

Wellness Reimagined:

Making Employee Well-being a Powerful Competitive Advantage



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Who is MMA?

MMA provides comprehensive business insurance, employee health and benefits, and retirement services and solutions for companies of all sizes.

Business owners require a strategic partner that can help them address complex issues, compete for talent, and position their organization for opportunity and growth. MMA successfully bridges the gap between what the “big firms” offer and the hands-on service, solutions, and strategies that smaller businesses require.

With over 130 locations across North America, MMA has the reach, expertise, and experience to help organizations strategize for future growth.

Well-being Is Smart Business



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Even before the unique challenges being faced by employers in 2020 came into sharp focus, we at Marsh & McLennan Agency (MMA) were providing our clients with enhanced well-being strategies to support their employees—in major aspects of their lives. A smart and well-executed initiative that supports employees’ total well-being can pay dividends in the form of higher productivity and engagement, lower absenteeism, fewer injuries, and lower claims costs. It can also boost retention rates and help you become an employer of choice.

When employees arrive to work (whether to a factory floor, a retail environment, or on a laptop as they telecommute from home), they bring the myriad complexities of their lives with them. Providing support across key realms of their life—mental, physical, financial and social—has clearly been shown to improve employee engagement and productivity. These important initiatives look at employees holistically, recognizing that each part of their lives is intertwined and inextricably linked.

Today’s employee well-being programs are smarter, having evolved far beyond step contests or weight loss goals of the past. Early wellness programs, though well-intentioned, often failed to meet objectives because they focused on only one aspect of the employee’s life—physical health. Now decades after their first introduction, we know that when done well, programs geared toward “whole person health” can dramatically improve employee engagement, which has direct impact on a company’s bottom line.

We see this as an important and growing trend for employers. Over the past few years, we have seen a heightened level of interest among our clients for additional resources related to well-being. The increased demand for employee support programs in the last several months could reasonably be attributed to the unique challenges associated with COVID-19. While no doubt significant, we see this as being only part of the macrotrend of employers focusing on “whole person health” for the good of their workforce and the company overall.

For several years, we have been investing in and building our deep expertise and robust programming across four dimensions of well-being, including mental, physical, social, and financial health. It’s something that clearly resonates with mid-sized companies. In fact, over 40 percent of our current clients have indicated that “enhanced well-being” is top-of-mind as they look ahead to 2021.

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When employees feel supported, in all aspects of their lives, it resonates throughout an organization. Typically, resources and expertise to help companies address well-being are only available to much larger organizations. We believe all companies, regardless of size, should have the resources to prioritize employee well-being. By investing in their team, they are investing in the organization’s ability to thrive.

- David Eslick, MMA Chairman and CEO

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Why “Whole Person Health” Is Mission-Critical for Business

We believe if you support the whole person with a comprehensive, smart and data-driven strategy, it gets results.

Because companies typically pay a significant portion of employees’ health insurance costs, it is not difficult to see the value of investing in well-being. As employees feel supported in the various aspects of their life—both personal and professional—we see decreases in costs associated with absenteeism, attrition, illness, workplace injury, and overall claims. Employers are increasingly embracing a more holistic view, knowing that well-being is highly correlated with increased engagement and productivity.

We believe well-being initiatives can be a strategic advantage.

Whether an organization is self-funded or fully insured, implementing a multifaceted well-being strategy can be challenging due to the lack of resources. We partner with our clients to extend their capabilities. By taking advantage of our well-being support, clients often see higher productivity, higher retention and an improved ability to attract top talent—powerful and strategic ways to beat the competition.

Investing in well-being programs can be both altruistic and good for business.

Employers are uniquely situated to address well-being given that they have their employees’ time and attention, as well as the necessary communication channels and a means of delivering resources. While we believe that better well-being positively impacts a company’s bottom line through greater productivity and engagement, it could easily be argued that it also contributes to the greater societal good. If employers can positively impact their employees’ health, they can potentially reduce the cost to the overall healthcare system by preventing or delaying disease onset and mitigating the risk of complex chronic health conditions.

