
Employer-provider partnerships can help us solve the nation's behavioral health crisis

During the pandemic, employers took bold steps on mental health education. Now they have an opportunity to continue this important work.

By **Michael Thompson and Stephen Parodi** | August 04, 2021



Not only would integration have the potential to improve care and timely access for employees, but it could also reduce the headache for employers who often manage multiple mental/behavioral health vendors. (Image: Shutterstock)

Long before COVID-19, mental health was a serious concern for employers and a major cost driver. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention depression caused an estimated 200 million lost workdays (<https://www.shrm.org/hr-today/news/hr-news/pages/the-paralysis-of-depression-in-the-workplace.aspx>) each year at a cost of \$17 billion to \$44 billion to employers. The pandemic escalated the crisis, as levels of depression, anxiety and other mental health concerns skyrocketed (<https://www.psychiatryadvisor.com/home/topics/anxiety/the-number-of-adults-with-symptoms-of-anxiety-or-depression-increased-during-covid-19/>) the past year.