

# WORKPLACE MENTAL HEALTH IN 2025

Trends and Best Practices  
of Top Employers



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

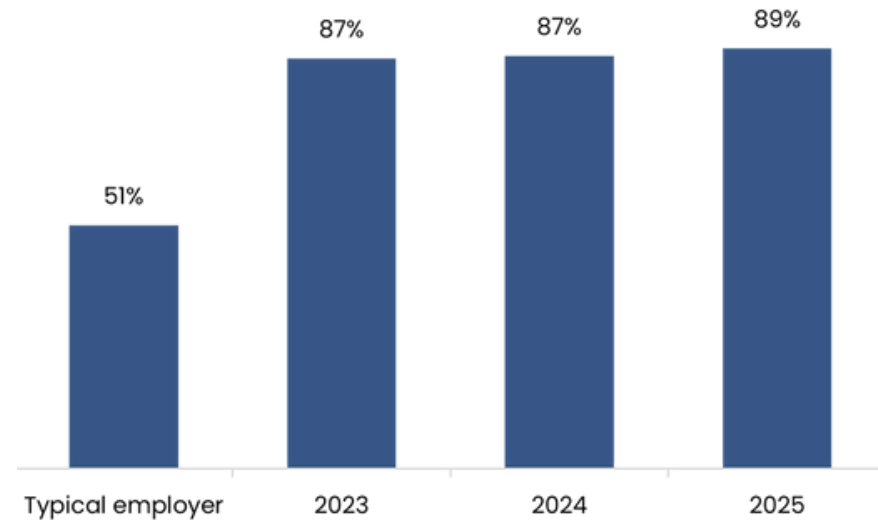
Depression and anxiety among employees cost the global economy an estimated \$1 trillion in lost productivity each year,<sup>1</sup> and 90% of employees in unhealthy workplaces report that work-related stress affects their mental health, more than twice the rate in healthy workplaces.<sup>2</sup> Workplace mental health has become a business and public health imperative, and forward-thinking employers are rising to the challenge.

The cultural narrative around work has evolved. Employees now prioritize psychological safety, flexibility, and a sense of purpose, prompting a shift in mental health from an HR initiative to a key part of business strategy. At the same time, employers are navigating the challenges of post-pandemic recovery, record-high burnout, economic and political uncertainty, and a rapidly changing workforce.

**Despite these challenges, a growing number of employers continue to lead by example, demonstrating that meaningful change is not only possible but also sustainable.**

In 2025, Mental Health America (MHA) awarded 360 employers with the [Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health](#), the nation's leading certification recognizing U.S. employers committed to creating mentally healthy workplaces. Since 2019, Bell Seal-certified employers have consistently prioritized employee well-being, achieving an average score of 89%. This score is up from 87% in 2024 and surpasses the national average of 51% among U.S. employers.

**Average Scores:**  
2023-25 Recipients vs. Typical U.S. Employer



This chart compares the average score of the 360 employers who received Bell Seal certification in 2025 with the scores of 2023 and 2024 recipients, as well as the 1,177 employers who completed a pre-survey used to determine certification eligibility.

This report highlights key themes and case examples from the 2025 Bell Seal cohort, providing guidance to employers committed to creating mentally healthy workplaces. Combined with resources from MHA's [Workplace Wellness Resource Center](#), these insights empower leaders to advocate for meaningful and strategic investments in employee well-being.

# 2025 HIGHLIGHTS



**360  
employers**

received the 2025 Bell Seal for  
exceeding national standards in  
workplace mental health



**21  
industries**

represented, like healthcare,  
non-profit, government, financial  
services, and technology



**2 in 5  
employers**

qualify for Bell Seal certification,  
based on a pre-survey that  
determines eligibility



**5.1  
million employees**

impacted nationwide  
since 2019



**40  
states**

and the District of Columbia  
represented



**900  
certifications**

awarded since 2019



[Learn more about Bell Seal certification](#)

# KEY THEMES

The 2025 Bell Seal cohort reveals key themes and actionable insights to help leaders learn from top employers and strengthen their own workplace mental health efforts:

1

## **Integrated Mental Health Strategy**

Leading employers integrate mental health and well-being into their strategic operations and workplace culture.

