

Prioritizing Mental Health in the Workplace

IBI Research Webinar
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IBI Speakers



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About IBI

National research and educational nonprofit focused on linking workforce health, productivity and business performance



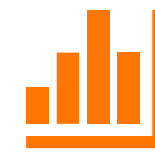
1,400+ corporate members covering 20 million employees. Member engagement opportunities include:

- National Forum & regional programs
- Informative webinars on hot topics
- Roundtable discussions

Develop & provide industry leading:



Research



Data



Tools



Learning opportunities

So business leaders can:

- Understand the toll that illness takes on employee productivity
- Recognize the competitive advantages of investments in employee health
- Create an impactful story for senior leaders about why this holistic view is important for their business objectives

IBI Research Priorities

- 1. Mental health**
2. Value of telehealth and digital health solutions
3. Measuring the total impact of workplace health and productivity programs
4. Helping employees balance work responsibilities with providing care for elderly or ill family members or young children
5. Plan designs that address financial, social, and structural barriers to care



Agenda

- Background and Context
- Research Questions
- Defining Anxiety and Depression
- Data and Sample
- Findings
- Employer Guidance
- Employer Panel



Background & Context

- Mental health was challenging prior to the pandemic as employers and employees alike struggled with stigma and access
- The effect of COVID-19 on the mental health and productivity of the workforce was the highest ranked priority project from our member surveys
 - Poor mental health is related to absenteeism and presenteeism
- The CDC reported a 3-fold increase in depression and anxiety after the pandemic began: from 10.8% to 33.9%
- Our aim is to look at how challenges due to the pandemic, such as work disruptions and health care, have affected employee mental health
 - Employer guidance to determine how employers assess and mitigate mental health issues and address challenges

Research Questions

- How do work disruptions – being on leave, working from home, and having children home from school – affect mental health?
 - How do demographics differ in the relationship between work disruptions and mental health?
- How do healthcare needs – delaying/skipping medical care, unmet mental health counseling needs, and having a mental health prescription – affect the relationship between work disruptions and mental health?

How Anxiety and Depression are Defined

- Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-2) for Depression
 - Having little interest or pleasure in doing things
 - Feeling down, depressed, or hopeless
- Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD-2) for Anxiety
 - Feeling nervous, anxious, or on edge
 - Not being able to stop or control worrying
- Anxiety or depression disorder (no/yes)

