

Amwell, Transcarent introduce new mental health programs—but competition is already steep

Article

The news: Digital health companies **Amwell** and **Transcarent** rolled out new mental health offerings.

- **Amwell** expanded its virtual care ecosystem to include Amwell Comprehensive Behavioral Health. The program builds upon SilverCloud's behavioral health programs and can be personalized to the user.
- **Transcarent's** new program lets members access therapy either in-person or virtually within three days. It's designed to meet both high- and low-acuity health needs.

The bigger picture: The US mental health crisis is snowballing. It was exacerbated by the pandemic—and with a sparse mental healthcare workforce, it's left an even bigger care gap.

- Even before the pandemic, **around 20% of the US population (52 million adults) experienced a mental health condition**, but **less than half** received treatment for it, per Mental Health America.
- **During the pandemic**, the percentage of US adults with anxiety or depression symptoms **jumped from 36.4% in August 2020 to 41.5% in February 2021**, **per** a CDC analysis.
- While there's high demand for mental health services, there's also a dwindling workforce of specialists. The current mental healthcare **workforce only meets 28.1% of the need** for mental healthcare in the US, **per** The Health Resources and Services Administration's 2021 data.
- The mental health crisis and shortage of mental health workers is growing so dire that the **federal government launched an initiative to invest \$700 million** into behavioral health programs.

The value of virtual mental health programs: Digital health tools fill in some care gaps, and consumers are willing to engage with them.

- Consumers with mental health conditions are twice as likely to use telehealth than all consumers, **per** PwC's Health Research Institute.
- To add, mental health can often be interconnected to other health conditions. Addressing mental healthcare can actually help payers cut costs in the long run. For example, someone experiencing chronic conditions or cancer will often simultaneously go through a mental health struggle related to it.

Because of all this, employers and insurers have been eagerly expanding their virtual mental health offerings.

- For example, a November 2021 Evernorth [analysis](#) found that quick access to mental healthcare could reduce a patient's total cost of care by over \$3,000 (in a two-year time period).
- Around **76% of US employers** are prioritizing access to mental health services in 2022.
- Even the CMS made the decision to [expand](#) coverage of virtual mental health services for 2022.

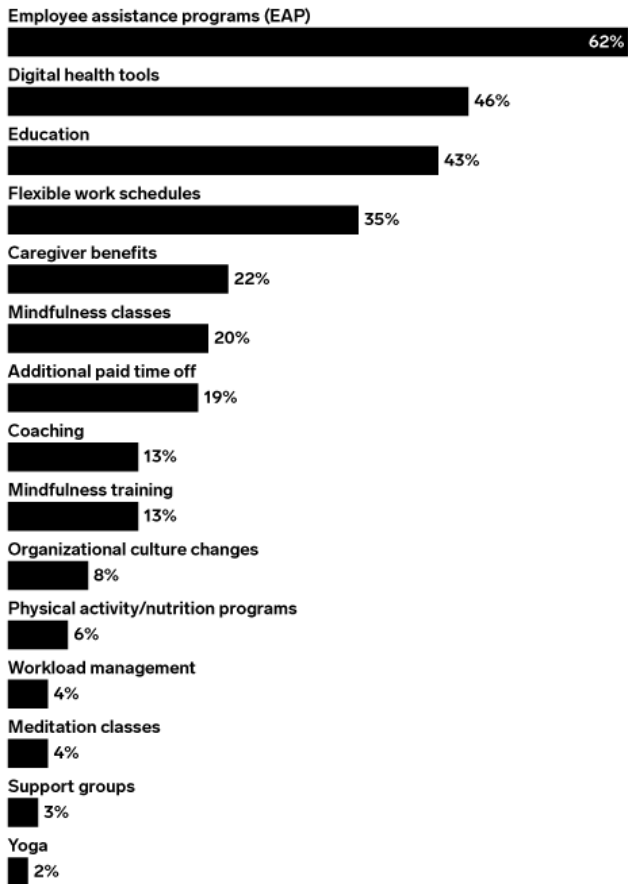
Something to watch out for: Virtual mental health programs rode the tailwinds of the pandemic, but those tailwinds are slowing down. And digital mental healthcare services are coming under greater scrutiny.

- For example, in 2020, **about 53% of US adults indicated greater satisfaction** with video visits compared with in-person care. But in 2021, their **satisfaction levels dropped to 43%**, [according to](#) Rock Health's 2021 Consumer Adoption Report.

[Click here to read our recent analysis](#) of how virtual mental health companies are coming under fire for the Rx prescribing practices, and what it means for those relying on D2C virtual care.

New Offerings US Employers Are Using to Promote Mental Health in the Workplace According to US Health Insurance Brokers, Nov 2021

% of respondents



Source: Wellable Labs, "2022 Employee Wellness Industry Trends Report," Jan 5, 2022

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