

RESEARCH REVIEW

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

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Work Productivity Loss Study Reveals Risk Factors Associated with Cardiovascular Disease

[*Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*](#)

February is American Heart Month, and businesses and their partners can play a part in reducing the risk of cardiovascular disease among their workforce. A study found that employees at high risk of cardiovascular disease (CVD) had their lost work productivity decline by 30% one year after enrollment in a pharmacist-run program designed to resolve drug therapy problems, initiate a care plan and develop goals for reducing CVD risk. The highest value productivity improvements could be obtained among men whose work changed from sedentary to more lifting

tasks or who reduced their body mass index, and among men and women who improved their health-related quality of life.

+ Income and job strain contribute to CVD risk: European Heart Journal [research](#) found that the risk of developing CVD is higher in adults with low educational attainment. Among men with low educational attainment, income and job strain explained half of the higher risk of mortality from CVD.

Parental Leave

Parental Leave Provides Benefits for Families at Almost No Cost to Firms and Workers

[National Bureau of Economic Research](#)

An analysis using administrative integrated employee and firm data finds that paid parental leave increased firms' wage expenses by about 0.25% for each birth per 100 employees. The biggest driver of costs are temporary increases in hiring and retention. Firm output, profitability, and success (that is, survival) were not affected by paid parental leave, nor were co-workers negatively impacted by the leave-taking. Coworkers saw a temporary increase in hours, earnings and likelihood of employment without an impact to their health and wellness when another employee went on parental leave. The authors conclude that "the costs of parental leave for employers are negligible."

Maternal Care Costs are Increasing for Employees

[Health Affairs](#)

Despite stable care costs, out of pocket maternity spending increased for women with employer sponsored health care by nearly 50% from 2008-2015, illustrating a growing burden of cost for individuals largely driven by rising deductibles. Potential problems associated with these high costs of care include lower use of necessary services and delayed care, which can increase the risk of maternity complications and strain the ability for new mothers to return to work in optimal health.

+ Stay tuned for more on parental leave: IBI is conducting [research](#) that will look into paid parental and family leave policies and its broader implications for business performance. Publication of the report and accompanying webinar will to be released towards the summer.

Stressful Situations with Health Care Providers Reduce Employee Likelihood of Returning to Work

[Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine \(JOEM\)](#)

The likelihood that workers returned to work from a job-related illness or injury was cut by one-third if they had stressful interactions with health care providers. Contributors to stressful provider interactions included difficulties accessing care, working with multiple providers, psychological distress, and financial stress.

Empowering Leadership Reduces Likelihood of Employee Mental Distress

[Scandinavian Journal of Work, Environment & Health](#)

Employees who self-reported higher job predictability, future employability, and quality leadership (defined as supportive, empowering and fair) had a lower risk of mental distress. Since [mood disorders have a negative effect on productivity](#), business leaders would be well served to minimize the potential for mental distress when possible. By focusing on ways in which to make employees feel stable and supported at work, employers can likely minimize the performance loss to their business caused by mental distress.

Higher Incidences of Burnout Found in Employees with Perception of Poor Work Climate and Competing Demands

[JAMA](#)

Burnout among physician-scientists was more likely among those reporting more time spent on parenting and domestic tasks, less vacation time, more time of patient care and poorer perception of work climate. Women were more susceptible to burnout than men, however, differences were no longer significant when those factors are taken into account. This suggests that the difference between men and women's rates of burnout are most likely attributable to more competing demands and poor work climate.

IBI is the leading not-for-profit research organization in health, wellbeing and productivity, providing data, research and tools professionals need to make sound decisions in how they invest in the health of their workforce. For additional information, please visit www.ibiweb.org.

Upcoming Events

March 17: [*Webinar: Integrating Employer and Patient-Centered Approaches to Benefit Design & Delivery*](#)

April 22: [*PBGH & IBI Regional Event: Biosimilars: The Next Frontier*](#)

September 15-16: [*Conference: IBI/Conference Board Health and Productivity Forum*](#)