Key Insights

As the global health and benefits landscape continues to evolve in our unprecedented environment over the past 18+ months, health and benefit professionals from around the globe looked to connect and focus on the future workforce at Business Group on Health's Global Summit. The Global Institute's hallmark Summit returned in a virtual format in September 2021, providing a unique forum for employers to collaborate with like-minded colleagues and strategize innovative tactics to enhance their global strategy by exploring the latest health, well-being and benefit trends.

The two-day agenda featured plenary sessions exploring the pandemic's biggest lessons learned and the path forward for multinationals, as well as intimate employer sharing sessions, where employers had an opportunity to share tactics and best practices across a variety of topics.

Key Session Topics

Virtual Health

Mergers & Acquisitions

Governance

Mental Health

Global Consistency

Focus on the Future

Day one of the 2021 Global Summit began with an opening plenary session and then transitioned into six employer-sharing and benchmarking sessions led by industry leaders.

While the pandemic is wrought in significant global uncertainty and forced employers to collectively respond to challenges related to health, well-being and benefits, it has also presented opportunities for employers to help accelerate change in this new environment.

The 2021 Global Summit opening employer panel focused on the biggest "pandemic lessons learned" and how Amazon and Stanley Black & Decker, Inc. are applying these lessons to recruit and retain happy, healthy and productive employees worldwide but also where the greatest opportunities await.

Fiona Mohring
Vice President, Health & Group Benefits,
Stanley Black & Decker, Inc.

Ophelia Galindo
Director,
Time Away Strategy,
Amazon Global Benefits

Plenary Key Takeaways

The intersection between public health and employer benefits has become more pronounced and the new norm, with the benefit playbook "writing itself." The benefits ecosystem has fundamentally changed such that well-being benefit professionals will not go back to working strictly in their silo; instead, they will need to actively partner with other groups within their organization such as talent.

The "Great Resignation" has caused soul searching for both employers and employees, creating unique talent pipeline pressures and resulting in a benefits arms race. Employers are now looking at people over profits but it's important to ask:

- How long will this last?
- Are you staffed appropriately to meet the challenge?
- Is your approach sustainable?

The pandemic shined a light on the importance of having a global framework, with customization and personalization where it makes the most sense.

Employees in different locations around the globe have different needs. It's important for employers to be responsive, nimble and thoughtful of not just what they're doing, but how they're doing it.

Be mindful of the collective trauma we've experienced.

The pandemic illustrated how we are connected to each other. As multinationals, employees who work in one country may have family in another, and the toll of the pandemic on everyone, including young adults who are the future workforce, is real.

Getting the C-Suite and Workforce Engaged in Mental Health from the Top-down and Bottom-up

The pandemic's impact on employee mental health has been nothing short of debilitating. Employers are using this "wake-up call" to find new ways to generate awareness, reduce stigma and increase access to appropriate and timely care.

BP plc.'s global pledge invests in moving the proverbial behavioral health needle and addresses gaps in care from the top-down across their workforce in over 70 countries.

Richard Heron, MD
V.P Health & Chief Medical Officer, BP plc.

Delya Sommerville
Director, Public Health, Health Systems & Health informatics, BP plc.

Have a Culturally Representative Team and Content

50% of their health teams are comprised of employees for whom English is not their first language and live where they grew up. For example, in China, one of the health team leads speaks Cantonese and Mandarin which helps build trust between them and their employees.

Tips for Employers

Create an open culture about mental health.
For example, BP plc. created a "This is Me" series to encourage and enable employees to share their lived experiences and challenges.

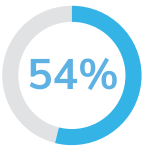
Provide manager training and employer tools and supports.
Encourage employees to prioritize their mental health through a global EAP.

Be transparent about progress and measure outcomes.
Monitor the anxiety, engagement and fatigue of employees by using tools such as a monthly employee survey.

Transforming Governance to Meet the New Workforce Dynamics

As companies evolve to meet their business and workforce needs, their global benefits governance strategy must evolve as well.

With limited resources, multinationals need to use the most effective tools to ensure that they have a strong understanding of their global benefits needs.



of attendees polled stated they have a ***partially centralized global benefits governance*** approach. Many employers expressed that having a partially centralized approach was more efficient than a centralized one, especially during COVID-19—but they still recognize they must consider the various pros/cons on both sides.

Strategy to Execution: Considerations

- **Convene quarterly Global Benefits Governance Meetings** and include regional representatives, not just HQ representatives.
- **Ensure local alignment to measure the impact of programs:** Understanding local needs and requirements is critical because having a US-centric mindset can lead to poor understanding of the local landscape.
- **Leverage resources:** Consultants, global brokers and captive managers can all play a role in helping develop and deploy the governance structure

Path to Global: Employers Experience with Virtual Solutions

There has been a virtual health explosion during COVID-19.

As employers embark on their journey, there are many considerations when scaling solutions globally. A good starting point is taking stock of lessons learned during the pandemic.

