



# Leveraging opportunities: Best practice guidance for employers

To help both employer and employee benefit from improved employee health, it's important to understand what's working and what's not. From there, employers can start to have important conversations about how to build healthy, happy, high-performing workforces.

Employers today need to maintain the quality of mental health support, benefits and communications and ensure they're on a par with physical health and, given the stigma still attached to mental health issues, tackle concerns around privacy and confidentiality. They also need to better communicate with and support younger workers, part-time workers and those who work from home. These factors signal missed opportunities and a potential long-term risk for employers.

At Aetna International, our members benefit from easy access to self-care and professional support. Members can choose from solutions that support their whole health – emotional, mental and physical, as well as the unique challenges of living and working abroad. We also go to great lengths to help employers make the most of their investment in well-being by engaging and supporting their people. Contact your Account Manager to learn more about our Aetna Well-being Employers Toolkit.



## A culture of well-being and whole-person health

- Through role-modelling, targets and accountability, foster a leadership culture that promotes health and well-being. Be more human and empathetic and lead by example.
- Report on progress as part of business continuity planning.
- Consider demographics and population segments and tailor benefits options. When in doubt, ask your employees what they need.
- Increase your focus on mental health support alongside physical health support.
- Discuss benefits provision and utilisation with insurance provider to identify improvements.
- Focus on causes of physical and mental challenges and illness, remembering that a toxic culture or line manager will offset any benefits package no matter how tailored and effective it is.



## Benefits communications

- Engage employees around benefits and access and communicate improvements. Tailor your communications, not just benefits. By offering timely, targeted communications you can keep health and well-being front of mind with employees.
- Make the most of your existing benefits. Understand them fully and communicate as part of a curated, on-going communications programme.
- Ask employees about preferred communication channels, frequency and type of content and information they want in relation to their benefits.
- Create a central hub of information about available support and care, including how to access and what to expect.
- Demonstrate to employees how they can tailor the support options available to suit their unique needs.



## Benefits training and guidance

- Introduce benefits training for employees, including for line managers and leaders, who are as vulnerable as anyone else to well-being issues. Ask your benefits provider to help.
- Introduce training for line managers around recognising signs of well-being issues and guiding employees to available support.
- Enable line managers to request benefits training and mental health first aid training.



## Confidentiality and data

- Be more transparent and vocal about confidentiality and choose insurance providers whose journeys embody this emphasis throughout.
- Be more vocal about stigma and the lack of reprisals specifically from a professional career development standpoint.
- Provide clarity about internal policies and local data protection regulations. Don't assume employees know that their data is protected.

There is a gap between workers' needs and their employers' actions. For the past three years, Aetna International has studied this gap – helping organisations to improve their return on investment in health and well-being benefits. For more information on the data sets and experience that inform our insights, search **'Tackling Polarised Perceptions'**, visit **[Aetnainternational.com](http://Aetnainternational.com)** or **contact us**. We're here to help."

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