

RESEARCH REVIEW

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Presenteeism Makes up One-Third of Workplace Costs for Caregivers of Patients with Treatment-Resistant Depression [JOEM](#)

A study of 1,239 employed caregivers found that caregiving costs nearly \$30,000 annually. For those caring for patients with treatment-resistant depression (TRD), that cost is 30% higher. Indirect costs – driven by lost productivity – represented about one-third of total costs for the TRD group (\$10,098), and about one-fourth of total costs for the non-TRD group (\$7,959). This emphasizes that the impact of caregiving transcends into the workplace as it not only places enormous burden on employed caregivers but it also results in costs to employers beyond lost productivity, including medical and pharmacy claims for care recipients on caregivers' employer sponsored health

insurance.

+ A Need to Bolster Support for Working Caregivers: IBI's recently published [research](#) reveals certain caregiving tasks are driving the bulk of the productivity burden in the workplace, and while paid leave allows the flexibility for employees to take time to do these tasks, benefit programs should also focus on helping employees navigate their roles as caregivers.

Blood Pressure Control Among US Population has Declined since 2013

[JAMA](#)

Having high blood pressure or hypertension puts individuals at greater risk of two leading causes of death: heart disease and stroke. Fortunately, it can be well controlled with medication. Researchers examining hypertension trends found that those controlling their blood pressure reached a peak in 2013-2014 at 54%, but then declined to 44% in 2017-2018. The rates of blood pressure control were lower among adults who were younger, Black or Hispanic, lacked access to care, or did not have a usual source of care. Failure to control blood pressure has consequences for the employed workforce as untreated hypertension increases their risk of complications, likely ultimately requiring greater health care utilization, and leading to missed work as a result of illness.

+ Missed Screenings Cost Employers: Recent research investigated the [productivity impact of preventive screenings](#) and found that the average disability cost for people who take leave for hypertension in a milder stage was 52% lower than the cost of leave if it was taken for a more severe form (a cost difference of \$6,019 per incidence). This suggests a productivity value for early detection and treatment to prevent the progression of the disease.

Hepatitis C Treatment Could Save Employers Over \$20K in Productivity Loss

[Advances in Therapy](#)

Adults who received treatment for Hepatitis C after diagnosis significantly decreased their risk of having a work-loss event such as taking a leave of absence, going on disability leave and/or early retirement. The overall

productivity gains of accessing Hepatitis C treatment can provide more than \$20,000 in value after 4 years, in addition to improved quality of life for employees. This study suggests that employers can obtain substantial economic gains from adopting programs that ensure access to Hepatitis C treatment.

Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic

One in Four Adults Delayed Care as a Result of COVID-19

[MMWR](#)

CDC researchers have found that over 40% of adults have put off medical care as a result of COVID-19 concerns, nearly a third of whom avoided urgent care. Avoidance of either routine or urgent care was found to occur more often among informal caregivers, a quarter of whom provide care for those at high risk of poor health outcomes should they contract COVID-19. Additional characteristics of those most likely to report delayed care include adults older than 44, people with higher education, people with disabilities or underlying medical conditions, those in the Black or Hispanic communities, and those without health insurance. The consequences of missed care could result in worse health outcomes in the future, and understanding factors associated with medical care avoidance can help to encourage people to seek timely care.

+ Alarming Workplace Leave Patterns Seen: [IBI's recent analysis](#) of short-term disability (STD) and Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) leave patterns early in the pandemic suggest that postponed care may account for about 24% of the observed year-over-year declines in STD caseloads. Pent-up demand for postponed health services—particularly for musculoskeletal conditions—and the progression of untreated chronic health or mental health conditions may drive up future leave rates among employees who remain eligible for benefits.

Rates of Mental Health Illness Has Increased Three-Fold Since the Start of the Pandemic

[JAMA](#)

The consequences of the pandemic on mental health exist both from the disease itself as well as from policies meant to reduce risk of spread. Researchers found that the rate of depression among U.S adults has increased from 8.5% prior to the pandemic to 28% in April 2020. Depression increased across all groups examined (sex, age, race/ethnicity, education,

marital status and household income), and symptoms were also found to be more severe. Those with the greatest likelihood of experiencing depression were widowed/divorced/separated or never married, earned below \$20,000 in household income or had less than \$5,000 in household savings.

+ Screening for Depression is Lagging: Depression affects one in eight employees and costs \$17 in disability wage replacements costs per employee each year. However, only one in ten employees receive the recommended screening for depression. [Closing the gap](#) on this can help employers realize major health and productivity savings.

+ Work Ability Can Reveal COVID-19 Implications: [Paying attention to a person's ability to meet the physical and mental challenges of their work](#) and its effects on job attitudes, well-being and behavior may help employers support their employees' as they cope with the pandemic.

Longitudinal Study Finds that Higher BMI or Having a Chronic Condition Increases Odds of Presenteeism

[Plos One](#)

A longitudinal survey of Australian adults was used to determine how body mass index (BMI) or the presence of a chronic health condition may affect workplace performance. Results of the analysis showed that employees with long-term health conditions or higher BMI had higher odds of presenteeism. Employees with chronic health conditions were three times more likely to report presenteeism than their peers without. The odds of presenteeism increased by 9% and 38% for employees who were in the overweight and obese BMI categories, respectively.



HEALTH AND PRODUCTIVITY AT WORK

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