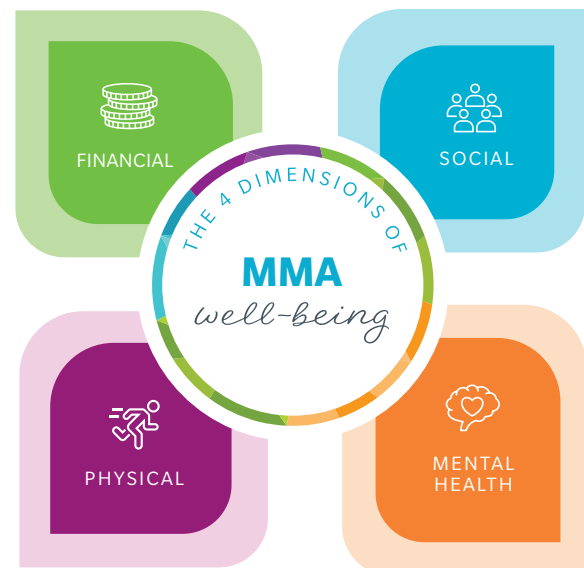


How Well-being Impacts Your Bottom Line

For years, Gallup has shown how two key factors — engagement and well-being— influence employee performance. Studies by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention show that employee well-being has direct impact on engagement in the workplace. We also know there is strong linkage between engagement and productivity; a Gallup poll found that actively disengaged employees cost U.S. companies between \$450B-\$550B in lost productivity each year. ¹ pathways to mortality and health. ³

How We Support Our Clients with Enhanced Well-being

Though there is no single determinant of well-being, we do know it’s highly dependent on good health, positive social relationships, and access to basic resources (commonly known as social determinants of health) such as income, access to healthcare, food, and shelter. Based on this, our approach to enhanced well-being is comprised of four dimensions:



A coordinated approach

By looking at well-being holistically and making it available broadly, there is real potential to impact not only individual lives, but the health of the company overall. We work as a coordinated team to deliver a cohesive solution, based on the unique needs of each client. We start by doing an inventory of everything the organization is already doing across the spectrum of well-being, identify the gaps, and build from there. We speak the language of business, and we're focused on helping our clients implement a smart strategy tailored to their goals. In collaboration with the client, we customize their plan and determine how we'll monitor and measure impact, then translate that plan into actionable tactics for implementation. We're behind the scenes helping everyone from the HR team to the CEO. Our goal is to empower our clients to solve problems, whether it's about attracting talent and reducing turnover, or improving engagement and employee satisfaction.

We have deep expertise in all four of the dimensions we believe are critical to achieving "whole person health" and we work collaboratively across these disciplines to deliver strategies that are unique to each client's unique circumstance. Often clients will start small by offering a few tools, and quickly want to expand what they offer to their employees. We've worked hard to create a well-rounded set of resources that provides value to all employees, at any age and at any stage of life. It's critical that any strategy is delivered in coordination with the other dimensions—not in isolation—because we recognize that to care for the whole employee, we must support all the key pillars in their life.

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Ideally, the office should be a place protecting the safety and well-being of employees while providing them with opportunities for better long-term health.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

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Driving value for our clients

When we work with clients to develop strategies, they're always driven by data. Whether our consultants are pulling carrier data specific to an organization, utilizing our data warehouse, or using national data benchmarks, our recommendations are rooted in analytics. Given the nature of well-being initiatives, it can be difficult to accurately quantify the financial benefits. The traditional measure of ROI often fails to capture the full value of well-being initiatives that touch so many facets of the workforce. Many clients will report improvements in productivity but, depending upon the industry, it can be hard to attribute the gain to a particular initiative.

Instead, we emphasize Value on Investment, which focuses on the value an employer gains as a result of well-being strategies. For example, our clients often implement well-being strategies to gain a competitive edge when hiring talent or trying to reduce turnover. They realize the value of these programs goes beyond simply reducing claims costs (though they can often do this); a comprehensive well-being strategy can fundamentally change and improve a company's culture in important and real ways that are hard to put on a balance sheet. We work to make this value visible to clients in other ways, with score cards, employee satisfaction surveys and other metrics that are directly aligned with their specific corporate objectives.

