Raising the Bar for High-Quality Mental Health

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National Alliance
of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions
Driving Health, Equity and Value

Moderator & Panel

Panelists

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NEW Action Brief

➢ Addressing workforce mental health challenges - culture, access, and effective treatment

➢ Provides new strategies to enhancing evidence-based approaches

Will be launched post webinar

Key Areas to High-Quality Mental Health Support

1. Recognize organizational and personal drivers of mental health and high-quality support

2. Architect for personalized and culturally sensitive support

3. Educate with deliberate and purposeful employee communications that resonate across a diverse population

4. Hold vendors accountable to improve affordable, timely and individually appropriate services

1. Recognize organizational and personal drivers of mental health and high-quality support

- Workforce wellbeing and mental health are intertwined

- Mental health does not begin at work

- Data gathering should go beyond using claims and clinical analysis

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Workforce Wellbeing & Mental Health are Intertwined

Physical
Social
Financial
Attitude/Outlook
Mental
Spiritual
Intellectual

Mental Health
"Emotional, psychological, and social well-being"
-- MentalHealth.gov

Mental Illness
"A condition that affects a person's thinking, feeling, or mood"
-- National Association for Mental Illness

Mental Health contributes to Wellbeing as…
other components of Wellbeing impact Mental Health
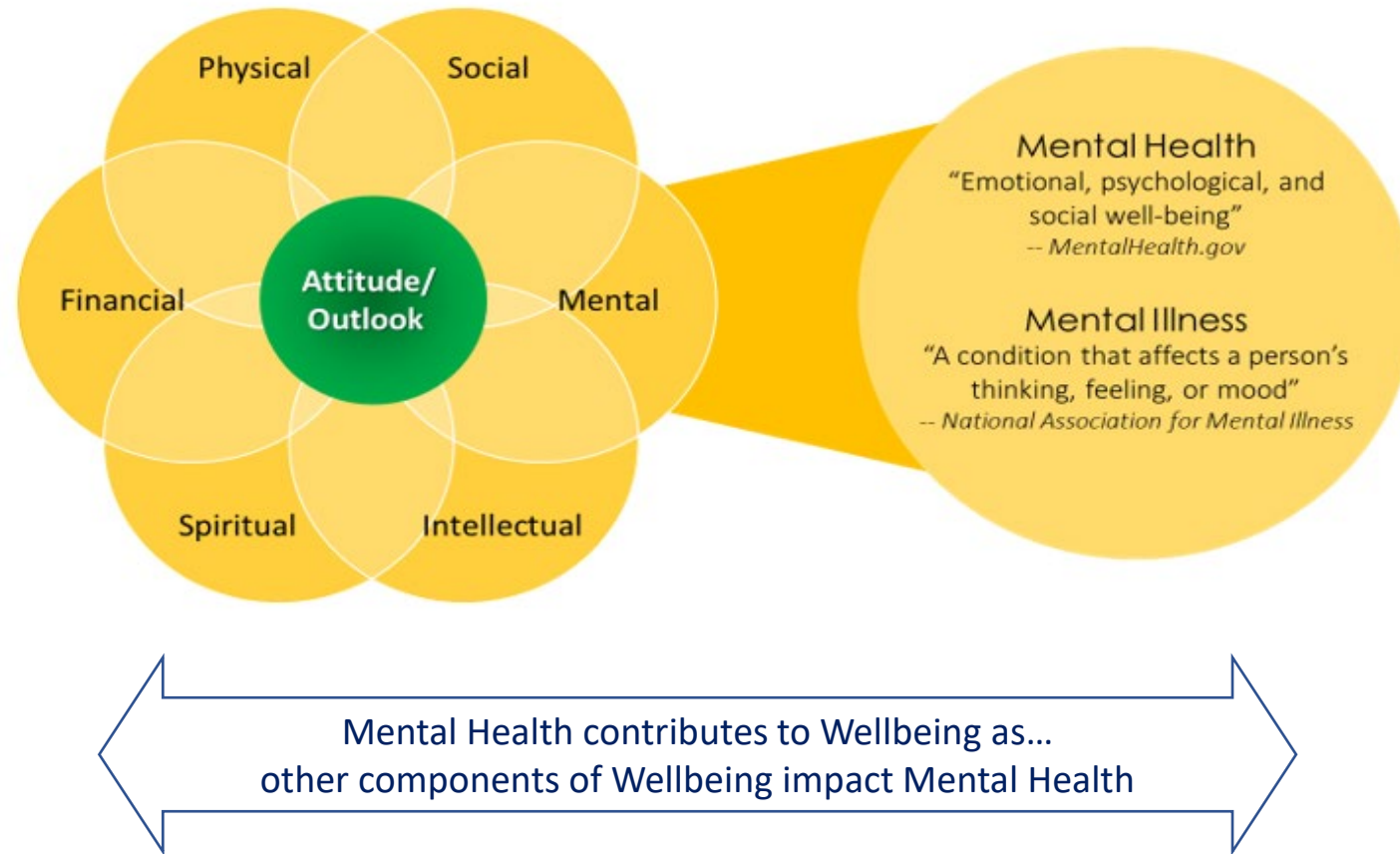
Thriving in All Wellbeing elements compared to thriving in Physical Wellbeing only

