

Members' Digest



Highlights

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Workplace Wellness: Navigating Change with Personalized Care

School buses and falling leaves mark the beginning of a new season – one that many see as a fresh start. Yet change isn't always easy, especially if it comes unexpectedly. This month, we are exploring the support needed for 'return to office' mandates and how we can help those going through the transition.

In a similar way, returning to work after a health setback also requires a personalized touch. At Members Health, we believe the value in healthcare should be considered not only from the outcome, but also in the power of the relationships that support those outcomes.

Transitioning Back to the Office

Fall is traditionally a chance to get back into routine after the relaxing days of summer. But for many office employees, routines are getting a ‘shake-up’ with return to office (RTO) mandates. Hybrid roles are being reduced or eliminated, and in-person attendance is increasing to an average of four days a week.

The Weight of Return

For employees, however, the reality is more personal. Many have reported feeling stressed and betrayed as they navigate this transition. They initially adjusted to working at home as a necessity and then came to appreciate it as a benefit. Now they must face stressful commutes, longer travel times, crowded transit, parking fees, and the fatigue of daily travel. Many feel the loss of flexibility they once relied on in hybrid roles to balance caregiving, health needs, or personal tasks.



A Cultural Turning Point

Returning to crowded offices also brings a new layer of adjustment stress. After years in quieter, more controlled home environments, the shift back to open-plan seating and back-to-back in-person meetings can feel overwhelming. For some, there’s the social pressure of relearning office norms and small talk, while others struggle with the constant interruptions that drain focus and energy. Beneath these experiences lies a deeper challenge: the risk of burnout. Longer commutes, stricter routines, and fewer opportunities for flexibility can quickly erase the balance employees have found in their hybrid roles to protect their mental and physical well-being.

Altogether, these shifts represent more than just a logistical adjustment; they mark a profound cultural and emotional change for both employees and organizations. Given there are both pros and cons for return to office mandates, it’s a transition that must be handled with care.

Settling Into New Routines

The return to the office raises a question beyond timing – it's about how the transition is managed in a way that supports everyone. The process may involve trial and error, and the solutions will not be one-size-fits-all. What matters most is approaching this stage with flexibility, openness, and a willingness to evolve.



Potential Pros of Return to Office

- Stronger collaboration and team culture through in-person contact
- Greater access to mentorship and on-the-spot learning from peers
- Clearer boundaries between work and home life
- Opportunities to feel more connected to the team and workplace culture

Potential Cons of Return to Office

- Commuting adds time, stress, and costs
- Risk of reduced work-life balance and increased burnout
- Adjustment fatigue for those used to remote/hybrid setups
- Decreased retention if workers prefer hybrid or remote options
- Caregivers and long-distance commuters are disproportionately affected

How MembersHealth Can Support the Transition

For those members who have access to our **Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP)**, a range of support is available to help navigate the shift back to office life. These services are designed to ease the practical, emotional, and financial challenges that come with this transition:

Ongoing mental health support

Access to regular counselling sessions that provide a space to process stress, build resilience, and maintain emotional balance throughout the transition.

Manager Support

Toolkits and training for inclusive in-office practices that reduce friction and foster psychological safety.

In-the-moment support

Urgent mental health services, providing immediate access to help when challenges feel overwhelming.

Nutritional Support

Guidance on meal planning and making health choices, whether packing food from home or buying meals at or near the office.

Signature Story: David's Story

When we think about health, it's easy to envision lab results, doctor visits, or the latest wearable device. However, the real engine for wellness runs much quieter and closer to home: our relationships. Health isn't just about managing numbers; it's about feeling seen, supported, and connected.

When David returned to work after a health scare, his recovery wasn't driven only by medical tests or prescriptions. What truly made the difference were the small gestures: a coworker checking in during breaks, neighbours dropping off meals, and his daughter's encouragement on daily walks. Those connections gave him the strength to stay consistent with his care plan and reminded him he wasn't alone.

This is the often-overlooked truth of healthcare: real value doesn't live in numbers alone. It lives in how safe people feel in their neighbourhoods, how supported they feel at work, and how connected they feel to family and friends. In fact, a 2023 study published in the National Library of Medicine found that social isolation raises the risk of dying as much as smoking or obesity.

Social connection is not an add-on. It's the catalyst that powers better health. People who feel supported are more likely to stick to treatment, make healthier choices, and bounce back from setbacks.



Mental Health Check-In

For Return to Work

If you're preparing to return to work after a health challenge, try these strategies to support your mental well-being and make the transition smoother.

- **Communicate with your manager:** Discuss your needs openly and explore flexible arrangements.
- **Discuss accommodations:** Make small adjustments, like modified hours or lighter duties.
- **Ease in gradually:** Permit yourself to build up your workload step by step.
- **Limit multitasking:** Stay focused on one task at a time to reduce stress and fatigue.
- **Be patient with yourself:** Healing is not a race, progress builds with consistency, and support.

If you need extra support during this transition, MembersHealth is here to support you. Contact us anytime at **1-800-484-0152**.

The Future of Wellness

Personalized Care

Social connection is the unsung driver of how we cope with stress, build resilience, and find meaning, whether that comes in the form of family dinners, trusted coworkers or connections within our communities.

Jamie, a forestry worker, once felt stuck in a cycle of exhaustion and stress. Long shifts and physical strain left him believing, “I’m not good enough. Even if I tried, I wouldn’t stand a chance at feeling better.”

Through Members Health’s Integrated Wellness Solutions, Jamie was introduced to a personalized program combining virtual care, mental health support, and access to wellness coaching. Within months, his perspective shifted. He regained not only his energy but also the confidence to rejoin his community soccer league—something he had long given up on.

Jamie’s story is more than a personal triumph. It shows how Integrated Wellness Solutions transform not just health outcomes, but people’s capacity to re-engage with their lives, relationships, and hopes for the future.



Our Way Forward

This is the story we see every day at MembersHealth. Wellness is not just the science of care, but the art of connection. By honouring the relationships that give life meaning, we create healthcare that is relevant, human, and lasting.

And we put this belief into practice by making personalized care the foundation of everything we do. From the very first step—discovery—we focus on understanding each member’s unique health story, not just their symptoms.

Through proactive, preventive care, we help people stay ahead of potential health challenges, building confidence and peace of mind.

Prioritize your health today

Learn how we make preventative care simple and accessible.



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