2

## **Transparent and Accountable Communication**

Employers who lead with transparency and accountability build trust among employees, especially during times of uncertainty.

3

## **Financial Wellness as Mental Health Support**

Forward-thinking employers recognize the connection between financial security and mental health and provide targeted support to address both.

4

## **Responsive, Comprehensive Benefits**

Top employers regularly review, tailor, and expand their benefits to meet the diverse and evolving needs of their workforce.

5

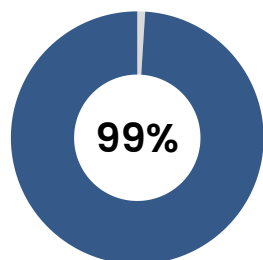
## **Accessibility and Belonging**

Value-driven employers deepen their commitment to a fair and accessible workplace in an increasingly complex work landscape.

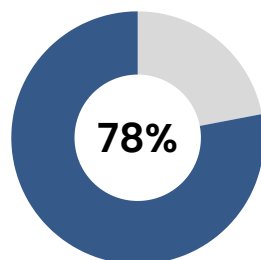


# INTEGRATED MENTAL HEALTH STRATEGY

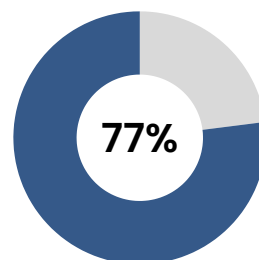
Bell Seal recipients are leading the charge in shaping the future of workplace mental health by integrating it into their strategic, operational, and cultural foundation. Business leaders who invest in mental health can achieve measurable benefits, including enhanced employee well-being and engagement, lower healthcare costs, and improved business outcomes.<sup>3</sup> For every \$1 invested in scaling up treatment for depression and anxiety, there is a \$4 return in better health and productivity.<sup>4</sup>



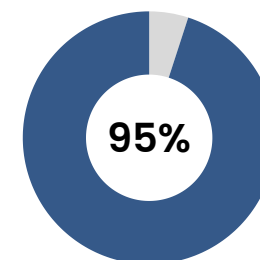
Of 2025 Bell Seal employers **integrate mental health** and well-being into their organizational strategy



Report that leadership **investigates structural and cultural issues** contributing to poor employee mental health



Have leadership who **openly share about their lived experiences** with mental health

