

# ACCELERATING VALUE THROUGH WELLBEING

---

## Early Perspectives from the National Alliance Wellbeing Initiative

(March, 2017)

*For the better part of two decades there have been substantial efforts among employers to improve employee health, wellness and productivity - with uneven results. This has led to a growing consensus that a new framework is needed. One that can shift a company and its culture toward a more engaged and productive workforce; one that looks to the overall well-being of people as a foundational tenant; and one that must be shaped and embraced by and for the benefit of our employers, our communities and our health systems.*



---

## Why Wellbeing?

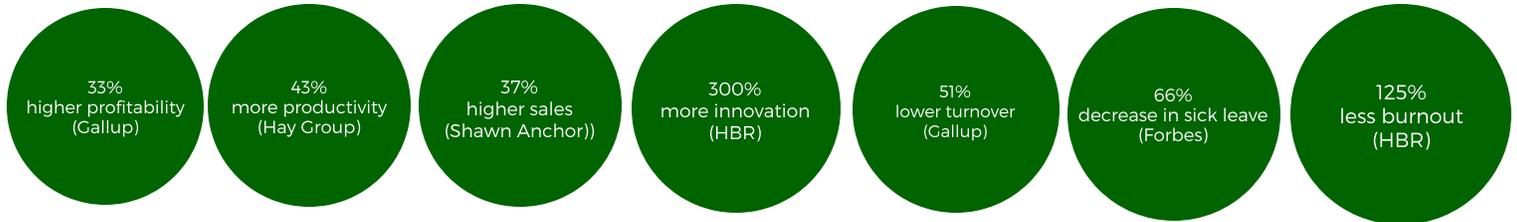
Today 85% of employers have implemented wellness programs on behalf of their employees. However, less than one in five believe their programs are very effective at reducing healthcare costs, or improving performance and productivity, or enhancing employee engagement, attraction and loyalty (PwC). While nomenclature in the current vendor climate has frequently relabeled "wellness efforts" as "well-being", at its core, a well-being approach is a people strategy first with improved health as a by-product, not the primary focus.

In the world of employers, what makes well-being particularly compelling is that the evidence strongly demonstrates that well-being is foundational and is directly tied to the cultivation of a highly-engaged and a high-performing workforce (e.g., higher sales, higher innovation, higher loyalty). The drivers of well-being are very aligned with employee engagement. Well-being is what employees seek, and engagement is what employers seek; and our view is that these are two sides of the same coin. Ironically, when this effort is more broadly defined as a people opportunity rather than a health opportunity, we can engender greater leadership support which will more likely lead to the "culture of health" we seek.

Well-being is an agenda, that when properly framed, can more easily engage C-Suite leadership for sponsorship as it more directly pertains to human capital and business performance. In addition, a leadership agenda that encompasses well-being is more easily understood and adapted to global companies -- this makes the conversation more relevant for U.S. companies that are increasingly defining themselves as global.

In addition, key national leaders agree that to impact health in a meaningful way in the country, we need to move upstream to influence the social determinants of health. Despite the desire to do so, there has been limited expertise and energy applied to engaging businesses in these efforts. Well-being inherently has a multi-dimensional focus whereby physical and mental health for example, are seen as interrelated elements and not distinct ones. Increasingly, efforts such as the 100 Million Healthier Lives are looking “upstream” into our communities to impact the social determinants of health which have shown to manifest themselves in the workforce and workplace. For example, there is emerging evidence that both “chronic stress” and “loneliness and isolation” are risk factors with as significant an impact on our health as tobacco usage. In addition, we see businesses and their employees focused on well-being as ultimately impacting community well-being over time.

## POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF CULTURE OF WELL-BEING



Addresses “social determinants of health”

## What is the Opportunity?

Simply stated, we can demonstrably improve the well-being of individuals and their families **through and to the benefit of employers, communities and health systems**. Employers by their nature have an easily recognized and articulated rationale for embracing well-being. We envision their initiatives in this regard as naturally expanding into the broader community where employers operate and from which they draw their employees.

Leveraging their collective voice as the purchasers of healthcare, employers can also help drive a positive impact on the health system itself where leading systems are increasingly recognizing the need to deal with and support the “whole person”.

Given the ongoing debate about the effectiveness of employer-based wellness programs, we believe that most corporations’ wellness is a siloed activity that lacks true C-suite support and role-modeling and therefore fails at true culture formation. The broader well-being agenda, with its human capital and business performance implications, is a compelling rationale for senior leader involvement, the creation of true organizational culture, and ultimately, the improvement in the health and well-being of employees and their family members.

In addition, it is not realistic to assume employees will naturally embrace wellness or engage as healthcare consumers based on the urging of their employers. For employees to fully engage with both their minds and hearts, there needs to be a foundation of trust established. A more holistic focus on wellbeing will be foundational to the trust and respect that is critical for employees to engage across the spectrum of opportunities and will create, among other things, shared values of good health and the good life that we all seek.

