health support programs accessible to you. In the U.S., MetLife offers Work-Life ASSIST, an Employee Assistance Program, where you can access free, confidential counseling. Trained counselors are available 24/7 at 1-877-286-0269. In addition, managers have access to a hotline (877-267-1585), a resource to get tailored advice and suggestions based on their needs or concerns – for themselves or for a colleague.

I thank you for all your hard work in service of our customers and your continued support of each other.

Best regards,



¹ <http://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/depression>

² http://www.who.int/mental_health/prevention/suicide/suicideprevent/en/

³ https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/67/wr/mm6722a1.htm?s_cid=mm6722a1_w



Sage champions the well-being of employees and a family-centric approach in its mission, work, and employee benefits all with the aim of having Sageans enjoy their journey.

Overview

Sage Therapeutics, a biopharmaceutical company committed to “making life better for patients and their families by discovering, developing, and delivering important new medicines,” is also a committed supporter of workplace mental health for its own 600-plus employees. Launched in 2010, Sage has consistently prioritized programs and practices that enhance workplace health and support a sound work-life balance. Its mantra – “seeing the brain differently makes a world of difference” – not only showcases its dedication to developing innovative medicines for patients, but also reinforces its core mission and business model as an organization – putting people first.

Sage has been uniquely positioned through its work with key patient populations to gather educational information and personal experiences to help raise awareness about mental health. It has leveraged these resources to address stigma and support a culture of mental wellness for its employees. Sage also aims to create a safe and supportive environment for employees impacted by mental health conditions as was recently demonstrated by their employees offering to share their own personal journeys related to postpartum depression.

Sage has high retention rates that surpass the industry average. This is a testament to its workplace culture and strong benefits programs that keep employees motivated and proud to work at Sage.

Programs

Sage offers robust programs that strengthen work-life balance and give employees flexibility in how they structure their time and use time-off benefits.

- **Paid Time Off:** Sage offers a paid time off plan that reflects a work environment built on a culture of trust and responsibility. Known as "discretionary time off" internally, employees can structure their time off to best fit their personal and professional needs.
- **Sabbatical:** Sage values its people and the phenomenal work they do every day. To reward employees and show appreciation for their dedication, all employees are entitled to take a five-week paid sabbatical after working for the company for five years. This practice rewards employee commitment and hard work.
- **Parental Benefits:** Sage is committed to serving employees as they welcome new additions to their families. During this time, all primary caregivers receive four months of time off with full-time pay. After the first four months, they work part time, but receive full-time pay for two months. Anyone who adopts a child also receives the same benefits as any other biological primary caregiver. In its family-centric culture, all new families also receive six months of free diapers, a Task Rabbit gift card, and Sage has a partnership with Milk Stork to aid breast-feeding mothers while they travel. Sage also offers Ovia Health, a suite of apps to help plan for fertility, pregnancy and parenting.
- **Wellness Benefits:** As a biopharmaceutical company dedicated to enhancing quality of life, Sage cares deeply about what its employees do outside of the workplace. In this capacity, Sage offers wellness benefits and programs to keep its workforce active and engaged outside of the office. Through its wellness initiatives, Sage pays a portion of eligible employee fitness costs such as joining a gym, purchasing exercise equipment for their homes, or taking a fitness class. Sage also offers free classes at local gyms such as, yoga, meditation, and group training to allow employees to decompress and maintain their physical and mental well-being. In addition to monetary support, Sage offers massages once a month for employees to refocus and unwind.
- **Technology Benefits:** Sage strives to create a work-life balance that works for its employees and their everyday lives. To strike this balance, Sage allows employees to work from home when needed. Sage also knows that its employees need access to the best technology so that they can effectively work out of the office. To alleviate the cost, Sage

provides a technology credit of up to \$1,000 every two years for employees to purchase items like iPads and iPhones so that they can stay connected. They also offer video conferencing in every conference room and on employee computers to allow seamless virtual meetings which support flexibility in working from home and alleviating the burden of a commute.

- **Community Resource Locator Tool:** Sage provides a resource for patients and for Sage employees to locate support provided by patient advocacy groups, community groups, and public health organizations in their community that can provide support for mental health, financial wellness, healthcare, childcare and other family related issues.