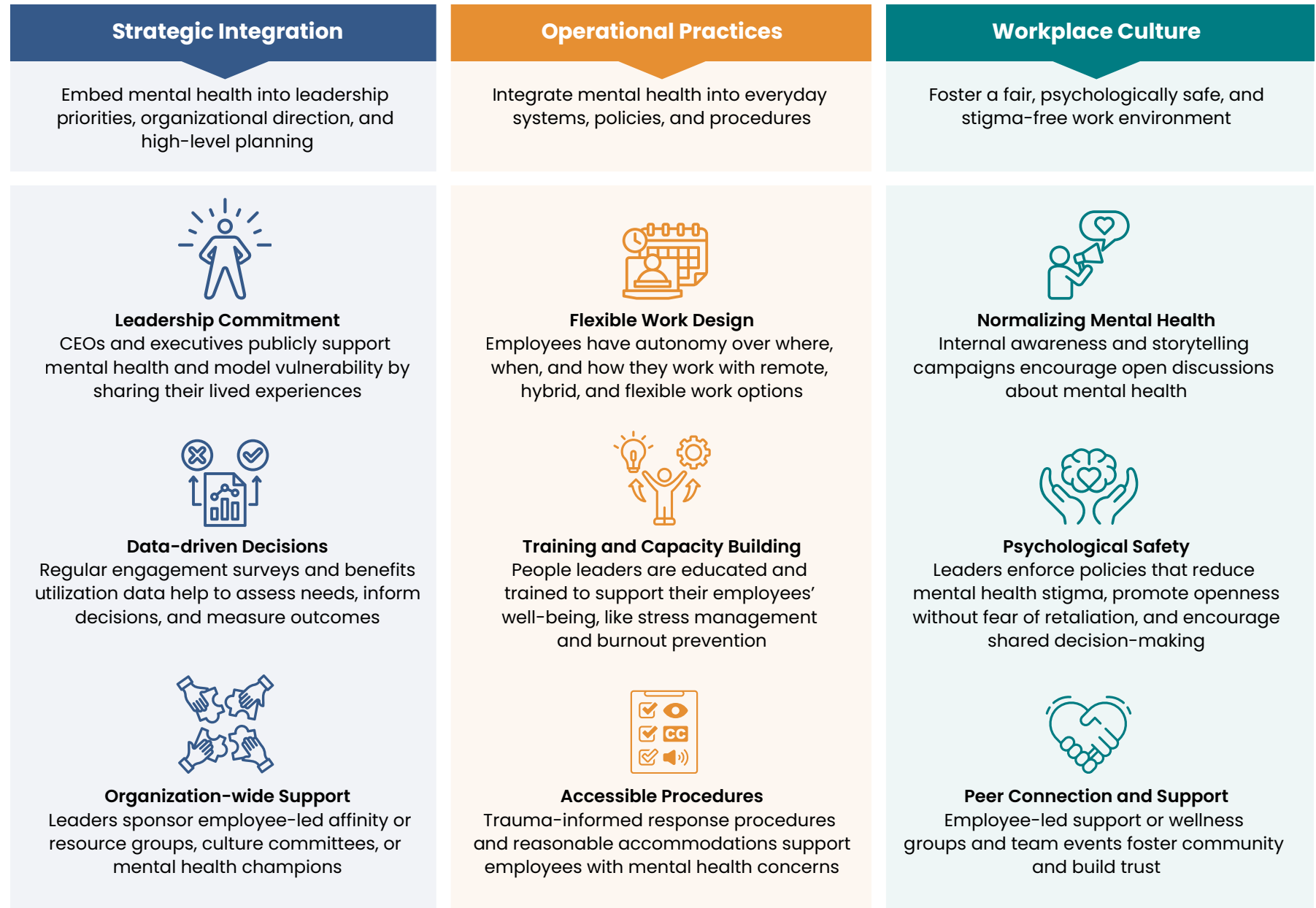


Encourage employees to **participate in decision-making** processes





This framework outlines how top employers integrate mental health and well-being into their strategy, operations, and culture.





**WellSpan Health** regularly assesses and adjusts its policies and processes to align with evolving best practices, promoting a workplace where all team members feel valued and empowered.

## Strategic Integration

In 2022, WellSpan Health introduced a system-wide well-being strategy for team members, aiming to improve the care quality and safety and enhance the patient and family experience. The Office of Well-being collaborates with senior leaders and various departments to develop learning programs that promote diverse perspectives, fair treatment, and a sense of well-being, engagement, and belonging. **These initiatives have contributed to a 4% improvement in burnout scores across the organization.**

## Operational Practices

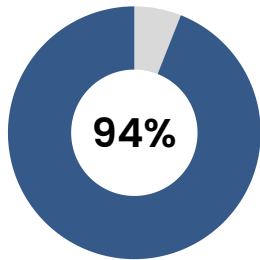
In 2024, WellSpan Health launched the first Code Lavender program at its flagship hospital. The peer support program is a rapid response to support team members experiencing heightened distress due to a traumatic or critical incident, with responders trained in Psychological First Aid who connect employees to necessary resources. **It has been activated 50 times to date and will be expanded at all seven of its acute care hospitals** in June 2025.

## Workplace Culture

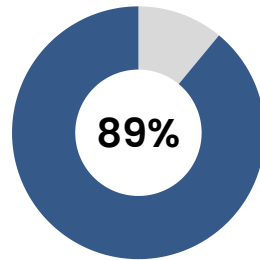
As a 2025 Wellbeing First Champion from the Dr. Lorna Breen Heroes' Foundation, WellSpan Health has implemented innovative measures to foster a positive workplace culture and mitigate burnout. **It is among the first in Pennsylvania to remove invasive mental health questions** from credentialing and licensing applications, encouraging hundreds of team members, including doctors, advanced practice providers, nurses, social workers, and allied health therapists, to seek support without fear of repercussions.

