

# RESEARCH REVIEW

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

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## [Impact of Neovascular Age-related Macular Degeneration on Absenteeism/Presenteeism](#)

Japanese adults 50 years or older with neovascular age-related macular degeneration (nAMD) had more health care provider and ophthalmologist visits than non-nAMD patients. Work productivity impairment was more than 10% higher and absenteeism and presenteeism were increased among nAMD patients compared to non-nAMD patients. Better in-home care or self-monitoring to reduce health care visits could reduce work productivity impairment.

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## [Socio-economic Consequences of Mental Distress](#)

Older and less educated adults in a German study had more days of incapacity to work based on their mental distress, measured by self-reported anxiety and depression symptoms. Adults with severe cases of mental distress had more days of incapacity to work, higher medical costs, and continued to work, increasing the rate of presenteeism. Preventive support and access to treatment could help workers and reduce absenteeism and medical costs.

**+Mental health among US employees:** IBI's [latest research](#) aims to help employers better understand and support the mental health needs of their employees.

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## [Association Between Telecommuting Environment and Low Back Pain](#)

A study in Japan revealed that environmental aspects (temperature, humidity, lighting) that are typically better controlled in an office setting along with desk space impacted lower back pain among telecommuting employees. These employees reported poor posture and sitting for prolonged periods increased lower

back pain. Researchers suggest that employers educate employees on proper at-home work environments or provide safe co-working spaces to potentially improve employees' pain prevalence.

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### **Effect of COVID-19 Vaccination on the Duration of Sick Leave among Healthcare Workers**

Although there were still positive COVID-19 cases after vaccination of Italian Healthcare Workers (HCWs), there were less cases, and most were asymptomatic. HCWs used significantly less sick leave (10 to 23 days) after vaccination compared to their sick leave before vaccination (10 to 34 days). Vaccination can reduce labor costs and maintain sustainability within the health care workforce.

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### **The Impact of Osteoarthritis on Disability Leave, Workers' Compensation Claims, and Healthcare Payment**

Employee claims data showed that those with osteoarthritis (OA) had 90% higher usage rates of short-term disability days than those without OA and nearly double the STD payments; overall healthcare costs were approximately 9% higher for OA employees. Opioid prescription usage and costs were also higher for OA employees and associated with higher absenteeism. Alternative treatments and therapies should be explored to lower costs and support better work productivity.

**+Osteoarthritis and opioid prescription usage:** IBI released a [report](#) on what OA costs employers and showed what they stand to gain from helping employees prevent, treat, and manage this condition. IBI also released a [report](#) on opioid use among employees, and its effect on absenteeism.

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### **Relationships between Physical Activity, Work Ability, Absenteeism and Presenteeism during COVID-19**

Part-time employees and employees with medical conditions surveyed in Australia and New Zealand were less likely to engage in physical activity and reported lower mental work ability during the COVID-19 pandemic. Providing support, programs, and trainings for employee physical activity can increase job performance and mental work ability. Further or additional support may be required for those with medical conditions.



### Upcoming Events

POSTPONED: [IBI/Conference Board Health and Productivity Forum \(Chicago\); new dates set for September 28-29, 2022](#)

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