Dedicated to the middle market

Looking at the middle market in the U.S., we are ahead of the pack in terms of expertise, program development, national scale, and local presence. The extensive capabilities we have in physical well-being (or more accurately, population health management), mental health, social/culture consulting, and financial well-being are all interconnected, not siloed like they are in most companies. We are able to leverage best practices for enhanced well-being in our sweet spot—mid-sized companies, regardless of industry.

Because we have locations throughout the U.S., in small towns and big cities, we have "boots on the ground" in the communities of our clients. This makes us uniquely able to understand the distinctive local nuances such as community economic pressures, local politics, and regional attitudes. Because we know our clients and their communities so well, we can tailor strategies that are appropriate for their particular situation.

Next we discuss in greater detail our areas of expertise in each well-being dimension.

The Importance of the Social Dimension in Overall Well-being



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What Is Meant by “Social Well-being” in This Context?

Simply put, social well-being is about feeling connected to others. It is sustained by building a healthy, diverse, supportive community within the organization.

We humans are complex creatures. In this age of automation, a company might hire someone for assembly and factory work. But they're not just getting their hands—there's a brain and heart attached. When we hire humans, we get the whole person and all of their complexity. And the environments they spend time in each day at work and home play a role in their health status.

The dimension of social well-being is about improving and enriching a company's internal environment or culture. Think of the company as being like a big fish tank, the water being the environment that surrounds the fish. You can feed the fish, but the water they're in needs to be healthy and clean for them to thrive. Focusing on the social dimension in the context of well-being is about creating an environment where team members can connect and thrive, and flourishing team members mean a thriving business.

Did You Know?

There is substantial evidence that social connection has a protective effect on health and longevity. ²

Social isolation and loneliness seem to have distinct pathways to mortality and health. ³

Why Is This So Important?

Everything is interconnected. Social well-being impacts mental well-being, which impacts financial well-being and so on. Social relationships constitute a major health risk for physical health as well. In fact, recent studies have warned that social isolation can be as damaging to health as smoking a pack of cigarettes a day.

Companies of all sizes are realizing that well-being is much more than physical fitness, and that emotional, social, and mental health play a big role in whether their people show up every day to work ready to be creative and productive contributors. Increasingly, we are hearing organizations say they want to focus on culture in an intentional way. They know they need to offer more than fitness programs and a 401K to get more out of their people. Organizations are now viewing culture as a valuable tool to attract and retain high talent. And, frankly, younger generations like Millennials expect that the company they work for has a healthy and supportive culture.

It comes down to: what the strategic goal is for the organization in supporting well-being. Is it to attract new talent? Is it about curbing attrition and retaining top talent? It has to be about more than just shaving healthcare dollars. Though ROI is important, the goals of most well-being strategies go beyond that. Admittedly, it may not be easy to quantify and measure the true impact of a healthier culture, but it's real nevertheless.



MMA Impact In the Real World

Boosting employee engagement to meet culture goals:

This mid-sized manufacturing client had long focused on physical health and had offered their workforce “the basics” such as a 401K and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Now they wanted to shift to support overall well-being. Working with MMA, they first did an inventory of their current offerings across the spectrum of well-being to identify what they were already doing and where there were gaps. Their first area of focus was on building internal community though, with a turnover rate of 30 percent annually, they questioned whether it would be worth the investment.

What they did:

- A New Hire Buddy Program connected new hires to veteran employees. The idea was to help new employees feel comfortable in the culture, and understand the organization. Neither a mentor nor a boss, the Buddy simply guided new hires to get them up-to-speed and comfortable.

- Spouse involvement was a deliberate strategy to improve social support for well-being at home. With a predominantly male workforce, the strategy was focused on creating awareness of available programs in the hope of increasing participation.
- Charity volunteering provided time off for teams who volunteered in the community. In addition to contributing time and talent to worthy non-profits, it was also a team-building activity. Supervisors and managers often volunteered along with teams and leadership provided public recognition once the team has completed their volunteer effort.