- 41% fewer unhealthy days

- 2X as likely to say they always adapt well to change

- 36% more likely to say they always fully bounce back after an illness

- 65% less likely to be involved in a workplace accident

- 81% less likely to look for a new job when the job market improves

Source: Gallup Wellbeing Index

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Mental health does not begin at work

US Surgeon General has recognized the interplay of workplace mental health & wellbeing

Five Essentials for Workplace Mental Health & Well-Being

Centered on the worker voice and equity, these five Essentials support workplaces as engines of well-being. Each Essential is grounded in two human needs, shared across industries and roles.

- Protection from Harm — Safety, Security
- Opportunity for Growth — Learning, Accomplishment
- Connection & Community — Social Support, Belonging
- Mattering at Work — Dignity, Meaning
- Work-Life Harmony — Autonomy, Flexibility

Centered on **Worker Voice and Equity**

Components

Creating a plan with all workers to enact these components can help reimagine workplaces as engines of well-being.

Protection from Harm
- Prioritize workplace physical and psychological safety
- Enable adequate rest
- Normalize and support mental health
- Operationalize DEIA* norms, policies, and programs

Connection & Community
- Create cultures of inclusion and belonging
- Cultivate trusted relationships
- Foster collaboration and teamwork

Work-Life Harmony
- Provide more autonomy over how work is done
- Make schedules as flexible and predictable as possible
- Increase access to paid leave
- Respect boundaries between work and non-work time

Mattering at Work
- Provide a living wage
- Engage workers in workplace decisions
- Build a culture of gratitude and recognition
- Connect individual work with organizational mission

Opportunity for Growth
- Offer quality training, education, and mentoring
- Foster clear, equitable pathways for career advancement
- Ensure relevant, reciprocal feedback

*Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

Office of the U.S. Surgeon General

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Data Gathering Should Go Beyond Using Claims and Clinical Analysis

Do medical claims tell the whole story?