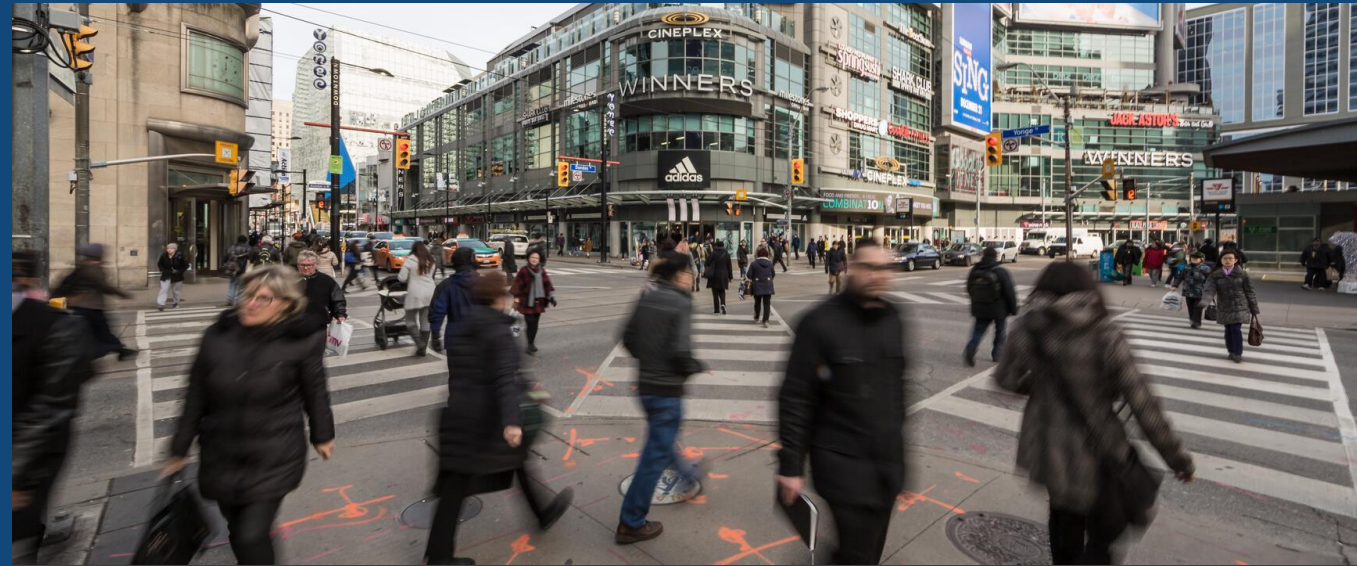
Data & Sample

- Household Pulse Survey
 - US Census Bureau
 - Sample size = 1,032,730
- Ongoing weekly survey that began April 2020 to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic affected US households.
- Sample:
 - Adults under 65 years of age
 - Responded that they have worked over the past 7 days or that they are on leave for a potentially temporary reason
 - Completing the survey across 3 phases totaling 27 weeks (April 23, 2020 - March 29, 2021)
- Modeled sociodemographic, state, week, workplace disruptions, mental health and medical health care

Summary of Findings

- Reported anxiety and depression have skyrocketed for employees during the pandemic.
- There are statistically significant characteristics of employees who are worse off than the national average:
 - Regional differences exist with the hardest hit locations in the west and south
 - Those who shifted to telework or were on leave
 - Those who are female, younger, less educated, White or another race/multiracial, and not married
 - Those with unmet mental health counseling needs and taking a mental health Rx

