



# Checking in on Behavioral Health

Blue Cross Master Class Webinar Series  
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This program is valid for 1 PDCs for the SHRM-CP<sup>SM</sup> or SHRM-SCP<sup>SM</sup>.



# Today's speakers

*Clinical expertise*



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**Renese Super, LMSW, LCSW, CCM**

Director of Business Development  
**New Directions**



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**Kristyn Spangler, LMSW**

Behavioral Health Program Manager  
**IHA**



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Director of Group Customer Advocates  
**Blue Cross Blue Shield of MI**

# What you'll learn from today's session

## *Topics*

- Definition of behavioral health and its impact
- How to recognize signs, symptoms and risk factors
- Tools available to assist employees who may be suffering

# What is behavioral health?

*A deeper dive*

**Inclusive of mental health disorders and substance use disorders that require behavior changes for better physical health**

**Mental Illnesses** are conditions that affect a person's thinking, feeling, mood or behavior. Examples include depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder, or schizophrenia.

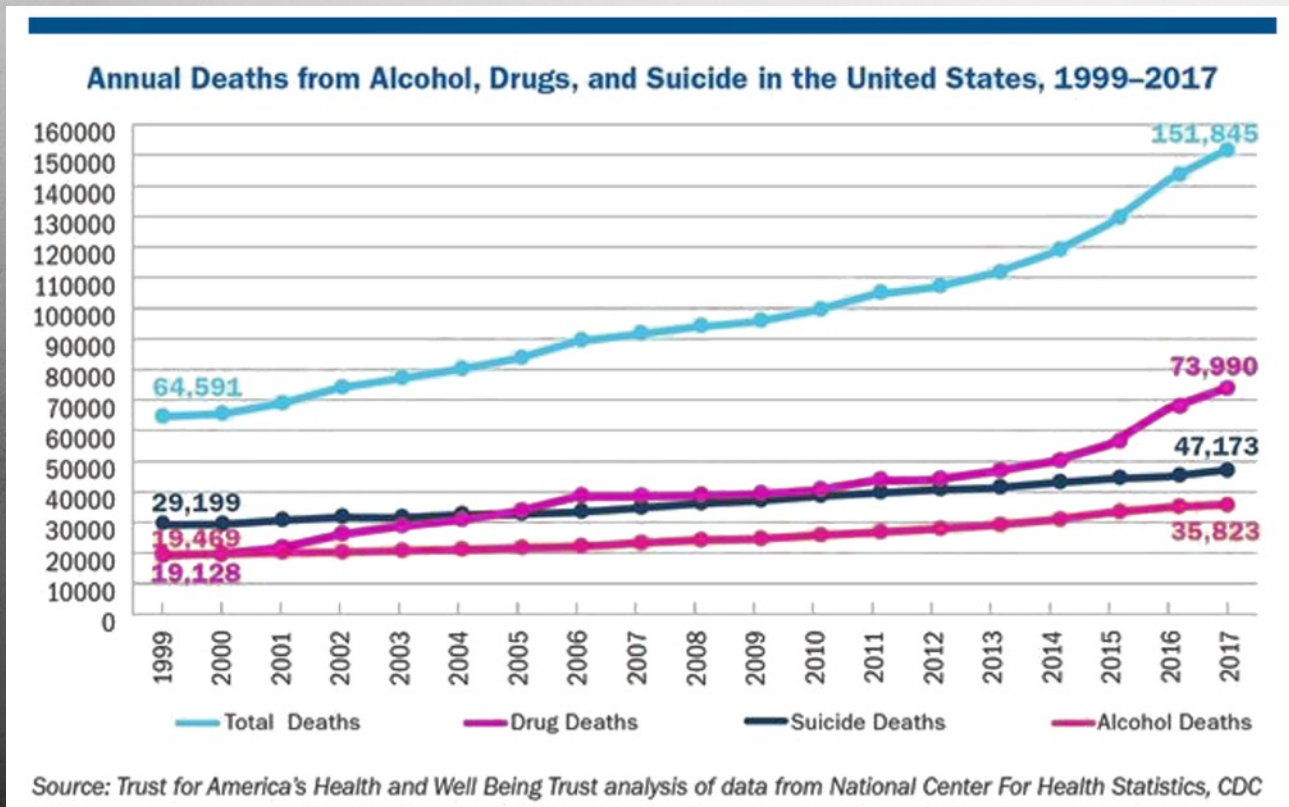
**Mental Health** is defined as your emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make healthy choices.