Claims-Based Mental Health Disorder Prevalence
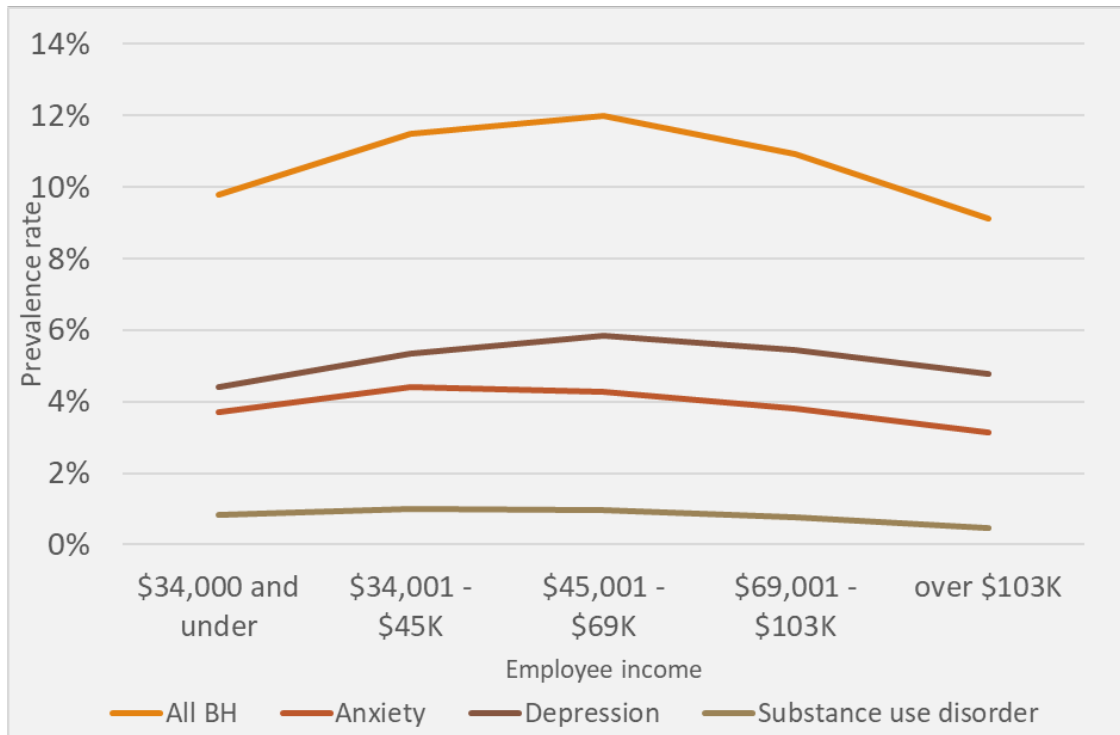
Odds Ratio of Mental Health Disorder

Sherman BW et al. Mental health diagnoses and services utilization vary by wage level. Am J Manag Care. 2023;29(4):173-178.

Sareen J, et al. Relationship between household income and mental disorders. Arch Gen Psychiatry 2011;68(4):419-427
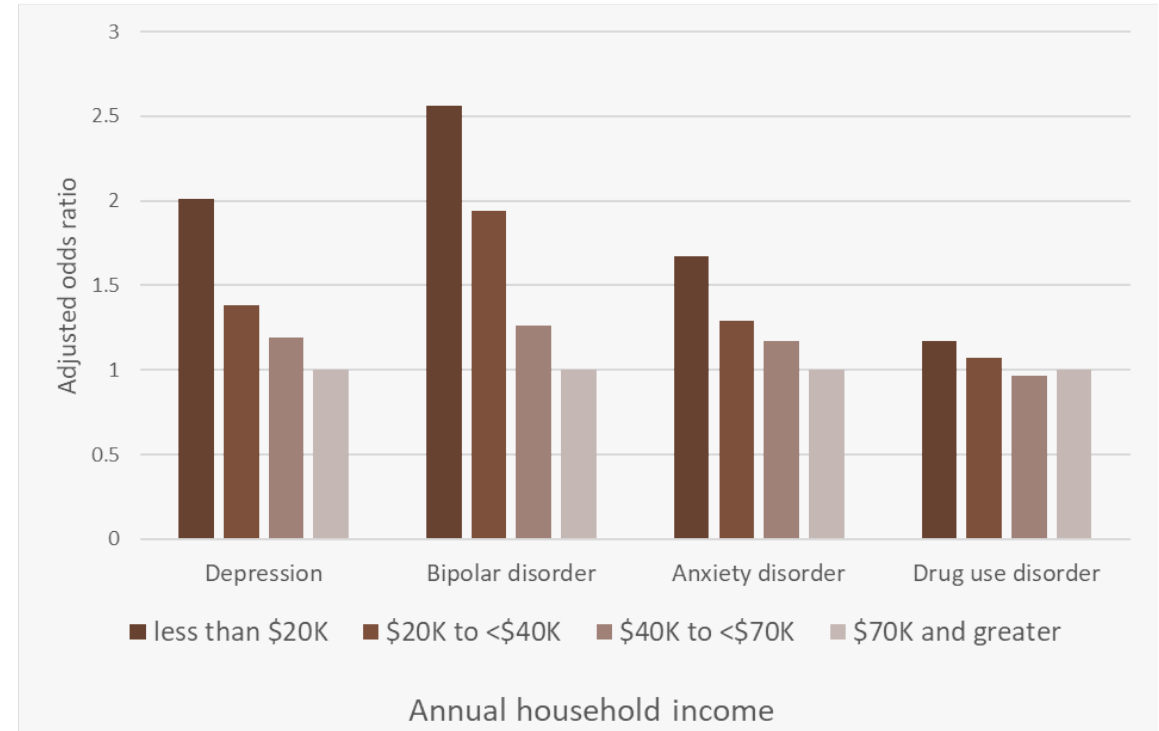
Data Gathering Should Go Beyond Using Claims and Clinical Analysis