# TRANSPARENT AND ACCOUNTABLE COMMUNICATION

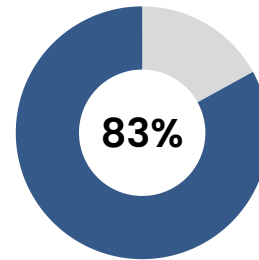
During uncertain economic and political times, workers may face mass layoffs, funding loss, reduced benefits, restructuring, leadership transitions, or return-to-office mandates, which can lead to chronic stress, burnout, and other mental health concerns. Top employers lead with empathy and proactive communication. According to research, transparent communication and supportive people leaders are strongly associated with employees' experiences of trust, appreciation, and psychological safety at work.<sup>2</sup>



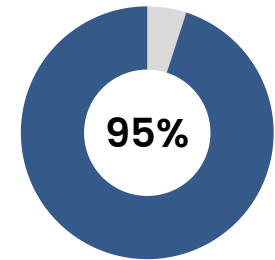
Have an internal plan to **communicate major transitions and potential impact** on employees



**Hold people leaders accountable** for all employees' fair and consistent treatment



Internally **communicate their mental health strategy** to all employees



Conduct awareness or literacy campaigns to **promote mental health** and resources

Employers that lead with transparency and accountability implement these communication practices:

- **Feedback loops and two-way communication**, such as surveys or listening sessions, are used to gather input before, during, and after major transitions, enabling employees to feel heard and included in the decision-making process.
- **Empathetic, employee-centered messaging** is designed to reduce uncertainty while providing mental health resources and opportunities for feedback.
- **Senior leadership's visibility and engagement** with direct communications demonstrate accountability and build trust.
- **Multi-channel communication strategies**, including town hall meetings, email, newsletters, videos, intranet posts, and printed materials, are used to ensure consistent and comprehensive communication at all levels.
- **Change management preparedness**, including toolkits, training, and support across departments and from external partners, ensures a smooth transition and reduces breakdown in communication.
- **A centralized resource hub** streamlines access to key information, mental health resources, practical guides, and crisis support.





By providing opportunities for employees to voice their concerns, leadership at **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Vermont** gained a better awareness, proactively shared information, and took steps to better support them.

## Feedback Loops and Two-way Communication

Employee feedback from quarterly pulse and annual engagement surveys revealed declining morale, rising anxiety, and a sense of not being heard. In response, they formed a cross-departmental team of trusted employees to represent their peers, share concerns, and inform change management efforts tailored to workforce needs.

COOK  
COUNSELING  
& CONSULTING INC.



With the launch of a new client management system, **Cook Counseling and Consulting Inc.** implemented a comprehensive communication plan to keep employees informed throughout the transition.

## Senior Leadership Engagement

The leadership team first explained the reasons for the change, the expected outcomes, and the implementation timeline during an all-staff meeting. Then, leadership sent a detailed email to all employees summarizing the key points and included an FAQ to address common concerns.

## Centralized Resource Hub

A dedicated intranet page was created with updates, resources, and training materials related to the new system.

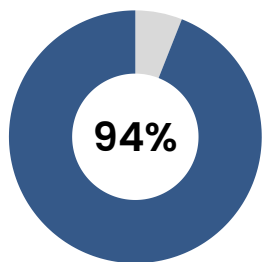
## Change Management Preparedness

Finally, leadership organized a series of training sessions and actively gathered feedback during these sessions to help employees gain practical experience with the new system and address any concerns in real-time.