Results:

- Over time, the client saw a marked decrease in turnover and attrition.
- After one year, an increase in the number of applicants who specifically mentioned knowing about the social programs the company offered and being interested in joining a supportive company.



The Importance of Mental Health in Overall Well-being



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What Is Meant by “Mental Health” in This Context?

As part of enhanced well-being, we define the mental health dimension as creating an environment free from stigma around behavioral health concerns. It’s important to understand that mental health exists on a continuum—the absence of mental illness does not necessarily equate with mental well-being. There is a lot of territory in between, and we seek to address the entire spectrum.

From the perspective of the employee, if they are dealing with stress, depression, or anxiety in their life, it’s hard for them to bring their best self to work. It’s important that organizations recognize the complexity and multi-layers of each employee, and provide the right resources to support them. For the mental health dimension, we work with clients to create a caring culture and one that is free of stigma, so employees feel empowered and free to get the support they need and do their best work.

Why Is This So Important?

Addressing mental health is critically important because of its high prevalence, with an estimated 20 percent of U.S. adults experiencing some form of mental illness each year. We also know that 80 percent of employees with a mental health condition refrain from seeking support due to shame or stigma. It’s an unaddressed problem that has significant societal and business costs.

Though the challenges of 2020 have increased the number of employers asking for more resources and enhanced support, mental health has always been crucial to overall well-being. We’re actually seeing what we believe is a cultural shift, with a greater emphasis being placed on mental health than we’ve seen in the past. This varies by industry, with professional services and “white collar” employees having had this support for years; they’ve come to expect it, with Employee Assistance Program (EAP) being a great example.

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Did You Know?

Each year, nearly one in five US adults experiences a mental health challenge. ⁴

80 percent of workers with a mental health condition say shame and stigma prevent them from seeking treatment. ⁵

Depression is the leading cause of disability in the US for ages 15 to 44. ⁶

More and more, however, clients in the manufacturing or industrial segments want to offer more structured resources for mental health. Working as their partner, we “meet them where they are” in terms of funding and philosophical approach. We’re seeing a shift here, where in the past it was absolutely required that a program show clear (and swift) bottom line impact. Now it seems organizations are taking a more thoughtful approach with the understanding that while it might be the “right thing to do” for their workforce, it may not quickly or clearly show benefits in the form of cost savings. Historically it’s been a challenge to get high participation in this sector, but we have seen that when organizations take

steps to create a stigma-free culture, utilization of behavioral health resources is measurably improved.

Ultimately, the mental health dimension is one part of the larger approach to well-being. Any mental health program should work in coordination with the other dimensions (such as social and financial), to address the whole person, for the best outcomes for both the employee and the organization. The “holy grail” would be to show real and measurable impact in things like mental health claims data, but also employee satisfaction surveys, attrition rates, behavioral health telemedicine utilization, EAP utilization, and employee engagement scores. Positive movement over time of these metrics is a powerful proxy for a culture and workforce that is getting healthier and more engaged.



MMA Impact In the Real World

Mental health support that can save lives.

An HR manager at a mid-sized manufacturing company in Minneapolis, Minnesota attended a Mental Health First Aid® class given by MMA’s Mental Health First Aid Instructors, intended to provide foundational information about helping employees living with mental health challenges. A day after the class, an employee came to her expressing he was having suicidal thoughts. Based on what she had just learned, she felt equipped to provide support to that employee. After the conversation, the employee left the

building without informing anyone. The HR manager immediately tried contacting the employee, but was unable to reach him and, based on the instruction of the course, she immediately called local authorities who did a welfare check. She later found out that the reason the employee didn’t pick up her calls was because he had been on the phone with the National Suicide Prevention Hotline—based on advice she had given him when he came to her office.

The HR manager believes they may have saved this employee’s life by giving him the right resources and taking the necessary steps to follow up with him, based on what she had learned at the Mental Health First Aid® class.