Anxiety or Depression Increased More for Employed Adults



Before the Pandemic¹

8.7%

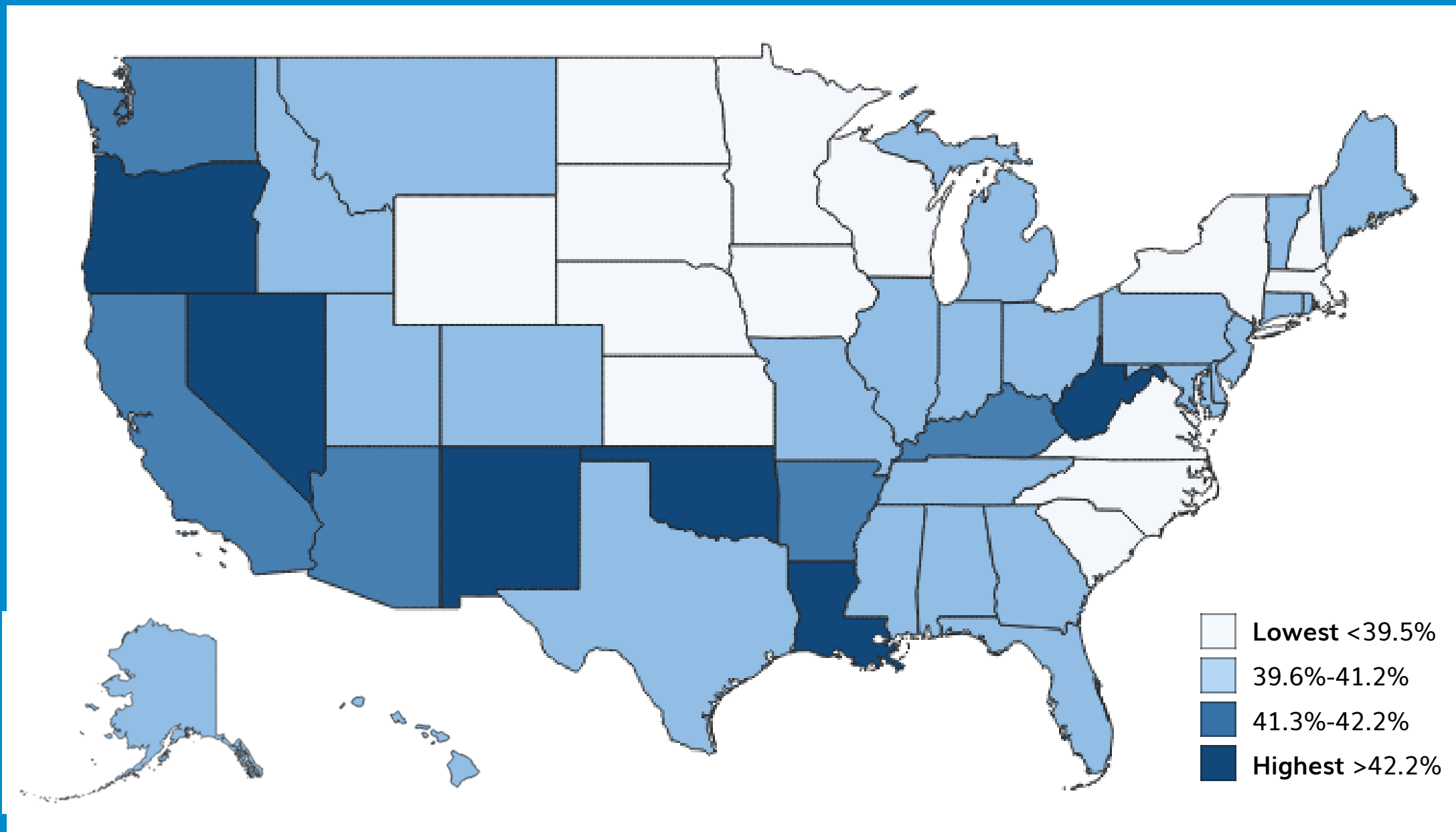


During Pandemic²

39.5%



More than 4x as many employed adults have anxiety or depression compared to before the pandemic



Compared to the national average, employees residing in southern and western states reported worse mental health.

Percentage of employed adults reporting feelings of anxiety or depression during the pandemic

Overall
39.5%

Currently Working
37.6%

On Leave
49.4%

Kids Going to School
34%

Kids Home from School
38%

Already Teleworking
35.1%

Working In Person
36.1%

Change to Telework
40.9%

Employees with work disruptions were more likely to report anxiety and depression.

Employees more likely to report anxiety or depression were:

- Women
- Younger
- White or Other/Multi-Racial
- Some College Education
- Never Married or Widowed, Divorced, or Separated

Percentage of employed adults reporting feelings of anxiety or depression during the pandemic

Overall
39.5%

Female	42.9%	High school or less	37.4%
Male	34%	Some college	40.8%
18-24 yrs	48.2%	Associate's	38.3%
25-34 yrs	44.4%	Bachelor's	37.9%
34-44 yrs	39.7%	Graduate's	38%
45-54 yrs	34.9%		
55-64 yrs	30.3%	Married	35.4%
White	40.5%	Widowed, divorced, separated	42.1%
Black	32.5%	Never Married	43.0%
Asian	30.9%		
Other/Multiracial	41.1%		
Hispanic	36.1%		

Women were more likely to report feelings of anxiety and depression—having kids at home from school and a change to telework greatly affected the mental health of women

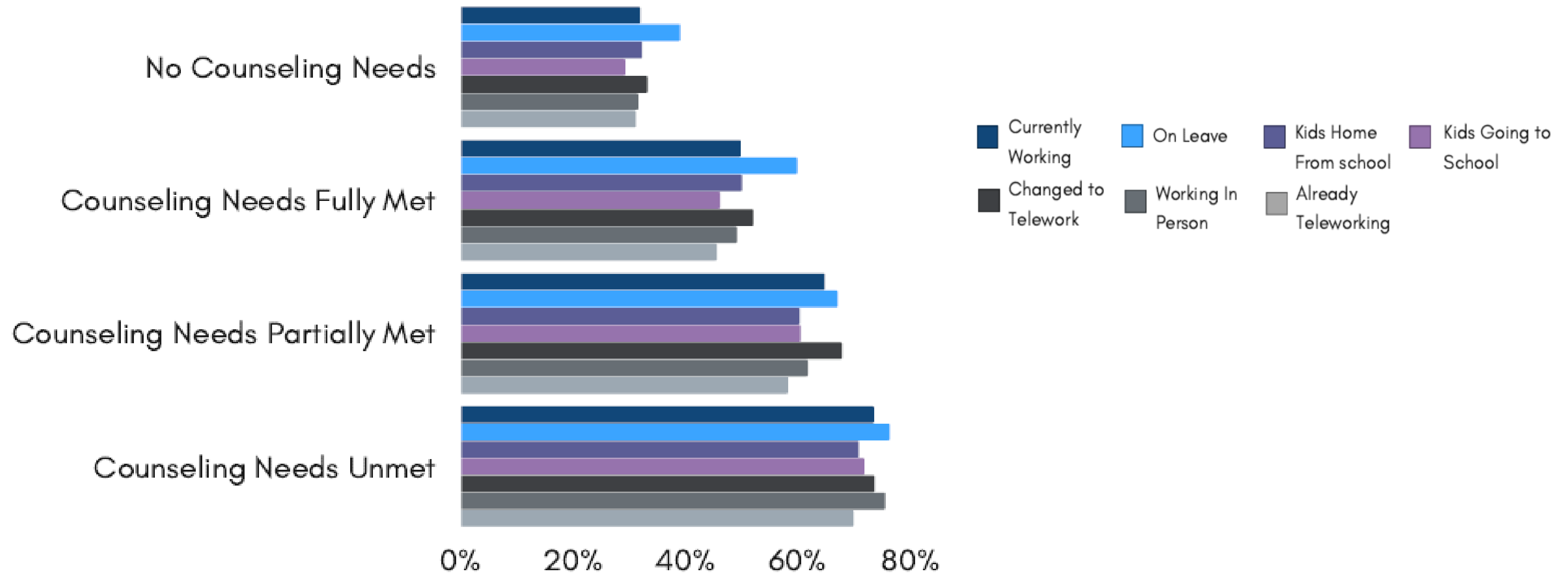
Percentage of employed adults reporting feelings of anxiety or depression during the pandemic