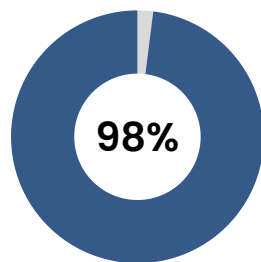


# FINANCIAL WELLNESS AS MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT

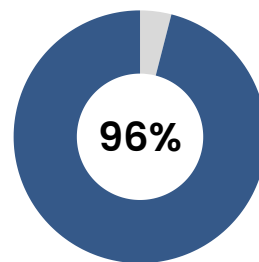
Evidenced by public discourse and employee feedback from the 2025 Bell Seal cohort, economic pressures, such as the rising cost of living, wage stagnation, high student debt, and inadequate access to affordable healthcare, increase financial stress and mental health concerns for many workers. Economic insecurity is a well-documented socioeconomic determinant of health,<sup>7</sup> and employers play a crucial role in alleviating these pressures for their workforce.



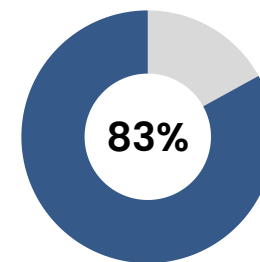
Of 2025 Bell Seal employers have a **transparent compensation** policy



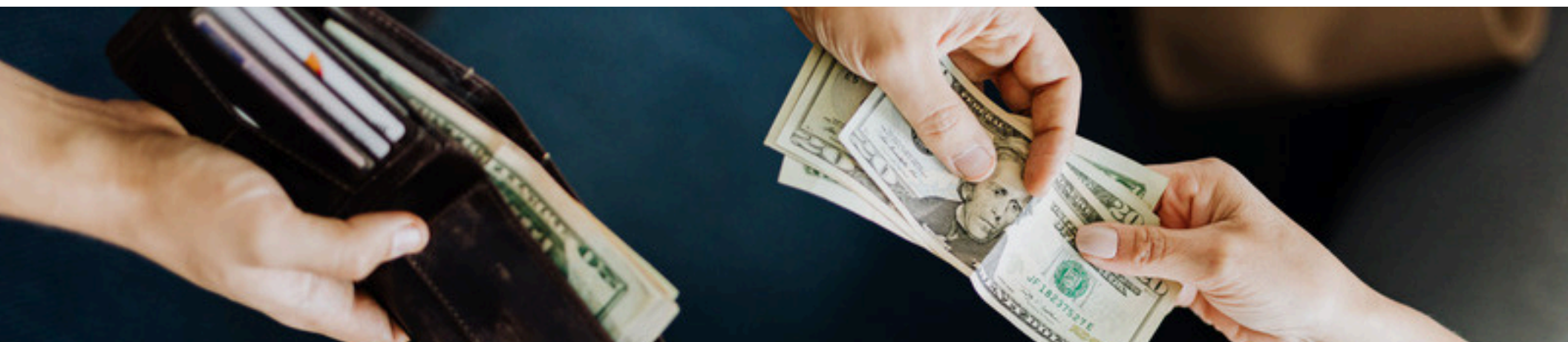
Enforce a **fair performance review** process



Provide clear pathways and guidance for **professional development**



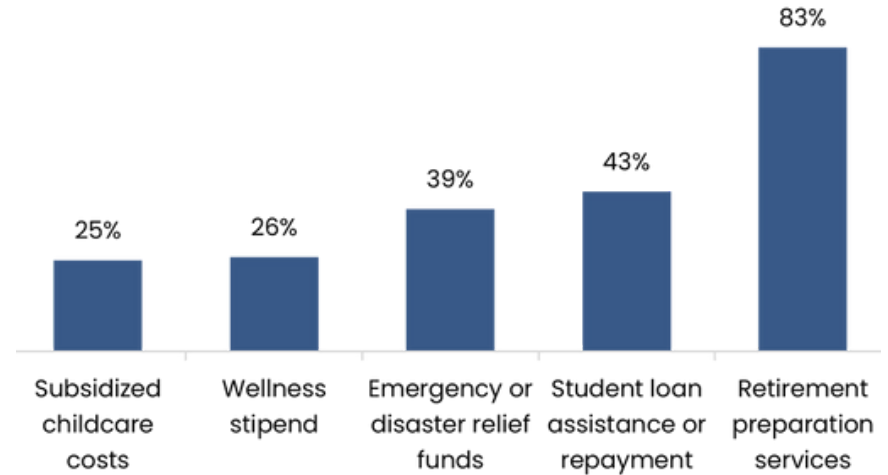
Offer **financial education**, planning, and resources