**Substance Use Disorders** are when a person's use of alcohol or another substance leads to health issues or problems at work, school or home.



# National scope of behavioral health

*The number of deaths from alcohol, drugs and suicide in 2017 hit the highest level since federal data collection started in 1999.*



# National scope of behavioral health

*Mental illnesses are among the most common health conditions in the United States.*

The U.S. loses

**\$193**

billion in earnings per year due to serious mental illness

**1 in 25**

Americans live with a serious mental illness

—

**1 in 5**

Americans will experience a mental illness in a given year

Employees suffering from these conditions may accumulate

**2-4x**

more medical claims

—

**6x**

more emergency room visits than employees without these conditions

# Common conditions

## *A deeper dive*

- **Anxiety** affects 40 million adults in the United States, or 18.1% of the population every year, yet only 36.9% are receiving treatment
  - The 2018 national anxiety score – based on the American Psychiatric Association’s national poll – is 51, a five-point jump since 2017.
- **Depression** affects more than 16.1 million adults in the U.S., about 6.7% of the population 18 and older, and is the leading cause of disability in the U.S. for ages 15-44
  - From 2013-2016, depression diagnoses increased by 33%
- Mental health disorders and **substance use disorders** can co-occur, making treatment for both disorders necessary. More than one in four adults with a serious mental health issues, such as anxiety, depression, schizophrenia, and personality disorders, also have a substance use disorder.

# Anxiety

*Worry or fears that do not go away and begin to interfere with daily activities such as work*

## Symptoms

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- Difficulty controlling worry
- Difficulty concentrating
- Fatigue
- Irritability
- Feeling restless or trouble sleeping

Those with an anxiety disorder are 3-5x more likely to go to the doctor and 6x more likely to be hospitalized for psychiatric disorders, than those who do not suffer from anxiety disorders.

## Risk Factors

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- Trauma
- Stress
- Personality
- Other mental health disorders
- Drugs or alcohol

Causes aren't fully understood.

These factors may increase your risk.

# Anxiety

*Worry or fears that do not go away and begin to interfere with daily activities such as work*

## **Treatment**

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- Psychotherapy
- Medications
  - Medication does not cure anxiety disorders but can help relieve symptoms

## **Things You Can Do**

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- Find a support group
- Exercise stress management techniques
- Relabel what's happening
- Stay active
- Consider an EAP referral



# Depression

*A common mood disorder, lasting two weeks or longer, affecting the way a person feels, thinks, and handles daily activities*

## Symptoms

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- Persistent sadness
- Feeling hopeless
- Fatigue
- Difficulty sleeping or oversleeping
- Aches, pains, headaches
- Appetite or weight change
- Thoughts of death or suicide

There should be at least four symptoms that reflect a change in functioning.

## Risk Factors

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- Personal or family history of depression
- Major life changes, trauma, or stress
- Certain physical illnesses and medications

Can happen at any age, but often begins in adulthood.

Depression can co-occur with other serious medical illnesses, such as diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and Parkinson's disease, and often worsens them.

# Depression

*A common mood disorder, lasting two weeks or longer, affecting the way a person feels, think, and handles daily activities*

## Treatment

- Medications
- Psychotherapy

Earlier treatment will be more effective.

## Things You Can Do

- Stay active
- Let others help you
- Spend time with friends and relatives
- Start a gratitude journal
- Consider an EAP referral



# Substance Use Disorders

*People engaging in pleasurable activities such as gambling, drinking, using drugs to the point where the substance or activity has a negative impact on personal relationships and work activities*

## Symptoms

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- Personality changes – mood swings
- Health problems
- Relationship problems
- Difficulty working
- Financial hardship

Addiction involves compulsive and harmful behaviors that can seem uncontrollable.