Metrics

Sage assembles and distributes both annual and quarterly surveys to gauge employee satisfaction and pinpoint opportunities for improvement. In its quarterly surveys, employees rate Sage's compliance with its overall mission highest. Employees cite that they enjoy working for Sage because it applies a strong commitment to employee well-being. Sage also measures employee satisfaction through its low rate of turnover. It has a turnover rate of 4-8 percent, which is much lower than the 16 percent industry average. Sage prioritizes its people and the statistics reinforce this honorable mission. We also have a high rate of employee referrals and are proud when employees are actively recommending Sage.

Future Steps

Moving forward, Sage is developing a brain health strategy and will continue to support workplace mental health initiatives and the well-being of its employees. Sage intends to create a toolkit that showcases its work in workplace mental health and stigma reduction. The toolkit will include mental health data, analytics, communications efforts, and social media content that Sage has used to incorporate mental health initiatives and stigma-reducing strategies in its business model. Sage hopes to distribute this toolkit to other organizations to facilitate the implementation of workplace mental health initiatives nationwide. Sage is also currently looking to participate in a clinical research study to support evidence-based insights into stigma-reduction that may help focus future efforts for employee well-being.



United Nations System

The United Nations system has comprehensively analyzed its organizational culture and management practices to better serve the staff that carry out its mandate.

Overview

The United Nations system is a family of multilateral entities that includes the United Nations Secretariat, the specialized agencies and related organizations. The United Nations Secretariat is one of the main organs of the United Nations, with offices and duty stations around the world, tasked with carrying out the management of the day to day work of the Organization.

In 2015, a Global Health and Well-being Survey was conducted to analyze employee mental health and occupational satisfaction of UN system personnel. A Staff Well-Being Survey Data Report was then published to outline the survey findings. The data and analysis from the survey serve as the foundation for the United Nations System Workplace Mental Health and Well-Being Strategy, whose goal is to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations by optimizing the psychological health of its personnel. Achieving this goal requires integrated policies and practical initiatives to change the organizational culture by providing support for staff, an enabling workplace environment, improving mental health and well-being services and ensuring that resources are available for these purposes.

Due to the diverse experiences and roles of UN system personnel, the survey aimed to identify links between mental well-being and occupational factors such as; duty station type, exposure to potentially traumatic events, incivility and occupational conflict, and the utilization of mental health care services. It was found that UN system staff report experiencing mental health issues at a higher rate than the general population and most employees who reported mental health conditions rarely seek help. From a managerial perspective, mental health issues also account for roughly 12% of sick leave days, resulting in a loss of productivity. This correlation between mental health and the challenging work of UN system personnel served as the basis for the comprehensive mental health strategy that is now being implemented to improve and ensure the well-being of this global workforce.

Prioritizing employee mental health and occupational experience, the High-Level Committee on Management, a steering committee comprised of senior managers across the UN system, adopted the Workplace Mental Health and Well-being Strategy on behalf of the UN Chief Executives Board. The endorsement of this Strategy by Secretary General Antonio Guterres represents a major milestone for the future of mental health in the world's most vital international peacekeeping body.

Programs

After the adoption of the Strategy in 2018, a proactive and thoughtful approach was adopted for its implementation. A coordinator was appointed in the Secretariat to operationalize the Strategy, evaluate its efficacy, and ensure a strong and sustained commitment to its mission.

To ensure that the mental health policy was given high priority and integrated throughout the UN system, an Implementation Board was established representing the breadth and diversity of the UN system. To further ensure that its mental health policies and services align with the needs of its staff, an Advisory Panel was established comprised of UN system personnel who have personally experienced mental health issues. This Panel includes staff from diverse regions, missions, and organizations throughout the UN system to inform workplace mental health initiatives. A broad multi-stakeholder approach has been found to be critically important in implementing the Mental Health Strategy, and ensuring input and support.

In the 2015 organization-wide survey it was found that UN system employees who suffer from mental health conditions rarely ask for help. As an international organization that operates in many diverse cultures and countries, stigma attached to mental health conditions poses a significant

challenge. To address this stigma, the UN system invited its staff and senior leadership to share their personal stories of hardship and how they overcame adversity through videos and other communication tools. The first step to reducing stigma is raising awareness about mental health and well-being. By highlighting personal experiences it is hoped that it will encourage others to seek help and eventually tell their stories of success.