Forward-thinking employers recognize the connection between financial security and mental health and provide targeted support to address both by:

- Codifying a **transparent compensation policy** with market-based pay structures and published pay ranges
- Conducting **compensation studies** to ensure fairness and organizational alignment with market standards
- Enforcing a **fair performance review process** with merit-based pay increases, professional development guidance, and opportunities for internal promotions
- Providing free or **subsidized mental healthcare options**
- Increasing **contributions to retirement and health savings plans**
- Providing **financial education and planning** resources

## Financial Resources



This chart shows the percentage of 2025 Bell Seal employers who offer financial resources.



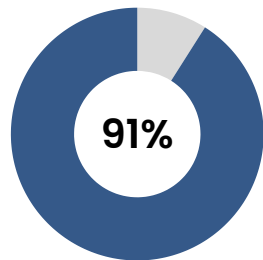
**Riverside Healthcare** conducted a compensation study for 350 unique job positions that encompassed its entire employee workforce. As a result, they implemented a new salary structure, grounded in competitive market pay and salary survey data, to support pay transparency legislation and ease wage pressures.



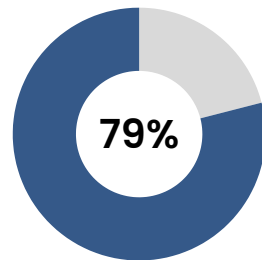
**UR Medicine Thompson Health** decreased medical premiums and increased its market adjustment budget to invest in salaries and help mitigate financial stress on associates.

# RESPONSIVE, COMPREHENSIVE BENEFITS

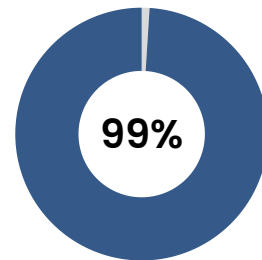
The U.S. workforce has become increasingly diverse in terms of age, family structure, caregiving responsibilities, and healthcare needs. Five years after the COVID-19 pandemic, workplaces have shifted toward more flexibility and tailored benefits to support employees' personal and professional lives. Employers who understand their workforce's unique and evolving needs can provide the most effective benefits.



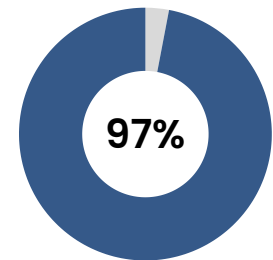
Of 2025 Bell Seal employers **changed a policy or practice** in response to employees' feedback