## Risk Factors

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- Family history of addiction
- Mental health disorders
- Peer pressure
- Early use
- Difficult family situations

Abuse of tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs is costly to our nation, exacting more than \$740 billion annually in costs related to crime, lost work productivity and health care

# Substance Use Disorders

*People engaging in pleasurable activities such as gambling, drinking, using drugs to the point where the substance or activity has a negative impact on personal relationships and work activities*

## Treatment

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- Professional help such as addiction treatment programs and behavioral counseling
- Social support
- Self-help strategies

## Things You Can Do

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- Develop new, healthy activities or hobbies
- Set goals
- Avoid triggers
- Know your “no”
- Consider an EAP referral





# Pediatric Disorders

*Adults are not the only ones affected by behavioral health*

According to the **National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH)**, emotional and behavioral disorders affect 10-15 percent of children globally.

In particular, Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) affects about 1 in 59 children.

*"Learning your child has autism can certainly change your perception of what you thought your life might be. You may have to restructure your priorities and develop new coping skills. And you may have to change some of your plans for the future. But in their place will be new dreams, new goals, and new priorities. The key is finding ways to adapt and adjust that suit your family, your needs, and your circumstances. It likely won't be easy. But people often find strength from within and from those around them to succeed. By loving your child dearly, you will be inspired to do what you can to learn as much as possible about ASD so that you too will be rewarded as you discover what works for your family."*

*-Autism Spectrum Disorders: What Every Parent Needs to Know; Alan I. Rosenblatt, MD, FAAP, and Paul S. Carbone, MD, FAAP, editors*





# Autism Spectrum Disorder

*A broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication*

## Symptoms

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- Difficulty with communication and interactions
- Restricted interests and repetitive behaviors
- Other symptoms that hurt the person's ability to function properly in school, work, and other areas of life

Wide variation in the type and severity of symptoms.

## Risk Factors

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- Having a sibling with ASD or older parents
- Having certain genetic conditions – such as Down Syndrome
- Very low birth weight

According to the CDC, Autism Spectrum Disorder affects an estimated 1 in 59 children in the U.S.

# Autism Spectrum Disorder

*A broad range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, repetitive behaviors, speech and nonverbal communication*

## Treatment

- Applied Behavior Analysis
- Behavioral, psychological, educational and other therapy like speech therapy
- Medication

## Things You Can Do

- Find an autism community support group
- Ask for help
- Reduce stress with counseling or meditation
- Increase or build up strengths of child
- Reserve time for yourself
- Consider an EAP referral