Yvonne Frame
Director, Benefits and Wellness Design,
Cerner Corporation

Lessons Learned

- There is tremendous **value** in virtual care.
- Virtual care can support your company's **Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) strategy** by promoting access and reducing care obstacles.
- **Communicate** as often as possible.
- Always **look to local partners** to see what they have available first, including a primary care physician (PCP) option.
- Pay attention to what is happening at the **local level** to clarify needs and create culturally appropriate programs.

Mergers & Acquisitions (M&A): Addressing Harmonization

Benefits harmonization can be used to increase market competitiveness in the merger and acquisition process.

Crafting a highly specialized, personalized approach and strategy is essential for companies working on global benefit harmonization –especially during M&A processes. **Do not come into M&A making assumptions about basic kitchen table values," as they vary by company and location.**

> "There is no black and white or right or wrong approach, just do what works best for your company."
>
> \- **Tracey Stephens** *VP Global Benefits* | **Dell Technology**

There are 1,000 different ways to achieve the same goal, but what works best for your employees needs to take into consideration values, needs, perspectives, statutory requirements and geographic footprints.

Employer Guidance:

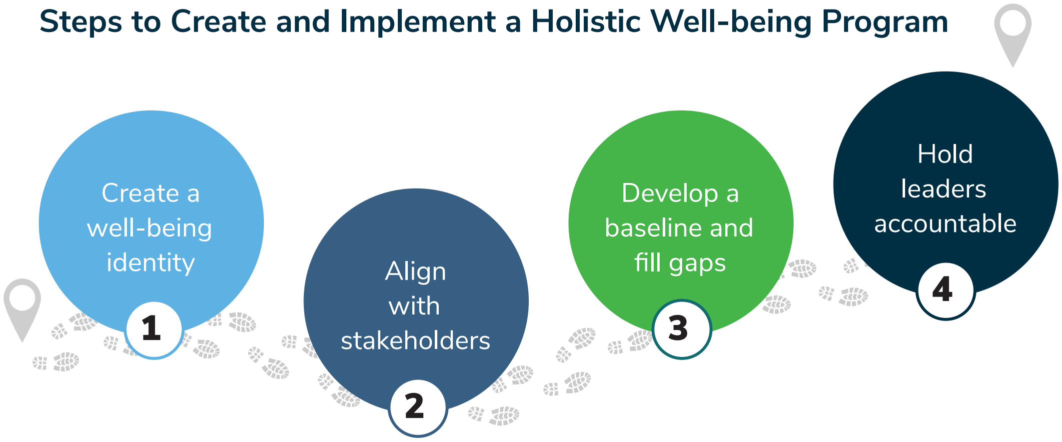
- ✓ Communicate any benefit changes thoroughly to all employees.
- ✓ Educate all employees on what implications any changes can have for them.

Creating Effective Well-being Engagement for an Evolving Workforce

With the changing workforce, there is a shift from decentralized well-being programs to a more holistic global focus.

Jessica Muhlenberg
Vice President, Global Benefits, Well-being & Mobility
VF Corporation

Steps to Create and Implement a Holistic Well-being Program



Well-Being Trends to Watch

In addition to programs that attract and retain talent, have programs that allow employees to thrive. This gives your company a competitve advantage in productivity, job satisfaction and more.

Support employees because it is the right thing to do and aligns with company culture.

The way a company brands its well-being pillars can impact how employees enagage with the programs.

Minimum Core Strategy: Moving Past Market Median

A minimum core strategy creates a fundamental set of offerings and services that provides a globally consistent benefits experience for a worldwide workforce.

Cyndi Tefft
Global Benefits Governance Manager,
Microsoft Corporation

Considerations

- ✓ **How will it be funded?**
- ✓ **What benefits will be included?**
- ✓ **How will it be administered?**
- ✓ **How will you ensure the ability of insurers to include desired benefits?** Look for insurers who can administer the plan with a thorough understanding of what is legally allowed in each country and health care system.

Microsoft decided to fund the plan centrally using an international benefits captive.

Day two of the 2021 Global Summit featured plenary session discussions on topics such as mental health, global well-being and captives. A hallmark keynote speaker, Alejandro Cané, MD PhD from Pfizer Biopharma Group spoke to the importance and impact of vaccines.

Beyond Coping to Thriving: Lessons Learned to Shape Future Mental Well-being Strategies and Organizational Priorities

The pandemic illustrated the need for robust behavioral health strategies and programs that are delivered equitability to all regions in the workforce.

Since human resource and benefits professionals are the backbone of their companies, they have a strong platform to advocate on behalf of employees' needs.

Eileen K. Meehan
Vice President, Global EAP, Well-being, and Worklife Services
Optum

Did you know?

Two-thirds of people with a known mental health disorder **never seek help from a health professional**.

70% of people worldwide who need mental health services **lack access to care**.

Anxiety and depression cost the global economy **US$ 1 trillion** each year in lost productivity.

Two out of five employees report **daily worry**.