Mental health services use for all behavioral health diagnoses

Emergency department use

Hospitalization rates

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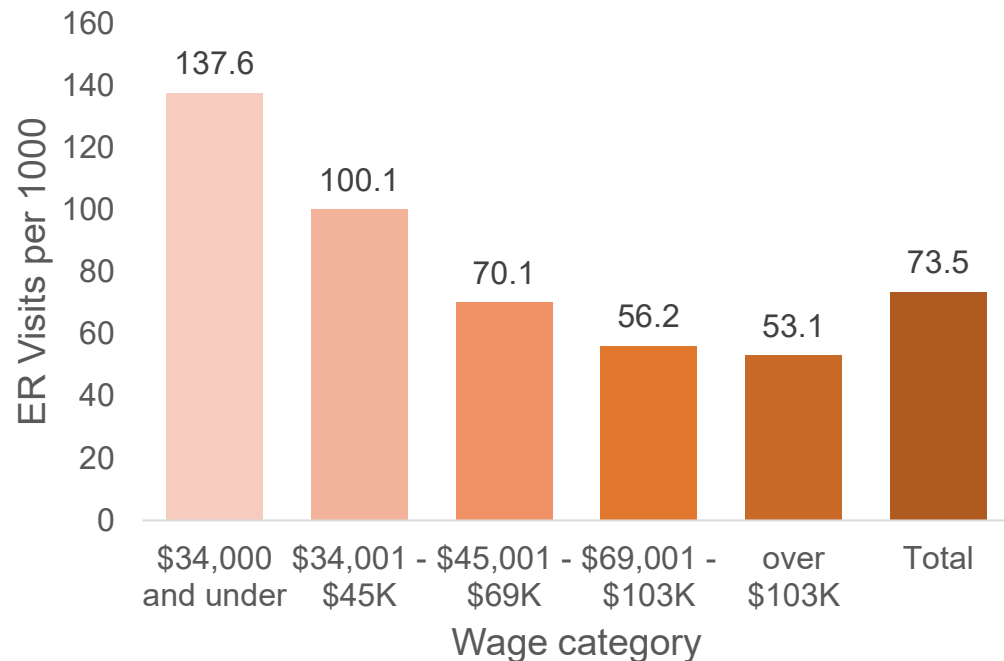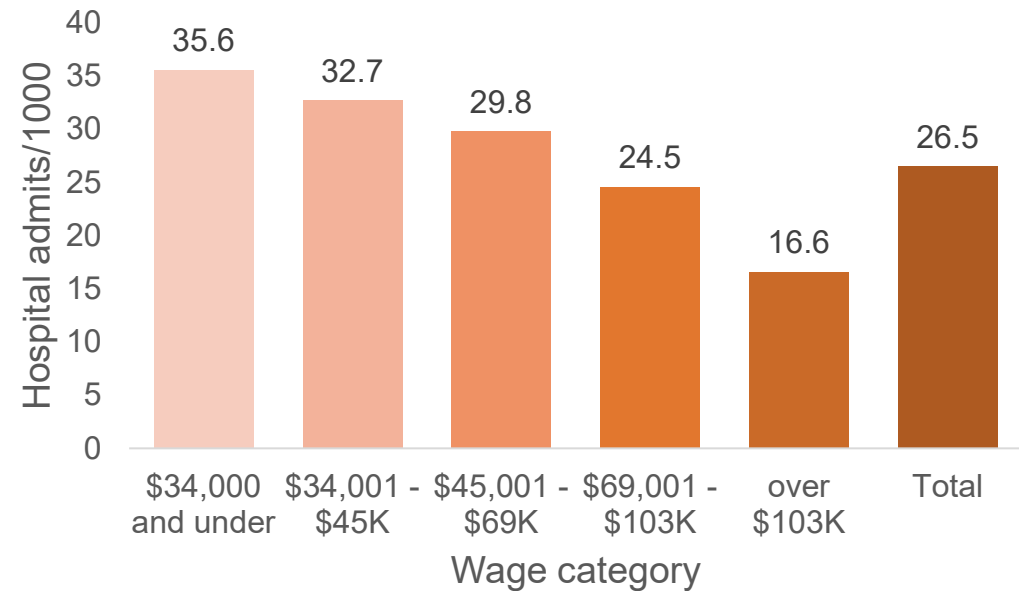
2. Architect for personalized and culturally sensitive support