### THRIVING IN ALL WELL-BEING ELEMENTS COMPARED TO THRIVING IN PHYSICAL WELL-BEING ONLY

- 41% fewer unhealthy days
- 2X as likely to say they always adapt well to change
- 36% more likely to say they always fully bounce back after an illness
- 23% more likely to donate money
- 43% more likely to have volunteered
- 65% less likely to be involved in a workplace accident
- 81% less likely to look for a new job when the job market improves

Source – Gallup-Healthways

Although the phrase “joy in work” sounds “soft,” this phrase encapsulates the aspirational goal of true workforce engagement. There is strong and growing evidence that a joyful, engaged workforce leads to better teamwork, productivity, patient experience, and outcomes.

**Institute for Health Improvement**

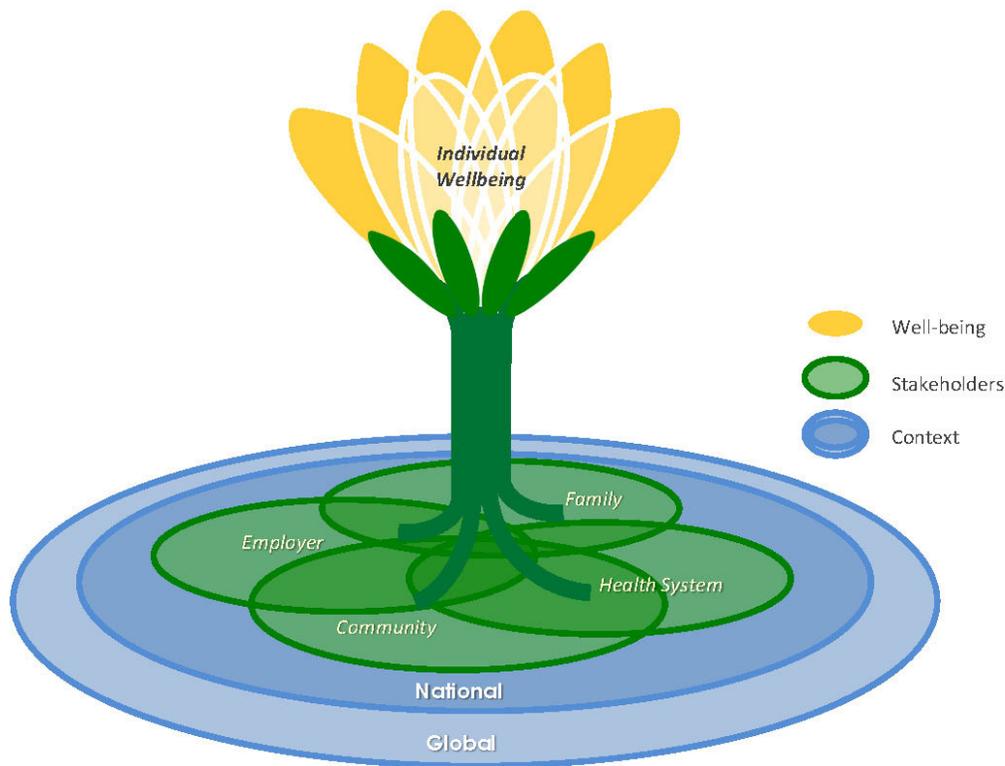
The role of our coalitions in facilitating the “wellbeing agenda” can be multi-fold:

*Connecting, Engaging and Challenging Employers* Employers are continuously challenging themselves to get better, have more impact and align their health and healthcare strategies with broader business objectives. We can help redefine the agenda in a manner that will bring employers together to share and accelerate their successes to do just that.

*Fostering Cross-Sector Collaboration to Improve Wellbeing* Wellbeing is the perfect storm that brings together and engages a diverse group of stakeholders toward a common and higher goal. Our coalitions play a unique role in engaging and collaborating with stakeholders.

*Creating Healthier, More Equitable Communities* As more employers embrace holistic well-being strategies, they will engage in the wellbeing of the communities where their employees work and reside to help raise the wellbeing of those communities. These activities will directly and indirectly benefit the wellbeing of their employees and their engagement and loyalty to their organizations.

*Strengthening the Focus and Integration of Health Systems and Services* As our health systems begin to better appreciate and focus on the social determinants of health, we can help define and drive the transformation to value, better aligning the missions and accountabilities of our health systems not just on repairing our health but rather on improving the health and well-being of our patients and populations.



## Where Do We Go From Here?

We know that the business rationale for wellbeing, even more than corporate social responsibility, will drive employer adoption and institutionalization of the wellbeing agenda. However, a programmatic and siloed approach to wellbeing will only take us so far. We will need to develop new models of leadership – “meta-leadership” - to influence and integrate up, down and across organizations and stakeholders while recognizing the potential diversity of entry points and sponsors. We will need to go beyond traditional domestic boundaries to one that contemplates a global work force and the influence of communities and families on our people and organizations.

We will need to be adaptable to go global, go local, and go personal. Our approach will be inclusive to recognize the power of the many while leveraging the unique role that employers play in the lives of people, the fabric of our communities and the influence of health systems. It is not just a series of programs or even a culture – it is a journey that aligns with the success and sustainability of our organizations, the health and wellbeing of our people and the sustainability of our society.