

# COMMUNIQUÉ

To Group Insurance plan administrators  
Health and wellness

## Wellness, a pillar of satisfaction

The 2023 Benefits Canada Healthcare Survey reveals the relevance (and benefits) of workplace wellness measures.

This is one of the key findings of the 2023 Benefits Canada Healthcare Survey,<sup>1</sup> in which plan sponsors and plan members express their views on workplace measures to promote wellness.

iA Financial Group is a platinum partner of the 26<sup>th</sup> edition of this annual study.

In this final article of a three-part series, we present the results of this wide-ranging survey, along with ideas for reflection and action.

### Promoting wellness, a source of satisfaction

A wellness culture is viewed positively by the majority of plan members: 77% say their organization promotes health and wellness. Plan members are even more positive when their plan offers virtual healthcare services, responds to their personal needs or when they understand what is covered by their plan.

Organizational culture is an important driver of health and wellness, the survey reveals: 85% of plan sponsors say their organization promotes health and wellness.

Mental health initiatives, such as assistance programs, top the list of wellness programs offered by plan sponsors. However, additional efforts to promote good sleep habits are desired.

All this pays off, with plan members generally satisfied (83%) at work. A wellness culture and a group healthcare plan that meets their personal needs are key factors in this satisfaction.

### Training is always relevant

Mental health training for managers and staff is offered by more than half of plan sponsors: 55% offer programs to recognize and respond appropriately to symptoms of depression or other mental illnesses. The likelihood of such training is higher in organizations with 500 or more employees.

### Important differences in benefits offered

The benefits offered in terms of mental health coverage vary widely between plan sponsors, with around 12% offering no coverage at all for mental health counselling.

Annual maximum coverages also vary, with some plan sponsors offering up to \$5,000 in maximum coverage while others have no idea what their maximum coverage is.

Increasing the amount of maximum coverage and broadening the list of eligible mental health professionals would increase the range of services covered and speed up the intake of people requiring support. This would benefit both organizations and their staff.

### Musculoskeletal health: an issue on which to act

Plan sponsors believe that organizations should focus more on prevention than just the treatment of illness and injury.

Musculoskeletal health is thus a new priority for plan sponsors wishing to promote wellness. However, a paradox exists: although 72% of plan sponsors feel that their work environment is conducive to musculoskeletal health, 65% of plan members say that their workplace causes them pain.

### Teleworking: another variable in the equation

Teleworking complicates matters when it comes to workplace wellness culture.

Although 46% of plan members work from home or telework, two out of three plan sponsors feel that it has become more difficult to influence workplace culture to encourage wellness and mental health.

In short, fostering wellness in the workplace relies on a documented strategy, support from senior management, dedicated staff and constant evaluation of the measures put in place.

Additional efforts can also be made to promote good sleep habits, offer musculoskeletal health wellness programs and invest in areas of wellness other than mental health to spread the total investment in wellness more equitably.

**Interested in learning more about how iA can support you in enhancing your group benefits plan, including the addition of effective workplace wellness initiatives? Talk to your Client Relationship Manager.**

Read the other articles in our 2023 Benefits Canada Healthcare Survey series:

- [Physical and mental health influence overall wellness](#)
- [The ups and downs of group insurance plans](#)

<sup>1</sup> The online plan member survey was fielded by Ipsos on behalf of Contex Group between March 28 and April 4, 2023. In total, a national sample of 1,004 primary holders of group health benefit plans completed the study. For all the details, visit the [Benefits Canada](#) website.

If you, as the plan administrator, have an important role to play in informing your plan members about their group insurance plan. We also look to your support to give them all explanatory and administrative documents upon enrolment or upon request. We will help you show them where they can consult this documentation if it is not available in hard copy. If you have any questions, please feel free to consult your administrator's guide or to contact your local Account Executive or Client Relationship Manager.

This communiqué and past publications are also available on our website [ia.ca](#).

iA Financial Group is a business name and trademark of  
**Industrial Alliance Insurance and Financial Services Inc.**

1-877-422-6487

December 18, 2023