The Importance of the Physical Dimension in Well-being



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What Is Meant by “Physical Well-being” in This Context?

For the past several decades, when people would hear “wellness” they usually assumed that meant physical wellness, or fitness. Indeed, for a long time, companies had wellness programs that focused on pedometers, walking challenges and weight loss goals. Many view physical well-being as a lever to pull for reduced healthcare costs. While it certainly can help with cost containment, it’s more powerful than just that.

Today, we view physical well-being as just one dimension of “whole person health,” and one that is interconnected and integral to mental health and social well-being.

Why Is This So Important?

Because early wellness programs focused so heavily on physical activity, there is a plethora of research that supports

the positive impacts physical activity can have on overall health and well-being. Numerous national and international research organizations such as the National Institute of Health, American Heart Association, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, American College of Sports Medicine, and World Health Organization vigorously support including physical activity as a strategy to improve health risk status and decrease health-related costs. These studies specifically confirm that inadequate physical activity is a significant risk factor for obesity and other chronic diseases, such as Type-2 diabetes, heart disease, stroke, certain cancers, and depression. Only half of U.S. adults get the physical activity they need to help reduce and prevent chronic diseases, and globally one in four adults is not active enough.

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Did You Know?

In recognition of the pivotal role physical health plays in overall well-being, the World Health Organization (WHO) has embarked on its 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This important initiative endeavors to promote physical activity around the globe across multiple sectors such as environment, education, and technology.

Today, we know that staying active is one of the best ways to keep healthy and improve overall well-being. Physical health is a critical piece of the population health strategy puzzle, along with mental health, social well-being, and financial well-being. Having physical well-being as part of an overall strategy can boost the bottom line through higher productivity, reduced healthcare claims, lower illness and disease rates, and even lower workers’ comp claims. And because everything is interconnected, we know that physical activity can have significant positive effects on one’s mental well-being, which impacts engagement and productivity at work.

We at MMA are confident our current initiatives with clients related to physical well-being are consistent with the large body of evidence that is fueling efforts by the WHO and others around the world. We know it’s good for employees, and smart business for organizations.



MMA Impact In the Real World

A robust well-being initiative that supports the mission.

A mid-sized industrial equipment manufacturer in the Southeast U.S. wanted a strategy to contain rising healthcare costs and reduce overall claims costs. Working with MMA, they developed a three-year plan that encompassed employee engagement, well-being initiatives, and encouraged enrollment in their Health Savings Account (HSA) plan. It was consistent with their company's vision of "a sustainable future." Their new strategy focused on encouraging regular physical examinations with a physician to obtain age- and

gender-appropriate preventive care screenings and access to lifestyle management programs designed to minimize risk of chronic conditions. Health coaches provided personalized plans of action for employees. Consistent and clear communications kept awareness levels high. The company saw significant increases in employee participation in HSA and in health screenings. Later, a points-based well-being platform was added that provides additional tools and resources to employees to meet their personal wellness goals.

Results:

- The overall health-risk score for participants decreased compared to non-participants.
- Improved job satisfaction per company surveys.



The Importance of the Financial Dimension in Well-being



Craig Reid
CFP®, CLU®, CFPA,
President MMA Securities LLC

What Is Meant by “Financial Health” in This Context?

When one thinks of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs, financial well-being is critically important. Do I have shelter? Am I safe? Do I have food? Without a minimum of financial well-being, these basics may not be met. Even after those most basic needs, feeling comfortable and secure with your finances and your financial plan is paramount—and it changes throughout one’s life. An employee just starting out will have completely different financial needs than someone getting ready to retire.

Most of us have personally experienced the extreme stress that comes with financial challenges. And we also know that stress can affect every other aspect of someone’s life, impacting their mental health and their physical health. Employees who are stressed tend to be less productive and engaged than those who feel secure. So, in the context of “enhanced well-being,” the financial dimension is hugely important. Years ago, providing financial programs and resources may have been reserved for upper management. Now it is seen as being a critical piece of the employee’s life

that organizations can provide support for and, in so doing, increase that employee’s engagement and productivity.