	Women Overall	Men Overall
	42.9%	34%
Kids Home from School	42%	34.2%
Kids Going to School	37.5%	30.7%
Change to Telework	45.4%	36.5%
Working in Person	40.6%	31.7%
Already Teleworking	39.7%	30.8%

Those who transitioned to telework AND had children at home from school had the highest likelihood of anxiety or depression; AND women were more impacted than men



Receiving counseling reduces the likelihood of experiencing anxiety or depression by 8-36% depending on how sufficiently counseling needs are met



Employees with unmet counseling needs are worse off, yet prescriptions alone are not enough to mitigate anxiety or depression when counseling is needed

	No Mental Health Rx	Mental Health Rx
No Counseling Needs	28.6%	49.3%
Counseling Needs Met	48.1%	64.2%
Counseling Needs Partially Met	65.3%	75.2%
Counseling Needs Unmet	73.2%	78.7%

Employer Guidance

Measuring and assessing mental health status and employee needs:

- Analytics (Claims and EAP utilization)
- Employee survey (pulse to HRA)
- Screening surveys (Perceived Stress Scale)

Varying mitigation strategies to improve mental health:

- Changing behavioral health plan design
- Improving communications and resources
- Increasing awareness

Most orgs made changes to their mental health strategies during the pandemic and measured impact via:

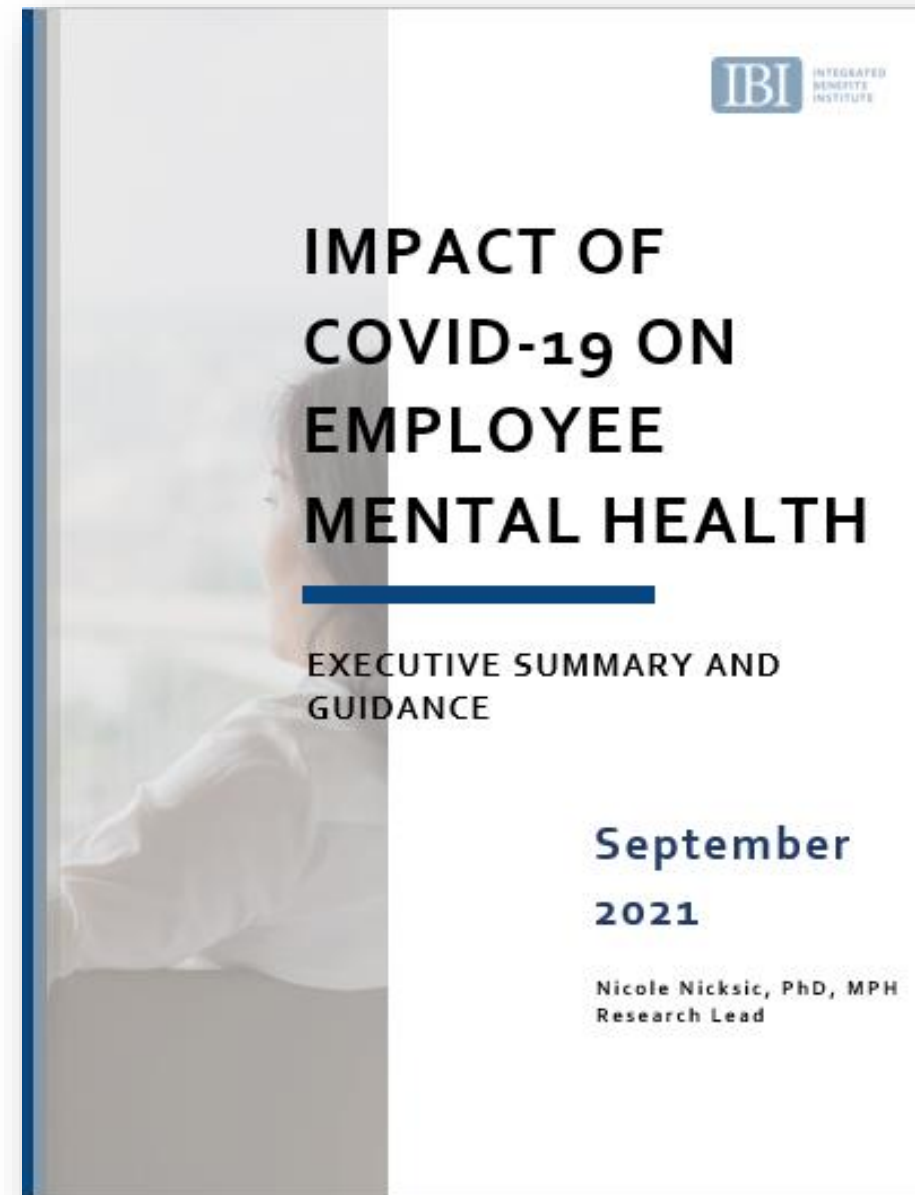
- Employee feedback mechanisms
- Available claims data
- Vendor reported outcomes data

