

## Leading Practices for Workplace Mental Health



Ernst & Young LLP (EY US) has a multilayered, proactive approach to workplace mental health, which has grown during the past year and a half as we have adapted our professional and personal lives to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

**Better You** is the organization's holistic approach to well-being and includes:

- **Robust mental health resources** to meet the varied needs of our people
- **We Care:** anti-stigma initiative to learn the signs that someone is struggling and how to help
- **Resilience initiatives:** mindfulness community and programs, along with multifaceted activities to promote emotional and physical well-being

### ROBUST MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

EY US has a hybrid internal and external employee assistance program (EAP), known as "**EY Assist**." The internal clinician team provides crisis intervention and support to individuals with significant life events as well as consultative support to HR and leadership on mental health initiatives.

A robust suite of vendor-provided services is also available. In 2021, EY US expanded the EY Assist counseling benefit from five to 25 no-cost sessions for all EY employees and family members in their households. Included with this benefit is a network of mental health coaches and therapists who all practice evidence-based care. Mental health coaches address milder issues, such as burnout and stress management, while therapists address more significant matters, like depression and anxiety.

#### EY MINDFULNESS PROGRAM IN 2020

- Introduction to mindfulness classes: about 80 sessions reaching over 14,200 people
- Daily mindfulness drop-in sessions: Over 200 sessions reaching over 55,000 people
- Mindful Leadership at EY, eight-week masterclass: nearly 15 cohorts reaching almost 2,000 people

The firm also provides access to digital tools to promote sleep health and resilience.

**The impact of EY Assist mental health programs has been dramatic:**

- Improved access to care — six days is the median time from initial request to first appointment with a mental health professional.
- 85% of EY people report reduced symptoms after working with EY Assist.
- The internal EY Assist team provided more than 200 virtual trainings on a variety of well-being and emotional health topics that were attended by more than 40,000 people in 2020.

Additionally, EY digital mental health tools have reduced symptoms of anxiety, depression and burnout by at least 27%. EY professionals also report at least four additional hours of sleep per week.

### MULTIYEAR MENTAL HEALTH ANTI-STIGMA INITIATIVE

**We Care** began in 2016 to address the stigma of mental illness and addictions. The initiative encourages peers, colleagues and leaders to recognize the signs that someone is struggling. We ask if they are OK and, if needed, connect them with EY Assist. The initiative has expanded to include addictions, caregiving, financial difficulties, isolation, relationship issues and current events.

**The scope and impact of We Care:**

- Nearly 50 *We Care* events in 2020 were attended by more than 12,000 EY people.
- Because of the increased awareness from *We Care*, *EY Assist* utilization has increased more than 200% in five years. This is a strong indication of the progress that EY US is making to erode the stigma around accessing mental health care.

**Resilience initiatives** include the EY Mindfulness Network and Mindful Leadership program. EY US hosted a Recharge Challenge focused on whole-person well-being, including sleep, unplugging from technology, prioritizing the day and expressing gratitude.

## Providing Recognition, Acceptance, and Support



Merck is committed to creating an inclusive and supportive work environment that values every employee and their family's overall health. This includes their emotional and mental wellbeing. Through **Mind Well**, the company is working to reduce mental health stigma through storytelling, resilience building and providing access to mental healthcare and resources. Like physical health, mental health is an integral part of overall wellbeing.

### MIND WELL CHAMPIONS INITIATIVE

A major component of Mind Well is the champion volunteers. Merck has over **100 Mind Well Champions** in place who have completed the **Mental Health First Aid training** and are available to colleagues for emotional wellbeing and mental health information and resources. These champions continue to work at a grassroots level to reduce the stigma of mental health by helping to raise awareness about mental health conditions. The company offers a robust suite of benefits and resources for employees and their families. A vital component of Mind Well Champions is the promotion of these programs that demonstrate the importance of emotional wellbeing, such as daily mindful minutes sessions, the Calm premium app Lyra, which

provides fast access to high-quality mental health care, and our EAP Resources for Living.

### MENTAL HEALTH TRAINING FOR MANAGERS

Merck designed and launched a global **Mental Health Awareness for Managers** training in 2020. Managers play a critical role in the work ecosystem. Approximately 3,000 employees have completed this training and leadership continues to promote this resource through town hall events, mental health campaigns, and the Mind Well Champion network. This training provides employees with the tools to connect colleagues with emotional and wellbeing resources and educates them on emotional intelligence and how to respond with compassion towards a colleague who may be struggling.

Merck fosters work-life balance by emphasizing the importance of self-care, time off, and flexibility to meet the changing demands of a global environment and our diverse workforce. Overall, Merck is focused on the safety and wellbeing of employees and their families. **We are all accountable for creating a work environment that is psychologically safe, emotionally supportive, and free from stigma.**

“ With a culture of wellbeing in place, we were able to quickly provide extensive support during an unprecedented global health challenge. We’re incredibly proud of our employees’ resilience, their willingness to support their colleagues, and efforts to help others in the communities in which we live and work. ”

*2020/2021 Annual Wellbeing Report*

## Prudential's Holistic Approach to Wellbeing



Prudential embraces a holistic approach to the wellbeing of its employees and understands the health of its workforce is intrinsically linked to that of the organization. Its multi-dimensional definition of health focuses on the physical, emotional, social, cognitive, spiritual and financial well-being of its employees and provides a foundation for the development and delivery of its programs and services.

### PROACTIVE APPROACH TO SUPPORTING EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING

Within that framework, Prudential recognizes behavioral health as an integral component which serves the emotional and overall health needs of its employees. And Prudential does not rest at offering mental health related benefits to its employees and their families. Rather, their proactive approach encourages employees to become actively involved in their emotional health.

An extensive Behavioral Health program provides a myriad of programs and services, including

- Confidential expanded virtual and in-person EAP counseling
- Life, budget and adult care coaching
- Mental health related webinars
- Mindfulness sessions
- Health coaching
- Work-life resources and referral services.

### ENHANCED RESOURCES

Prudential is also now offering enhanced virtual and digital behavioral health support for employees on a medical leave of absence. A

newly developed Mental Health Hub focuses on highlighting the support and resources available for employees and their dependents who are seeking help regarding their mental well-being. The company is also launching new training programs to increase awareness of mental health concerns and encourage allyship. The EAP team partners with managers to appropriately address behavioral concerns and crisis response within the workplace. They also serve as an excellent resource to assist in identifying services which support the emotional health needs of employees, both at work and at home.

### COMMITMENT TO REDUCING STIGMA

To compliment the broad scope of services offered, Prudential facilitates a variety of forums that encourage employees at all levels to participate in open conversations focused on mental health and wellbeing. To this end, employees have shared their stories of mental health challenges and their journey to health. The company has also launched a **Mental Health Champions** initiative to reduce stigma and encourage healthy conversations about mental health through the development of a community of allies. The company's commitment to a healthy workplace is underscored by the recent addition of executive sponsors who serve to promote the importance of mental health, help reduce stigma and encourage those in need to reach out for support.

Prudential understands that the work environment is a critical driver of health and is committed to continuing its focus on reducing the stigma of mental health in the workplace and building a culture of health that benefits employees, their families and the enterprise.

“ Prudential is committed to creating a culture where employees feel safe both seeking support and being supportive of each other, free of stigma. ”

*Sharon Smith, Chief Medical Officer, Prudential*