

RESEARCH REVIEW

Keeping you up to date with the latest peer-reviewed research on workforce health and productivity

[NEWSLETTER ARCHIVE >](#)



[Mental Health, Employment Benefits and Working Mothers During COVID-19](#)

Among working mothers in the US, increasing the number of family-friendly benefits received decreased mental health symptoms after a year into the COVID-19 pandemic. Flexible schedule, flexible location, and supplemental leave were among the most helpful benefits offered. Employers should identify and address gaps and disparities in benefits and mental health support for employed parents.

+Supporting mental health: To help employers better understand and support the mental health needs of their employees, IBI [conducted an analysis](#) of the impact of work disruptions of COVID-19.

[Lessons Learned from the Pandemic on Telework and Presenteeism](#)

Austrian employees who teleworked pre-pandemic increased their working hours outside of regular hours and overtime hours, which was associated with presenteeism. Indirect control, or goal-directed management, was also related to teleworking pre-pandemic and thus presenteeism. Employers should put telework policies in place surrounding work hours and leave, and train managers to maintain visibility to reduce the harmful effects of indirect control on telework.

[Impacts of an Employer-Sponsored Weight Loss Program on Activity, Weight Loss, and Quality of Life](#)

US employees with a BMI of at least 25 participating in an online, behaviorally oriented, commercial weight loss program were found to have more than 60% improvement in energy, mood, indigestion, and self-confidence, along with improvements in sleep and musculoskeletal pain after 10 weeks. Company

investment in an online commercial weight loss program can result in improved quality of life for employees and a valuable return for employers.

Adult Spinal Deformity Surgery Associated with Increased Productivity and Decreased Absenteeism

Patients with adult spinal deformity (ASD) who had operative treatments increased their work or school productivity by 18% and decreased their absenteeism by 1.1 days per quarter, after two years. Researchers suggest that ASD surgery can have overall benefits not just for patients but for employers and the economy as well.

Work-Life Balance and Social Support Positively Related to Work Engagement

A study on employees from several European countries found that work-life balance and social support, in addition to age, gender, and employment status, are positively related to work engagement. Longer working hours decreased work engagement. Considerations should be given for employers to provide a resourceful work environment that potentially leads to higher performance and work engagement while reducing stress.

Employer-Led Strategies to Improve the Value of Health Spending

A systematic literature review found that high deductible health plans with a savings option (HDHP-SO) resulted in a reduction in health expenditures for the employer yet reduces the use of preventative services. Lowering cost sharing for medications and care for chronic illnesses shows an improvement in the value of employer health spending. Employers should consider on-going evaluation of their programs and lean toward opportunities to lower cost sharing for high value services to improve the value of health spending.

Association Between Working Posture and Workers' Depression

Working in a tiring or painful position, musculoskeletal pain, white-collar jobs, and lower job satisfaction were all related to increased depression among Korean workers. Women were driving the differences in certain work positions, such as standing at work was associated with decreased depression, yet sitting increased depression. Employers must provide appropriate interventions to reduce pain and improper work positions.

+ Managing musculoskeletal disorders: [IBIs report](#) provides a scalable benchmark of what back pain costs employers and shows what they stand to gain from helping employees prevent, treat, and manage this condition.



Upcoming Events

[IBI/Conference Board Health and Productivity Forum \(Chicago\); September 28-29.2022](#)

Integrated Benefits Institute, 1901 Harrison Street, Suite 1100, Oakland, California 94612

[Manage preferences](#)