Metrics

As part of the implementation of the Strategy, and to measure its success in achieving its purposes and identify areas for improvement, a monitoring and evaluation mechanism was established to provide feedback on progress, and includes mechanisms for staff feedback, a supportive complaint process, agreed standards of care, and specialized training and licensing for staff working to provide mental health services to staff. It is also foreseen to conduct more regular organizational surveying and maintain up-to-date data on employee experience and management practices. Still in the early phases of its culture shift and mental health initiatives, the UN system benchmarks its programs against the best practices of other organizations to adapt and enhance its policies and services, and looks for opportunities to share best practices and collaborate in addressing a global issue.

Future Steps

As a part of the Secretary-General's overall management reform, the UN system, and the Secretariat within it, has made a long-term commitment to creating a people-centered culture. Knowing that much of its staff works in remote and dangerous locations, often for extended periods of time and without the support of family and community around them, the focus is on preventive measures to prepare employees for missions that are physically, emotionally, and mentally demanding, and support them through those missions. Prevention is not only a crucial aspect of the Secretary-General's political agenda to avoid conflict and harm to staff, but also its managerial agenda to enhance staff well-being.

There is also an ongoing review of policies to better serve families and keep them connected. For example, by offering more flexible working hours and conditions, the UN system hopes to give employees more time to interact with their families and maintain these precious and supportive relationships.

The UN system is additionally investigating how to leverage innovative technology to enable telehealth and telepsychology services to support the mental health needs of its remote workforce. Employing webinars and social media, the UN system is committed to optimizing its global workforce connectivity. Related policies are also being examined to ensure that there is no unintended discrimination and to ensure staff trust that they can disclose their mental health challenges and receive the necessary support. Through integrated initiatives, the UN system is also working on gender parity, unconscious bias and civility programs.

The United Nations system is making great strides to champion workplace mental health and create a culture centered around the unique people who realize its mission.

THE GOLD STANDARD:

PILLARS FOR A WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH GOLD STANDARD

After reviewing the key themes and best practices from the interviews, we combined these insights with existing research in the field to develop the Pillars for a Workplace Mental Health Gold Standard.

This Gold Standard builds on research from organizations like the American Psychiatric Association, the Kennedy Forum, NAMI, and national and regional business groups on health. It also includes input from our global network, especially our partners in Europe, Asia, and Canada.

We see these 8 pillars as a framework for employers who want to design and deploy effective mental health policies:

- 1. Long-Term Commitment.** We will engage in values-driven organizational change toward mental health promotion, and mental illness and suicide prevention – with a commitment to continuous improvement.
- 2. Promote Mental Health.** We will support employee mental health and well-being through comprehensive policies, education, and resources, similar to physical health promotion efforts.
- 3. Eliminate Stigma, Social Prejudice, and Discrimination.** We will engage in shifting attitudes and changing behaviors through comprehensive efforts including contact education and policy review.
- 4. Adopt a Proactive Prevention Approach.** We will actively work to prevent harm to worker psychological health in a continuous improvement process that seeks to reduce risk factors and increase protective factors in how work is organized and how people are managed.
- 5. Provide a Coordinated Response.** We will play a vital role in creating improved access to seamless connections to mental health treatment, services, resources, and support.
- 6. Early and Effective Workplace Interventions.** We will ensure that performance, absence, and disability management systems intervene early and effectively through supportive conversations that engage the employee in collaborative solutions.
- 7. Explore Innovation, Including Technology.** We will employ innovative practices, approaches, and concepts, including new technologies.
- 8. Continuous Evaluation.** We will measure all efforts to ensure quality, outcomes, accountability, and to contribute to the growing body of knowledge about workplace mental health as a field of study.

About One Mind at Work

Most of the world's population spends one-third of their adult lives at work. The workplace and its leaders have a tremendous opportunity to improve quality of life for all people and play a critical role in driving mental health solutions. One Mind at Work is a global employer-led coalition, collaborating across sectors, industries, and national boundaries to transform workplace approaches to mental health. One Mind at Work corporate members and non-profit partners include ADP, American Express, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, American Psychiatric Association Foundation, ArcBest, Arogya World, Atmos Energy, Bank of America, Cognizant, CVS Health, Delta Airlines, ExL Services, Faegre Baker Daniels, Farmers Insurance, Johnson & Johnson, Kaiser Permanente, the Kennedy Forum, Levi Strauss and Co., Mental Health America, Merck & Co., MetLife, Otsuka Pharmaceuticals, Partners Healthcare, Silicon Valley Bank, the Steinberg Institute, Sutter Health and Walgreens

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