

## Leading Practices for Workplace Mental Health



Ernst & Young LLP (EY US) has a multilayered, proactive approach to workplace mental health, which has grown during the past year and a half as we have adapted our professional and personal lives to meet the challenges of the pandemic.

**Better You** is the organization's holistic approach to well-being and includes:

- **Robust mental health resources** to meet the varied needs of our people
- **We Care:** anti-stigma initiative to learn the signs that someone is struggling and how to help
- **Resilience initiatives:** mindfulness community and programs, along with multifaceted activities to promote emotional and physical well-being

### ROBUST MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

EY US has a hybrid internal and external employee assistance program (EAP), known as "**EY Assist**." The internal clinician team provides crisis intervention and support to individuals with significant life events as well as consultative support to HR and leadership on mental health initiatives.

A robust suite of vendor-provided services is also available. In 2021, EY US expanded the EY Assist counseling benefit from five to 25 no-cost sessions for all EY employees and family members in their households. Included with this benefit is a network of mental health coaches and therapists who all practice evidence-based care. Mental health coaches address milder issues, such as burnout and stress management, while therapists address more significant matters, like depression and anxiety.

#### EY MINDFULNESS PROGRAM IN 2020

- Introduction to mindfulness classes: about 80 sessions reaching over 14,200 people
- Daily mindfulness drop-in sessions: Over 200 sessions reaching over 55,000 people
- Mindful Leadership at EY, eight-week masterclass: nearly 15 cohorts reaching almost 2,000 people

The firm also provides access to digital tools to promote sleep health and resilience.

**The impact of EY Assist mental health programs has been dramatic:**

- Improved access to care — six days is the median time from initial request to first appointment with a mental health professional.
- 85% of EY people report reduced symptoms after working with EY Assist.
- The internal EY Assist team provided more than 200 virtual trainings on a variety of well-being and emotional health topics that were attended by more than 40,000 people in 2020.

Additionally, EY digital mental health tools have reduced symptoms of anxiety, depression and burnout by at least 27%. EY professionals also report at least four additional hours of sleep per week.

### MULTIYEAR MENTAL HEALTH ANTI-STIGMA INITIATIVE

**We Care** began in 2016 to address the stigma of mental illness and addictions. The initiative encourages peers, colleagues and leaders to recognize the signs that someone is struggling. We ask if they are OK and, if needed, connect them with EY Assist. The initiative has expanded to include addictions, caregiving, financial difficulties, isolation, relationship issues and current events.

**The scope and impact of We Care:**

- Nearly 50 *We Care* events in 2020 were attended by more than 12,000 EY people.
- Because of the increased awareness from *We Care*, *EY Assist* utilization has increased more than 200% in five years. This is a strong indication of the progress that EY US is making to erode the stigma around accessing mental health care.

**Resilience initiatives** include the EY Mindfulness Network and Mindful Leadership program. EY US hosted a Recharge Challenge focused on whole-person well-being, including sleep, unplugging from technology, prioritizing the day and expressing gratitude.