There was a drastic increase in Employee Assistance Program (EAP) usage, corresponding to increased reported stress and anxiety during the pandemic. This resulted in the average length of calls increasing by over 200 seconds, causing companies to adjust their well-being strategy:

- **97%** implemented a work-from-home policy;
- All regions **added virtual EAP counseling** at a similar level;
- APAC and LATAM emphasized **virtual stress reduction**; and
- **EMEA invested in an on-site EAP** in preparation for return-to-work.

Biggest Lessons Learned

1. Ongoing stressors related to pandemic uncertainty are having a significant impact on emotional well-being.
2. HR and benefit functions led organizations and business units in new ways.
3. Employers and employees are looking for new ways to develop healthy routines, maintain social connections and create a sense of community.
4. Virtual programs and engagement are important solutions that should continue as additional ways to engage employees.
5. Robust mental well-being offerings allowed some organizations to respond faster to employee requests for help.
6. Access to benefits like EAP may be lacking for part-time workers, some of whom continue to serve in frontline roles.
7. There is a need for both short- and long-term solutions, not simply 2-month interventions.

Managing Well-being Through Waves: What Have We Learned and What's Next?

The pandemic has made organizations realize just how important people are, illustrating people and profits are equally important.

Aon presented their Global Well-Being Survey illustrating date points from two pandemic "waves" (wave 1, March 2020; wave 2, September 2020), which showed the value of holistic well-being programs that include financial and social well-being pillars.

Furthermore, global employees in different roles, such as work-from-home or salaried versus in-person/essential, have very different needs, challenges and requirements for support to be their best selves at work. As a result, most notably, the scope of financial well-being programs and services expanded to include protection against adverse and unforeseen events.

Stephanie Pronk
Senior Vice President
Health Transformation
Team Leader,
Aon

Emerson Soma
Senior Vice President
Aon

Did you know?

87% of companies have well-being programs, but only **55%** have a strategy.

Four Key Themes

1. Well-being performance impacts company performance.
2. Company performance is at-risk due to stress, burnout and anxiety.
3. Well-being is more than programs; it is a people and performance strategy.
4. The future of work is promoting flexible working styles and building resilience for both individuals and organizations.

The Top 5 Well-being Issues and Changes Between Pandemic Waves

1. Work/Life Balance (3%↑)
2. Mental Health (nc)
3. Burnout (3%↑)
4. Physical Health (nc)
5. Financial Stress (3%↑)

Utilizing Captives to Address Global Inequities

Beyond Captive 101

What is it you are trying to achieve with your benefits strategy and how can a captive play a role? A captive can enable more flexibility in your plan design, but at the same time, it can add complexity and cost. Make sure you understand the pros and cons and how a captive fits into your overall needs.

Alan Buckley
Global Consulting Leader
Leader, MMB International
Mercer

Barry Perkins
Partner, Financing &
Carrier Relations
Mercer

Did you know?

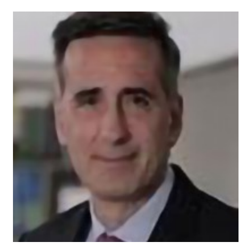
- Captives are not new to the insurance market, but there has been a large uptick in interest and implementation in the last few years.
- Captives can help fund programs (i.e., fertility that would add higher costs in a regular insurance company) and remove local exclusions.
- COVID -19 has provided employers an opportunity to look at what is covered versus what is not and ask questions about what might be possible with a captive.
- Effective captive implementation requires collaboration among internal teams.

Giving it a Shot: Employer Vaccination Efforts as a Way to Promote Equity

Vaccines improve public health outcomes, and throughout history, have resulted in the control, elimination or near-elimination of numerous infectious diseases that were once pervasive and often fatal, particularly for children.

While employers and health systems can support improvement on COVID-19 vaccination efforts that would advance public health goals, the pandemic has taught us we all must be better prepared for the future.

The journey developing the Pfizer/BioNTech mRNA vaccine was nothing short of remarkable, and pharmacies have been a critical player in the process, as they have been instrumental in reaching the largest number of people. Pfizer has shipped more than 1 billion doses around the world.



Alejandro Cané, MD PhD
North America Vaccines
Medical and Scientific
Affairs Lead, Pfizer Vaccine,
Pfizer Biopharma Group

Remember the 3 C's

1. **Convenience:**
   Make it easy to get vaccinated
2. **Conviction:**
   Demonstrate the importance of vaccination
3. **Cost:**
   Keep it free when possible

What Is in Store for the Future?

- Cases and deaths are expected to be higher among the unvaccinated.
- For those who are vaccinated, the level of protection is similar to that of flu shots.
- We will learn to live with COVID-19, just as we have learned to live with flu as a seasonal disease. The COVID-19 vaccine can protect people from severe disease
- Clinical overview results for children will be completed in October/November, largely determining the future of the BNT162b2 Clinical Development Program (Pediatric: 6 months to 11-year-olds).

Ways Employers Can Support Vaccination

Attitudes about vaccines are complex and dynamic, and vaccine confidence is key for all new vaccines, but especially for COVID-19 vaccines.

The private sector can speed up the rate of vaccination by:

- Improving access;
- Informing and educating;
- Providing incentives; and
- Requiring the vaccine and verifying uptake.