Ethnically and culturally appropriate employee communications about mental healthcare help lessen resistance to early diagnosis and treatment.

- ✓ **Build personalized, ethnically and culturally sensitive mental health support** into the care structure.

- ✓ **Steer individuals to evidence-based treatments** that promotes patient-centered outcomes and whole person health.

- ✓ **High-quality mental healthcare** is having access to appropriate healthcare providers

- ✓ **Provide culturally sensitive information** and education that is relatable and engages patients across various populations

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Current Issues in Behavioral Health

Behavioral healthcare facts

- Poor quality behavioral healthcare is pervasive. The US Surgeon General warned us that only 16% of patients are getting good quality care in 1999.

- Evidence-based treatments have not changed this (e.g., the latest meta-analysis of CBT shows it is no better than other forms of treatment).

- Patients are asked to guess their diagnosis (i.e., what do you need help with?)

- Providers are guessing (and guessing wrong) about what their strengths are.

- The result is a better chance of being harmed by care than helped

PCORI Research Results

- Patients that are given access to actual provider outcomes across 12 dimensions of well-being can increase their chances of returning to health and productivity to 80%

- The process requires a patient to complete a 5-10 minute diagnostic assessment

- Intake staff review scientific matches with the patient and select the right treatment provider

- Over 95% of patients willingly participate

- Providers feel a higher sense of job satisfaction

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CASE STUDY: NBA (National Basketball Association)

How can we support black employees and allies with mental health issues?

- Consulted their Employee Resource Team: Dream in Color

- Curate a trusted network of therapists - many of whom were black therapists

- Build trust through personalized connections:

  - Arrange group sessions with therapists and employees

  - Enable one-on-one connections with therapists

- Benefits:

  - Enhanced mental health support for employees

  - Improved well-being and productivity

- Next steps:

  - Expand therapist network for increased availability

  - Evaluate program effectiveness regularly

Northeast Business Group on Health
Well Gauge Tool

Creating a Culture of Mental Wellness — Well Gauge

The score is an indication of how effective your organization is in creating a culture of mental wellness. In general, higher scores mean your organization is engaging in more recommended practices. After getting your results, use this list of action items to help normalize conversations around mental health, reduce mental health stigma and integrate strategies to create a culture of mental wellness.

1 Communicate a Commitment to Mental Health
Make it clear that employees' mental health is central to your organization's core values and operations.
Section Score

2 Engage Leadership at All Levels
Leaders need to "walk the talk" and demonstrate they are engaged in supporting employees' – and their own – mental health.
Section Score

3 Demonstrate Commitment to Mental Health Equity
Use DE&I principles to create a culture that embraces all employees and facilitates access to respectful mental health resources.
Section Score

4 Foster Environments that Support Total Health
Apply business practices that promote holistic health and demonstrate regard for the many factors that influence well-being.
Section Score

Use the following lists to learn how to improve your score for each section.