Employer Guidance Continued

- Challenges:
 - Access
 - Employee engagement
 - Stigma reduction
 - Communication effectiveness

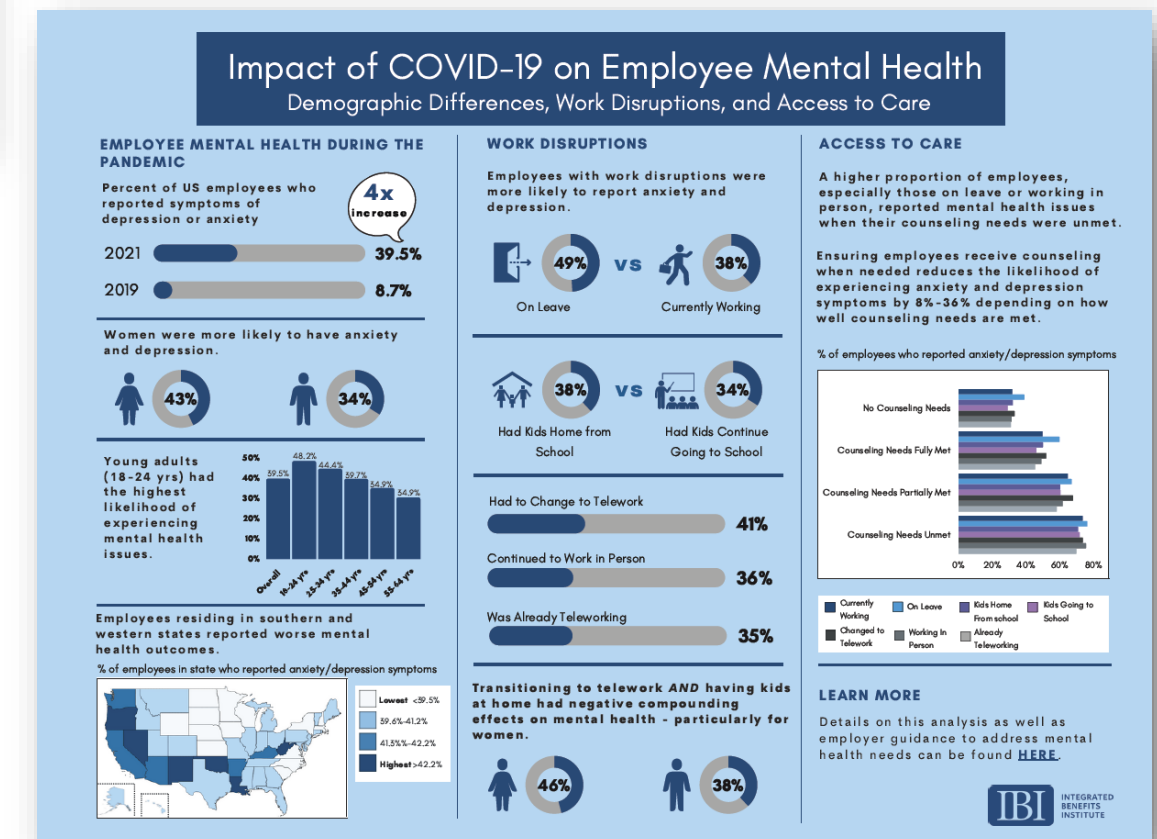
- General Considerations
 - Ensure all your mental health resources are easy to find and in one place
 - Remove all barriers to care – physically and financially
 - Now is the time to use the momentum from the pandemic to bring actual change

Learn More



Visit

<https://www.ibiweb.org/resource/impact-of-covid-19-on-employee-mental-health-report/>



Panel Discussion



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