# How health benefits can assist

1

Provider Partnerships

2

Employee Assistance  
Programs

3

Managed Behavioral  
Health Care Services

# Provider Partnerships



# Why integrate behavioral health into primary care?

40-70%

Smoking, Obesity,  
Physical Inactivity

10-30%

Heart Disease

10-30%

Diabetes



10-20%

Cancer

10-20%

Neurological Disorders

25-50%

Chronic Physical Pain

**Mental Health/Substance Abuse**



# Collaboration is not a natural state

*Standard care is often siloed*

60%

of people with mental health concerns will not receive treatment

20%

will see a Primary Care Provider

20%

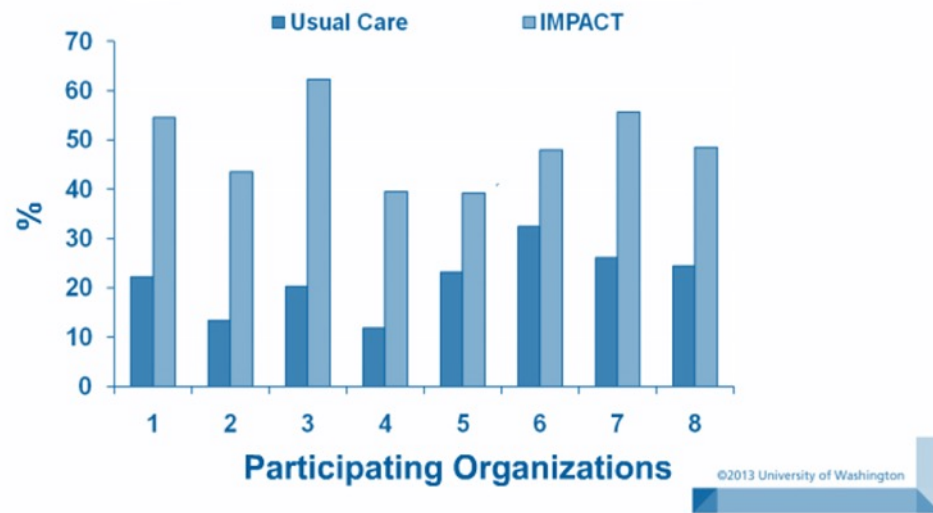
will see a Mental Health Provider



# IMPACT Study

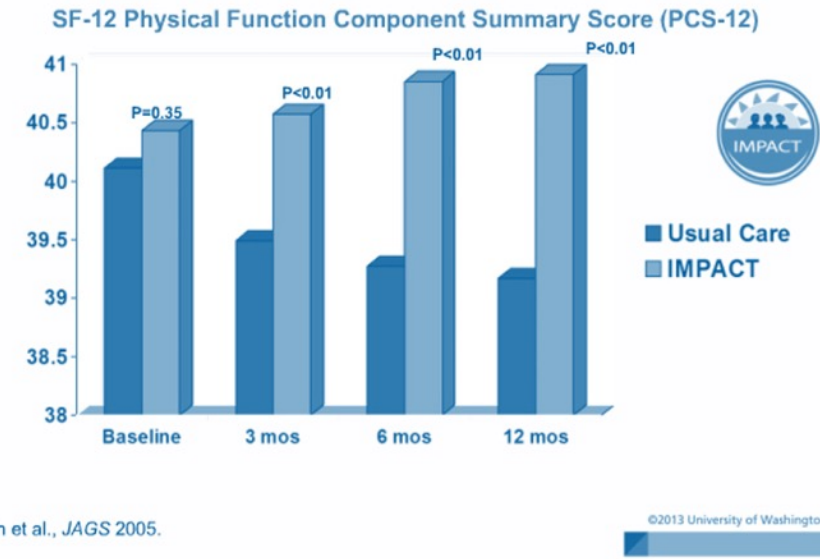
## Results

### IMPACT doubles effectiveness of treatment



Twice as likely to show 50% or greater improvement of depression at 12 months.

### Improves physical function...



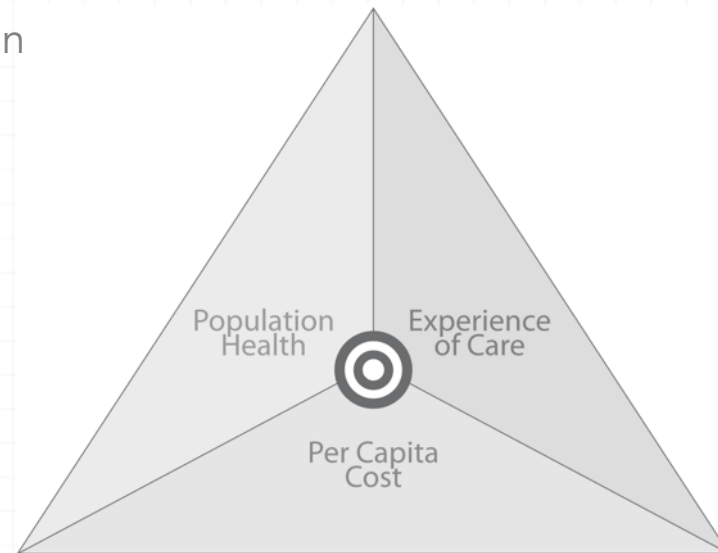
Callahan et al., JAGS 2005.