Total Score:

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3 Demonstrate Commitment to Mental Health Equity

Section Score:

Use DE&I (diversity, equity and inclusion) principles to create a culture that embraces all employees and facilitates access to respectful mental health resources.

3A ☐ **Is DE&I integrated throughout the organization?**
ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT THIS:
- DE&I goals and objectives are included in performance reviews, aligned with bonuses and recognized in hiring practices.
- Organization communicates its commitment to DE&I to internal and external stakeholders.
- Leaders are required to participate in anti-racism, allyship and/or implicit bias trainings.

3B ☐ **Are hiring, selection and accommodations practices developed according to DE&I best practices, and encompass (but not limited to) race, gender and neuro diversity, those with mental health disorders and those with physical challenges?**
ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT THIS:
- Performance measures and bonuses are tied to DE&I hiring and retention practices.
- Resources support diverse employees and demonstrate value of inclusion in building new knowledge and competencies.

3C ☐ **Does your organization recognize the mental health needs affecting diverse employee populations and their families, and the communities in which they live, including social determinants of health (SDOH)?**
ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT THIS:
- Organization has demographic data and population health data for its employee population consisting of income, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, gender, and/ or other marginalized identities.
- Connections with community-based resources and initiatives that destigmatize mental illness and provide mental health support for diverse populations are pursued.
- Surveys and focus groups are conducted that include members of Employee Resource Groups.
- DE&I leaders work across silos with ERGs, benefits and employee wellness.
- Effort is made to create awareness campaigns and messaging that resonate with a diverse workforce.
- Organization works with mental health vendors to achieve a health equity vision and goals – such as performance and cultural competency metrics, diversity in provider networks, navigation to culturally competent care, and improved access in mental health deserts.
- Organization has action plans to identify discrepancies.

3D ☐ **Does your organization demonstrate awareness and recognition of societal and environmental factors affecting employees' well-being?**
ACTIONS THAT SUPPORT THIS:
- Speakers are enlisted whose topics reflect cultural, societal and environmental trends and issues, i.e., implicit bias and allyship workshops.
- Safe spaces exist to air concerns and develop actions to escalate to leadership.
- Communications from leadership acknowledge external factors and describe – if applicable and appropriate – organizational actions in response.

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NORTHEAST BUSINESS GROUP ON HEALTH

3. Educate with deliberate and purposeful employee communications that resonate across a diverse population

- Raise employee awareness

- Normalize through story-telling

- Promote a culture of support

- Offer easier access

- Prioritize mental health

Employers can take many steps to promote access and engagement for mental health services

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4. Hold vendors accountable to improve affordable, timely and individually appropriate services

- Measure what matters to your business and supports the company values

- Establish measurable metrics to determine performance

- Set realistic expectations to measure quality, access and engagement

- Conduct on-going review and make changes as necessary

"What gets measured, gets noticed and what gets rewarded, gets done"
~ Dr. Christa Marie-Singleton, CDC/OPM
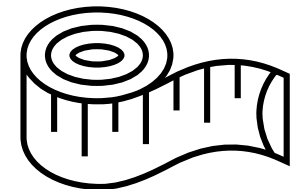
Questions to Ask Vendors

1. Can you provide data by race and/or ethnicity? Can you provide it regularly or only on request?

2. What methods are you using to attract diverse talent and clients?

3. How do you lead by example in DE&I?

4. How does your organization's work align with and support our DE&I strategy?

5. How do you engage users in evaluating how well your offerings meet their needs? How do you ensure that feedback reflects diverse users?

6. What is your strategy for understanding those you're not reaching?

7. Do you use qualitative and quantitative methods to measure the success of your offerings?

8. If your offerings involve machine learning and artificial intelligence, to what extent have you looked at inherent bias in your algorithms?