Why Is This So Important?

We know from employee surveys that financial stress is a perennial issue that impacts all other areas of an employee’s life. Those same surveys tell us that employees see their employer as a trusted resource and they want them to care about their financial well-being. As organizations take a more holistic approach to employee well-being, financial well-being is every bit as important as physical health, mental health and social well-being. Financial stress can be a distraction that spirals into myriad other issues for the employee.

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Did You Know?

32 percent of employees are not saving for retirement due to expenses and other debt. ⁷

53 percent of workers report being stressed about their finances. ⁸

Financial stress makes employees 5 times more likely to be distracted at work. ⁹

Financial stress can result in poor physical and mental health, unhealthy coping behaviors and delayed healthcare. ¹⁰

78 percent of employees report wanting to work for companies that care about their financial well-being. ¹¹

It’s clear that when organizations support their employees’ financial well-being, the positive impact to both is substantial in the form of lower absenteeism, improved productivity, higher engagement. We’ve seen that in just over 12 months, financial well-being initiatives can result in employees:

- Building up a three- to six-month emergency savings fund
- Increasing their contribution to a retirement fund

- Boosting their retirement savings by earning an employer match
- Feeling more confident and secure that they are on track with their financial goals

In addition, employers are better able to attract and retain top talent, and they may pay reduced healthcare expenses. Over time, employees who participate in financial well-being initiatives often see substantial improvement in their credit scores and a boost to their savings balance sheet.

Everyone wins.

And though the benefit of implementing well-being initiatives can't always be boiled down to a simple ROI, we have seen

that employers can reap \$3 for every \$1 invested in financial well-being programs, through higher productivity and engagement, and better retention.

As it relates to financial well-being, our goal is to inspire people to create better financial futures. We continually monitor and check in to understand how things are going not just at the employer level, but also at the participant level. Given how central financial well-being is to overall “whole person health,” it’s hard to imagine a robust initiative without it.



MMA Impact In the Real World

Financial well-being reduces stress, addresses participants concerns.

In mid-March, COVID-19 was dramatically increasing in the U.S. resulting in historic market volatility. MMA Retirement Services began hosting a series of participant-focused webinars to address the current conditions and discuss ideas that retirement plan participants should consider for the road ahead. In addition, the New England regional office began offering virtual one-on-one sessions with their financial coaches for participants who wanted to discuss their personal financial situation with a licensed professional. During a seven-week period, they met with more than 275 participants from 80 different clients. After each session, participants were asked to respond to a survey.

Results:

- **Before the webinars:** nearly two-thirds of respondents said they were ‘Concerned’ or ‘Very Concerned’ about the current market volatility.
- **After the webinars:** more than 90 percent of respondents stated the MMA Retirements Services professional addressed their concerns.
- **Highly-recommended:** 100 percent of respondents stated they would recommend a 1-on-1 session to a colleague.



Why Consider an Enhanced Well-being Strategy With Marsh & McLennan Agency?

It's smart business: Providing employees with resources that support “whole person health” can increase engagement and, over time, drive organization savings through reduced healthcare expenses, lower workers' comp claims and increased productivity.

We have deep experience and expertise in all four of the dimensions (social, mental health, physical and financial).

Smooth execution: Unlike many other companies that have these practice areas siloed and separate, our teams work collaboratively together to create a highly coordinated strategy.

We're focused on the middle market. We understand the needs and challenges of mid-sized organizations and can deliver robust programs and strategies that are usually only available to larger corporations.

World class, local touch: We have national scale, and “boots on the ground” with offices located throughout the U.S. to provide a personalized touch. This includes solution vetting, implementation strategies, vendor placement when necessary, and program evaluation all with a targeted approach for each employer's situation.

Let us help you reimagine an employee well-being strategy.

To discuss your organization's specific situation and goals, reach out to your dedicated MMA representative or visit [MarshMMA.com](https://www.marshmma.com)



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