

Big Health releases new mental wellness app

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A new app seeks to help stressed out workers better combat their worries.

Health technology company Big Health released earlier this month Daylight, a smartphone application that uses cognitive behavioral therapy to help workers handle negative thoughts and feelings.

Mike Radocchia, marketing and business development lead at Big Health says many adults who are struggling with mental health issues face barriers to care, whether that be the stigma associated with mental illness or the cost. If a worker is struggling with mental wellness, that can impact both their work and home life.

"One of the key challenges is that most people suffering from one of these conditions is not getting the help they need," he says.

Daylight uses narration and animation to help workers address their stressors. Employees first assess how they feel and what in their life might be causing them stress. Then, Daylight provides them with suggestions and tools for overcoming those anxieties as well as an overall measure of progress.

Mental health awareness

More than half of employees say they don't know if their company offers mental well-being programs or that no support is available

- No idea what employer offers, 11%
- No support or programs available, 42%
- Support and programs available, 47%



Source: Workplace Options

Daylight, for example, has scheduled worry time that sets a designated time of day aside for employees to assess their anxieties. It also has tools like tense and release, that help workers release physical tension.

Big Health worked with experts from Boston University, UCLA, University of Oxford and the University of Texas as well as podcast producers, filmmakers and animators from Pixar and NPR's Radiolab to design the app, Radocchia says. This is Big Health's second cognitive therapy based app. The company also developed Sleepio, an app designed to help workers improve their sleep.

"These experts combined their creative expertise to build an experience that's going to resonate with folks," he says. The company would not disclose how much Daylight and Sleepio cost employers, but it is typically priced per employee per month with some flexibility.

Boston Medical Center soft launched Daylight with more than one-third of its 7,500 person workforce in the beginning of February. The hospital plans to make Daylight available to all workers starting in May. Lisa Kelly-Croswell, SVP and chief human resources officer at Boston

Medical Center says employers should focus on improving worker well-being so workers feel mentally, and physically healthy on the job.

"I think if we're able to make life easier for people by providing them with tools that are intuitive, I think that's core to what we want to do in helping the whole person," she says.

Kelly-Croswell adds the hospital has other well-being programs in place in addition to Daylight and Sleepio. For example, the employer offers telemedicine and an on-site resiliency clinician.

Although Daylight is currently only available to a small number of BMC employees, Kelly-Croswell says they have received positive feedback from workers who have tried it. She says she is glad they are able to provide workers with something that may make life easier.

"For me it's just about being human. We are thinking about our employees not just as employees but as people, people who come to work every day and then go home to friends and families and neighborhoods and communities," she says. "We can participate not only in helping people be safe and perform at work, but also paying attention to the whole person."

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