**Identify interventions** that support employees at various points on the mental health continuum



**Offer flexible work options** and resources to support employees' personal lives

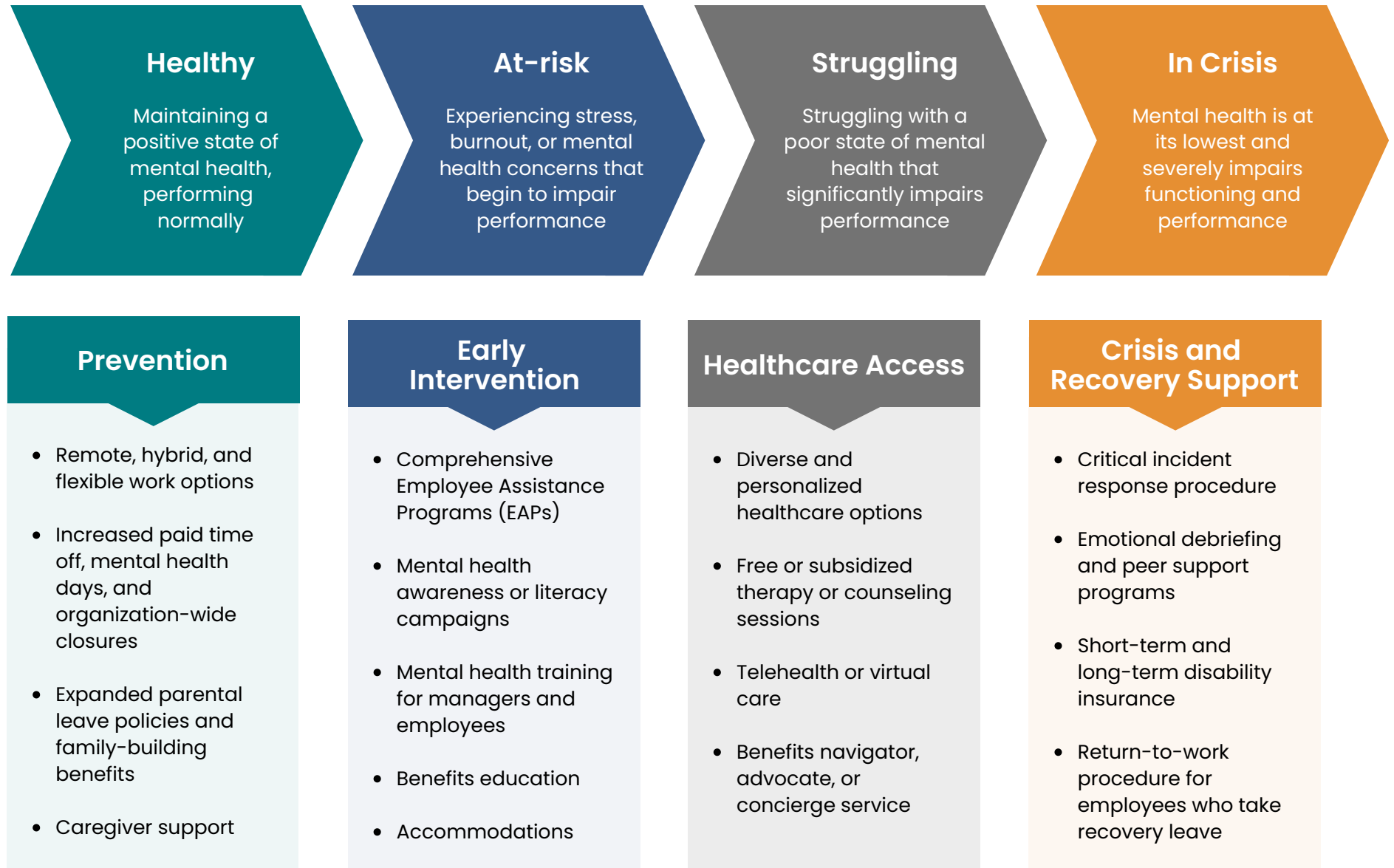


Assist employees with **navigating their benefits**



# Mental Health Continuum

States of employee mental health and top employer interventions







**Ally Financial's** comprehensive, inclusive, and data-driven approach to employee well-being provides support across the mental health continuum.

Ally Financial's strategy includes proactive digital well-being tools, such as meditation, soundscapes, and personal development courses, to support positive mental health. Through their EAP, all employees and their household members are eligible for 16 free, confidential sessions of therapy or coaching, crisis support, and parent and teen programs. The EAP also features a well-being check-in and a mental health questionnaire that connects high-risk users to a dedicated care navigation line.

Additionally, they offer leave accommodations and structured return-to-work support for employees navigating more serious challenges. Their substance use advocacy program is also available to all employees and their families, providing education on addiction, risk factors, and support resources. To evaluate impact, they leverage utilization data, employee feedback, and aggregate well-being assessment data to continuously refine their strategy, meet evolving workforce needs, and drive meaningful outcomes.



**Connecticut Children's** mental health strategy recognizes the needs of its workforce. In response to employee feedback, they provide on-site mental health support through a dedicated psychologist, along with Code Lavender, a real-time emotional debriefing program, and Ears for Peers, a peer support program.



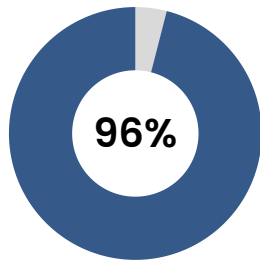
**Southern Company** focuses on reducing stigma, building an inclusive mental health culture, and lowering healthcare costs to support employees at all levels of care. Benefits include mental health coverage with equal in- and out-of-network rates, free substance use support, digital clinical tools, and a rapid recovery program. Family supports include marriage and divorce toolkits, low-cost backup care, eldercare resources, and college coaching.



