

Insight

An e-newsletter for leaders from your Advocate Aurora Employee Assistance Program

Mental health issues are affecting your employees – and you can help



May is National Mental Health Awareness month. According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Mental health disorders affect approximately one in every five people. Workplace leaders play an important role in promoting a mental-health friendly workplace. Unfortunately, people who don't personally struggle with any of these issues may not spot the signs of them in others. As a result, some employees who are struggling don't receive the help they need because of a lack of mental health awareness.

How do mental health issues impact the workplace?

Poor mental health and stress can negatively affect:

- job performance and productivity
- a person's physical capability and daily functioning
- engagement with one's coworkers or work responsibilities

How can company leaders help?

You can demonstrate that you support mental health by your actions and openness in talking about this subject. Open and honest dialogue can show employees they are not alone, and that you care. This may help employees to feel comfortable talking about the mental health challenges they are facing, and hopefully reach out for help.

Workplace leaders shouldn't be expected to personally handle complex mental health challenges employees may be facing. However, you can support your employees if they come to you to discuss any mental health struggles such as anxiety, depression, burnout, or other day-to-day challenges. You should freely acknowledge that you are not a counselor. You can respond to mental health concerns by truly listening and then offering the employee information about Advocate Aurora EAP.



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For assistance, please contact Advocate Aurora Employee Assistance Program:
800-236-3231



Tips for observing and connecting with employees

With so many people now working from home, it can be even harder to notice the signs that someone is struggling. Intentionally checking in with each of your direct reports on a regular basis is more critical than ever. Ask questions. Take the time to hear how your team members are truly doing and be supportive and compassionate.

Potential signs and symptoms managers might observe in their employees, include:

- missing important work deadlines and meetings
- feeling sad or down
- confused thinking or reduced ability to concentrate
- extreme mood changes of highs and lows
- avoiding interactions with coworkers
- low energy or other changes in behavior
- evidence of alcohol or drug abuse

How Advocate Aurora EAP can help

Remind employees that their employer has paid for EAP benefits. All EAP services are free and confidential for employees. Advocate Aurora EAPs services are available to employees and family members residing in their household.

If employees contact the EAP, trained intake counselors will listen to the person's concerns, gather information and ask questions about their current situation. Based on their needs, employees will be:

- connected directly with an EAP counselor
- scheduled for a later consultation at a convenient time, or
- linked to the EAP's specialized work-life services

Advocate Aurora EAP is committed to helping find solutions to quickly and conveniently help deal with the challenges of today's complex world. If assistance beyond the scope of the EAP is needed, employees will be referred to appropriate outside resources.

**It's okay
to
ASK
for
HELP**

As a workplace leader, you can help your employees understand it's OK to ask for help. There should be no stigma or repercussions involved in seeking professional help. You are encouraged to build a culture of open and non-judgmental two-way communication.

By promoting Advocate Aurora EAP services, you'll play a crucial role in guiding your direct reports to a healthier and happier work and personal life.



For more information, please call Advocate Aurora EAP at **800-236-3231**