

The **FUTURE** of Financial Wellness

Trends for 2025

As 2025 gets underway, HR departments and benefits managers are abuzz with efforts to design a benefits package that engages and retains employees. Workplace wellness is a key trend dominating the marketplace overall, especially as we read about high burnout rates among employees. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared “burnout” an occupational phenomenon in 2019 and conditions have worsened in the last 5 years (World Health Organization, 2019). In a recent poll by Gallup, 28% of workers say they feel burned out “very often/always” (Gallup).

This is coupled with what another Gallup study has termed “The Great Detachment” as employee engagement hit an 11-year low in 2024 with only 30% of employees reporting that they felt engaged at work—4.8 million less than in 2023 (Harter, 2024). This is caused by a myriad of pressures, not least of which are economic and inflationary conditions. Workers seem uncertain about looking for a job in this economy and less likely to quit but are becoming less and less interested in and motivated by what they do at work.

This is a vicious cycle that countless employees are trapped in—personal stress (financial, mental, physical, or otherwise), leads to lower performance and disengagement at work. For this reason, workplace wellness, especially a holistic financial wellness solution, continues to rise as a key antidote to a stressed-out and dissatisfied workforce. So, what’s on the horizon for financial wellness in 2025 and what can you do to better support employees?

#1

MORE BENEFITS PACKAGES WILL INCLUDE A FINANCIAL WELLNESS SOLUTION

According to one survey, 60% of Americans live paycheck to paycheck (Cavanaugh, 2024c). Unsurprisingly, this creates inordinate employee stress and can lead to inattention at work. In 2025, more companies will begin offering a financial wellness solution to meet employee needs—nearly half of employers are predicted to offer financial wellness by 2026 (Cavanaugh, 2024a). Chime has called financial wellness “the cornerstone of benefit strategies” (Chime, 2024). The most effective financial wellness offerings will include a financial education platform, with access to webinars, workshops, articles, tools, and personalized coaching that help employees develop a holistic strategy for their overall financial health (Cavanaugh, 2024b). As employees deal with day-to-day financial pressures and fears about their future retirement, financial wellness support is becoming not just desired but expected by job seekers.

#2

EVERYONE WILL HAVE ACCESS TO A FINANCIAL ADVISOR (NAMED CHATGPT)

No matter what financial wellness solution employers offer, their employees will also have increased access to a “personal assistant” powered by AI that will help them comb through credit card agreements, loan documents, and retirement plans to break jargon down into easy to understand terms. AI is becoming more and more prevalent in the average person’s day-to-day workflow. Correctly applying tools like ChatGPT to read fine print and explain complicated concepts could be revolutionary in protecting consumers against predatory loans, disguised interest rate hikes, or other financially harmful products that they may otherwise misunderstand. Encouraging employees to leverage these tools could be one part of an overall strategy that helps your workforce avoid bad debt and build a healthy financial future.

#3

EARNED WAGE ACCESS (EWA) WILL TAKE CENTER STAGE

A major trend in financial wellness is Earned Wage Access (EWA), also called Early Wage Access. This offering allows employees to use a third-party provider to access their wages as soon as they earn them—even on the same day. People are not accustomed to waiting anymore—for anything—and the instantaneous nature of our culture makes traditional payday cycles seem outdated to some. EWA has often come with hefty fees that may or may not have been disclosed to employees, but that may be changing as the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau is considering treating EWA payments as “consumer loans” and subject to the requisite disclosure notices (Bhattacharyya, 2024). Many employers will explore EWA this year to meet increasing demand and help employees avoid excessive debt or predatory loans to deal with an emergency.

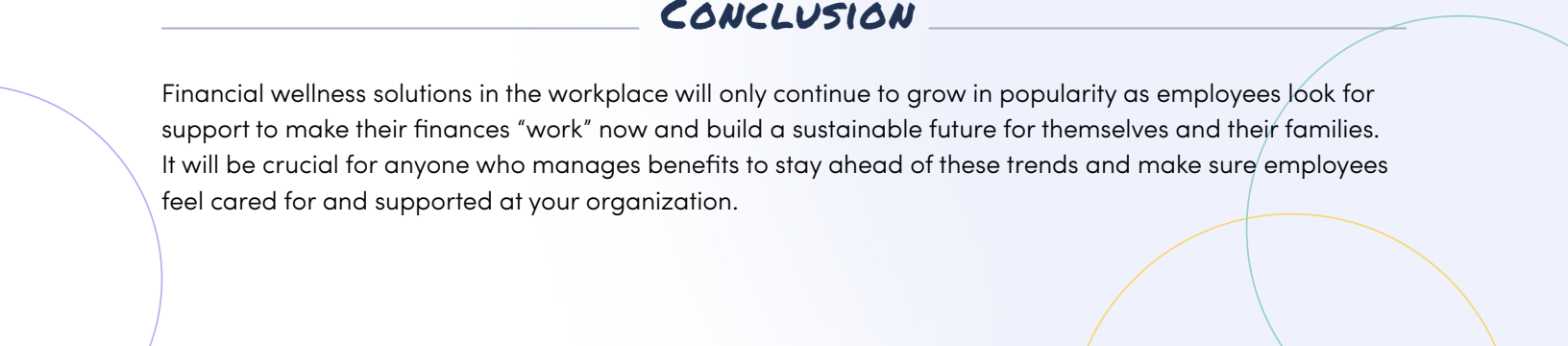
#4

EMPLOYEES WILL LOOK TO THEIR EMPLOYER FOR RETIREMENT PLANNING SUPPORT

One PlanAdviser study showed that 48% of employees name retirement as their top cause of financial stress (Duggins, 2024). Additionally, a recent survey by Goldman Sachs asked employees “What financial planning and advice services are you most interested in receiving from your employer?” A clear majority selected “Retirement saving and investing” (Goldman Sachs, 2024). Unquestionably, employees want and need retirement planning support. The SECURE Act 2.0 provides a key first step to saving since it requires automatic enrollment. This will certainly help improve retirement outcomes, but it won’t be enough on its own. To truly help employees plan for retirement, organizations will need to provide support that may include personal advisor services and regular classes. This will be a key feature of any financial wellness solution in the future.

CONCLUSION

Financial wellness solutions in the workplace will only continue to grow in popularity as employees look for support to make their finances “work” now and build a sustainable future for themselves and their families. It will be crucial for anyone who manages benefits to stay ahead of these trends and make sure employees feel cared for and supported at your organization.



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