# Integrated care is collaboration

## *Collaborative Care Model*

### Integrating behavioral health into primary care will result in:

- Improved access
- Focus on the whole patient; Patient Centered Care
- Improved continuity of care across settings
- Stronger clinical outcomes
- Reduced costs
- Increased satisfaction
- Achieve triple aim



# Principles of effective collaborative care

1

## Collaborative Care

- A multidisciplinary team of professionals providing care in coordination and empowered to work at the top of their professional training.
- Co-location is not Collaboration

3

## Population Focused

- The Collaborative Care team is responsible for the provision of care and health outcomes of a defined population of patients.

2

## Evidence Based

- The team adapts scientifically proven treatments within an individual clinical context to achieve improved health outcomes.

4

## Measurement Guided

- The team uses systematic, disease-specific, patient-reported outcome measures (i.e. assessments and screening tools) to drive decision making.
- Treatments are actively changed until the clinical goals are achieved
- Assessments measure member's outcomes over time

# Collaborative Team Approach

## Case Manager

Works closely with the treating provider to ensure that the member is receiving appropriate care

- Facilitates member engagement, education, initial and follow up assessments
- Works with the member on goals to improve health and decrease risks
- Closing gaps in care

## Social Worker

Provides brief, evidence based interventions or refers to providers for counseling services

- Facilitates referrals to other services as needed
- Prepares client for relapse prevention

## Pharmacist

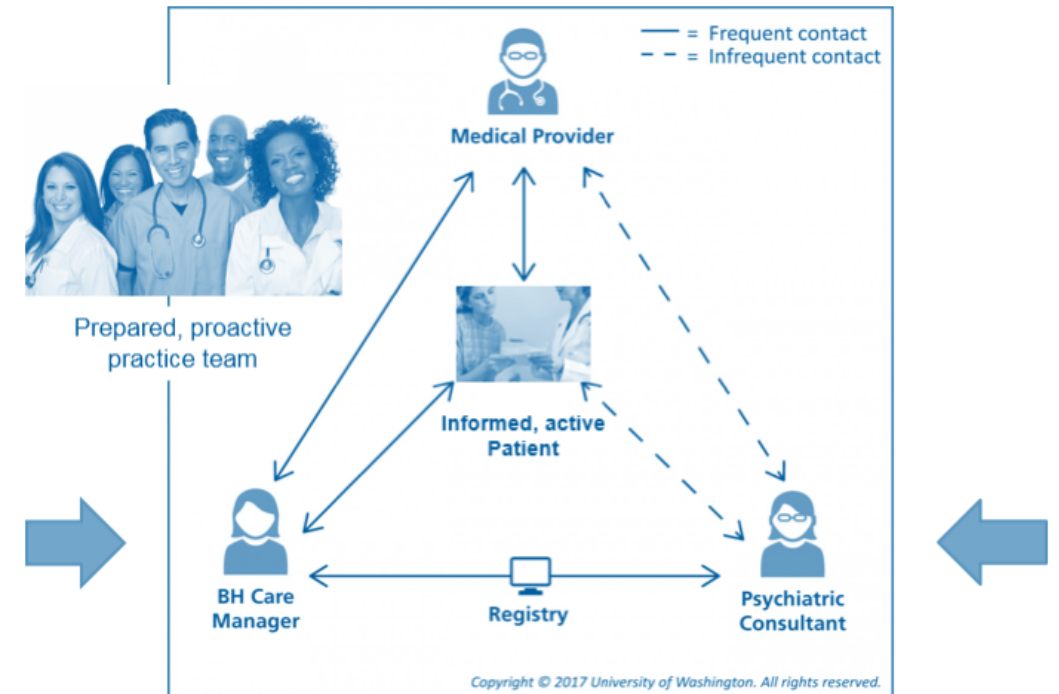
Provides consultation as needed for members that have multiple medications prescribed

- Provides education and resources to the multidisciplinary team

## Psychiatric Consultant

Provides consultation as needed with a focus on patients who are not improving clinically

