

The Emotional Disorder Creeping into the Workplace

Alliant Employee Benefits



Does your organization have an “always on” work culture? It’s commonly defined as being available or connected via technology no matter the time or the day. Today’s work culture expectation is predominantly one of ‘more is better’ and being ‘on’ all of the time. With this hard-driving culture, health is suffering and particularly, mental health. Employees are less and less likely to care for their own emotional, physical, and social well-being as a result. When well-being decreases, so does health status and resiliency to cope in difficult times.

Anxiety has surfaced as the most prevalent emotional disorder in the United States.

Surprisingly, anxiety has surfaced as the most prevalent emotional disorder in the United States’ adult population, with 30 to 44 year-old women suffering the most¹. According to a national poll conducted in 2018 by the American Psychiatric Association, the millennial generation (those born between 1981 and 1996) are more anxious than other workforce generations due to jobs that require long hours. However, there is extra pressure that comes with working longer hours which results in added stress. But this generation is not alone. Baby Boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) saw a whopping seven point increase in anxiety levels between 2017 and 2018². While added workforce stress impacts all workers, it particularly impacts women who experience higher levels of anxiety and psychological distress at work than their male counterparts do³.

Burnout is also now officially classified by the World Health Organization (WHO) as a diagnosis. It is a

syndrome resulting from workplace stress that has not been successfully managed and has three contributing factors. These factors include feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, increased mental distance from one’s job or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one’s job, and reduced professional efficacy.

In the workplace, an employee’s direct manager is most likely the one to spot emotional troubles like burnout and anxiety, but often doesn’t have the tools and training to navigate the situation or the organizational policies to back them up. Empowering people managers with this support is a critical step in fostering a positive work environment that encourages mental well-being. Ultimately, the most effective workplace programs address employees from a whole person approach as well as recognizing positive changes start with your organizational culture.

Learn how and why employers carry the financial burden of mental health disorders and actions your organization can take. Ask your Alliant representative for our whitepaper, *Lifting the Veil – Revelations on the mental health crisis in America’s workforce.*

- 1) Adapted from Mental Health Policies and Programs in the Workplace, World Health Organization (2005). Retrieved from https://www.who.int/mental_health/policy/services/13_policies%20programs%20in%20workplace_WEB_07.pdf
- 2) American Psychiatric Association Anxiety Poll. (2018). Retrieved from <https://www.psychiatry.org/newsroom/news-releases/americans-say-they-are-more-anxious-than-a-year-ago-baby-boomers-report-greatest-increase-in-anxiety>
- 3) Harvard Business Review (August 2016) Why Women Feel More Stress at Work. Retrieved from: <https://hbr.org/2016/08/why-women-feel-more-stress-at-work>

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