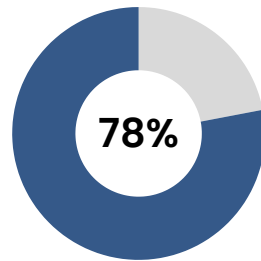
# ACCESSIBILITY AND BELONGING

Research shows that employees who experience feelings of belonging are associated with a positive workplace culture and increased employee engagement.<sup>8</sup> In addition, MHA's 2023 research found that employees thrive in a work environment where their identities are represented and valued, particularly in a workplace where leadership and management demonstrate these values.<sup>9</sup>

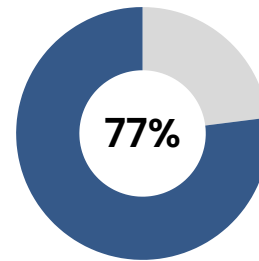
Among 2025 Bell Seal employers, 83% report addressing various dimensions of their workforce, including demographics, role or function, and work environment or location, and 86% ground their strategy in fair and inclusive practices.



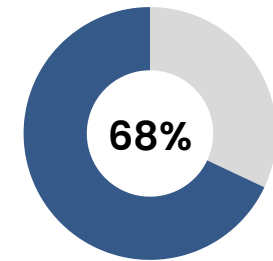
**Review their hiring practices for fairness** for people with mental health or substance use conditions



**Educate employees about accommodations** for mental health conditions



**Train their people leaders on accommodations** for mental health conditions



**Enact recovery-ready practices** to support employees in recovery from a substance use condition

In an increasingly complex work landscape, value-driven employers deepen their commitment to creating a fair and accessible workplace by:

- Reinforcing leadership's commitment to supporting the unique needs of its workforce
- Codifying accessibility and mental health policies in the employee handbook
- Ensuring mental health policies and resources are culturally competent and reflect the workforce's identities
- Creating or expanding employee resource groups or affinity groups
- Implementing initiatives and programs to support often-overlooked employee populations, such as neurodivergent individuals, those experiencing menopause, lactating employees, or caregivers



## Southern New Hampshire University

**Southern New Hampshire University** has implemented several initiatives to improve accessibility for employees of all abilities. Efforts include improving digital accessibility for internal systems, refining accommodations processes, expanding awareness training, and exploring better support for neurodivergent employees and individuals with diverse needs.

## WebMD<sup>®</sup> HealthServices

**WebMD Health Services** is pursuing Menopause Friendly Workplace Training and Accreditation<sup>10</sup> as part of its commitment to a supportive, inclusive workplace. This recognized standard affirms excellence across culture, policies, training, and engagement. Early employee feedback confirms that these efforts are making a meaningful impact on their work experiences.

**Garmin** adopted a milk delivery program for their lactating associates whose positions require travel. This allows the associates to maintain their child's feeding schedule, ensure milk production is undisturbed, and avoid emotional or financial stress.

## GET STARTED

**Evaluate how mental health is reflected in your policies, practices, and benefits** by using MHA's [Bell Seal framework](#) to identify potential opportunities and guide the next steps in supporting your employees' mental health and well-being.



# ABOUT MENTAL HEALTH AMERICA



Mental Health America (MHA) was founded in 1909 and is the nation's leading nonprofit dedicated to promoting mental health, well-being, and illness prevention. Our work is informed, designed, and led by the lived experience of those most affected. MHA's workplace initiatives focus on researching and advocating for best practices in employee mental health and well-being, as well as awarding top employers with the Bell Seal for Workplace Mental Health certification. Learn more at MHA's [Workplace Wellness Resource Center](#) or email us at [workplace@mhanational.org](mailto:workplace@mhanational.org) with any questions.

This report was researched, written, and prepared by Taylor Adams, Suzi Craig, and Danielle Fritze.

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