- In person and/or telephonic consultation





# Employee Assistance Programs



# Importance of providing an EAP

*Voluntary, work-based program that offers free and confidential assessments, short-term counseling, referrals and follow-up*

- Typically provided at no cost to the employee
- Independent of your organization
- Interaction is confidential, employer has no access unless granted by employee
- Can provide early intervention – before problem becomes overwhelming
- Services may be delivered in person, by telephone, or through information technology media and include:
  - Counseling services
  - Referrals and access to community resources

80%

of members report reduced productivity at work due to daily stress

84%

of members who use the EAP find their stress levels improve

79%

of members who use the EAP see an improvement in their ability to perform work duties

# Tips for employers

## *Ensuring program success*

- ✓ Clearly define the scope of EAP services your organization will cover
  - Communicate these to managers, employees and family members often
- ✓ Be proactive in managing programs to ensure high quality and relevancy
- ✓ Utilize organizational services to support human resources and disability management functions
- ✓ Promote alternative counseling methods, such as telephonic, to assist employees and family members with time or transportation constraints
- ✓ Discuss ways to analyze performance, including validated outcome measurement tools
- ✓ Consider conducting periodic intake or case assessments to evaluate the quality of the member experience

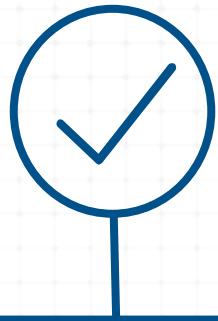


# Managed Behavioral Health Care Services

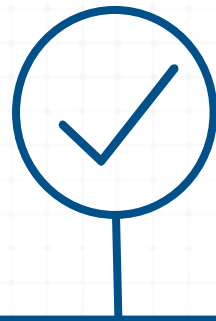


# New Directions

*Providing managed behavioral health services*



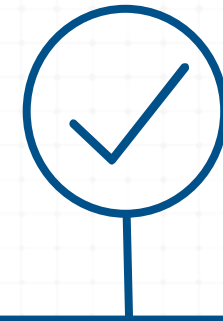
Helps people live healthy, balanced lives serving over 16 million members



Available to private and public health plans, large and medium employers and labor groups



National presence with over 700 employees across the country



Services include

- Managed Behavioral Health
- Employee Assistance Program (EAP)
  - Organizational Training
  - Student Services



# Know the signs of mental illness

*Early intervention can be the key to getting proper help and support*

## **In adults, young adults and adolescents signs include:**

- Confused thinking
- Prolonged depression, sadness or irritability
- Feelings of extreme highs and lows
- Excessive fears, worries and anxieties
- Social withdrawal
- Dramatic changes in eating or sleeping habits
- Strong feelings of anger
- Strange thoughts or delusions
- Hallucinations, seeing or hearing things that aren't there
- Growing inability to cope with daily problems
- Suicidal thoughts
- Numerous unexplained physical ailments
- Drug or alcohol use
- When pain doesn't have a direct diagnosis

# What to say

## *How to interact with someone struggling with their mental health*

### DO



- I care about you and want to help.
- You are important to me. Your life is important to me.
- Tell me what I can do now to help you.
- You are not alone in this. I'm here for you.
- Talk to me. I'm listening.
- We will get through this together.

### DON'T



- We all go through times like this.
- You have so much to live for.
- Why do you want to die?
- What do you want me to do?
- I can't solve your situation.
- You'll be fine. Stop worrying.
- Here's my advice...
- What's wrong with you?
- Shouldn't you be better by now?

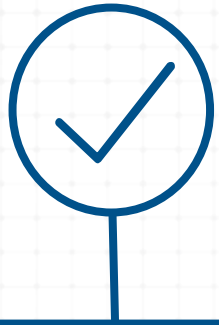
If you suspect someone is actively suicidal, always seek emergency medical help. Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-8255.

