

## STUDY FINDINGS

# EMPLOYERS SEE 500% ROI ON MENTAL HEALTH PROGRAMS

AS DEMAND grows for employer-sponsored behavioral health programs, new research suggests well-designed mental health programs can generate measurable financial returns for businesses while improving employee well-being.

Behavioral health services can deliver a projected return on investment of more than 500%, with employers seeing about \$6.07 returned for every \$1 spent, according to an analysis by ComPsych, a company that specializes in organizational mental health and absence management services.

While group health plans are required by law to cover mental health services just as they do physical health services, the shortage of therapists coupled with soaring demand has made it difficult for enrollees to access psychologists on a regular basis. Providing additional behavioral health services can help bridge that gap.

### Where the savings come from

Besides the services offered through group health plans, employers have additional options, including:

- **Employee assistance programs** – Typically provide a set number of free counseling sessions, along with referrals for ongoing care.
- **Tele-counseling and virtual therapy** – Access to licensed therapists via video, phone or messaging.
- **In-person therapy networks** – Expanded provider networks or preferred access to local clinicians.
- **Mental health apps** – Tools focused on stress, anxiety, sleep and mindfulness.
- **Caregiver support** – Help managing elder care, childcare or family responsibilities.
- **Mental health days or expanded leave policies** – Time off specifically for mental well-being.

### How employers benefit

The financial impact is driven by several factors that tie directly to workplace costs:

**Lower medical spending** – Early intervention can reduce emergency room visits, hospitalizations and prescription drug use (this accounts for about one third of ROI).

**Fewer disability claims** – Treating mental health conditions before they escalate can prevent or shorten disability leaves (this accounts for about 15% of ROI).

**Reduced absenteeism** – Employees who receive care are less likely to miss work.

**Improved productivity** – Workers who are mentally well tend to be more focused and engaged on the job (this accounts for about half of ROI).

### Access and engagement remain key

While many employers offer behavioral health benefits, utilization is often lower than expected. Stigma, lack of awareness and limited access can all stand in the way.

Expanding access has become easier in recent years, particularly with the growth of telehealth and digital tools. Many employees now prefer a mix of in-person and virtual care, allowing them to fit treatment into busy schedules.

Employers that see the strongest results tend to focus on more than just offering benefits. They also actively promote them.

### Strengthen behavioral health ROI

To get the most value from behavioral health investments, employers can:

- Promote benefits regularly so employees know what is available.
- Train managers to recognize signs of stress and guide employees to resources.
- Offer a mix of in-person, virtual and self-guided care options.
- Integrate mental health with broader well-being programs, including financial and caregiving support.



If you have questions about your coverage or our products, please reach out to me:

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