# May is Mental Health Month

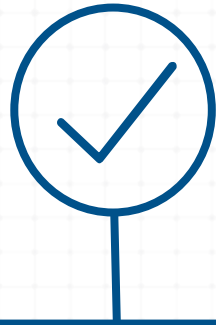
Encourage your workplace to #checkin. You might be surprised what they have to say. Use this toolkit to share the message.



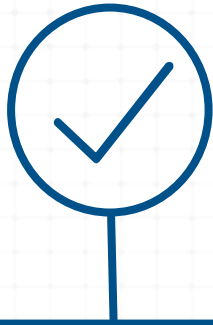
# What employers can do



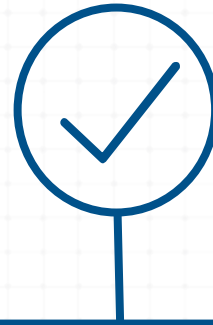
Remove the stigma attached to behavioral health issues



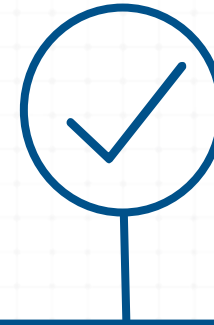
Choose and promote an employee assistance program (EAP) for early intervention



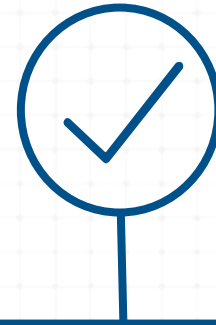
Educate employees with tools and resources available



Provide diversity training



Promote wellness and overall workplace well-being

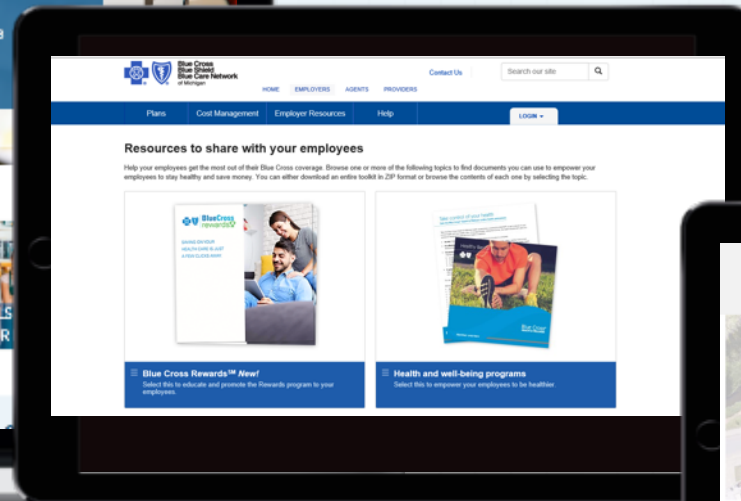


Contact your Blue Cross representative for more information

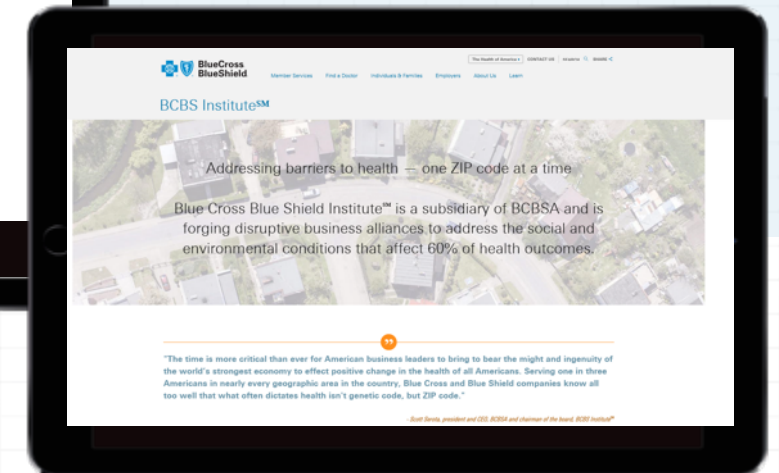
# For more information



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3



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# Thank you.

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