



Lucent Health
DATA DRIVEN + HUMAN FOCUSED



Narus Health
A LUCENT HEALTH COMPANY

The Right Care Starts With Being There

Improve Outcomes for Employees
With Behavioral Health Disorders

See Health Benefits in a New Light

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Executive Summary

Self-insured companies have a vested interest in making sure that employees get the help and care they need to manage healthcare issues. When employees—and their families—are taken care of, employers can reduce associated healthcare costs and count on employees who will be more productive and present.

Behavioral health challenges affect a large portion of the population, so care management for behavioral and mental health issues is crucial for employers who want to keep their employees healthy and productive. For example, almost half (46%) of Americans have a meaningful relationship with someone struggling with addiction or have struggled with it personally.¹ In addition, 76% of U.S. employees reported experiencing at least one symptom of a mental health condition in the past year, according to Mind Share Partners' 2021 Mental Health at Work Report, conducted in partnership with Qualtrics and ServiceNow.²

Narus Health, a Lucent Health Company, offers a behavioral health program as one of its five key disease management programs. When behavioral health care management is integrated into your health plan administration, employees and their families can access the care they need—including medical, recovery and counseling—in one location, ensuring privacy and avoiding stigma. Choosing a plan administrator that provides specialized care management for behavioral health can have a positive impact on employees' health outcomes as well as on employers' bottom lines.



Understanding the Problem

More than **47 million people in the United States are living with a mental health condition**, according to research published in Mental Health America's 2021 State of Mental Health in America Report.³ Data from the National Alliance on Mental Illness reveals that anxiety disorders are the most common kind of mental health condition in the United States, followed by depression.⁴ On average, employers spend \$15,000 more each year on an employee who is mentally distressed than one who is not, because of increased healthcare expenses, extra days of work missed and increased turnover.⁵ Even more concerning, mentally distressed employees are nearly 3.5 times more likely to have substance use disorders.⁶



"Behavioral health is a top reason why we have such health issues, period," says Daniel Winkler, LCSW, behavioral health therapist at Narus Health, a Lucent Health Company. "Companies are losing employees and people aren't coming back to work, so many people are dealing with substance abuse, isolation and the challenges of socially integrating back into the workforce. If employees are healthy mentally, they're going to do a lot better at work."

In addition, "there is a behavior component with almost any clinical diagnosis," adds Sheila Goode, VP, Clinical Services at Narus Health, a Lucent Health Company. "When someone is diagnosed with hypertension or infertility, for example, they often will develop anxiety or depression as a result of that diagnosis."

Behavioral health issues don't just affect the primary patients. Their families also suffer. For example, the percentage of people living in homes where addiction is present has jumped to 32%, a Gallup poll found.⁸

Having a loved one struggling with addiction can also translate into health problems for family members, as they are stressed and preoccupied. Behavioral health and addiction issues may not show up directly in health claims, but employers might see clues of the damage, such as higher numbers of ER visits and missed days of work. There's no way to code medical issues as due to a loved one's addiction, so pinpointing the issues may require careful attention to claims.

Despite the widespread issues, treating behavioral health and addiction problems is difficult. Many people fear they will be ostracized by family members or co-workers, or passed over for promotions, if they admit that they or a family member have a problem. Only 10% of people suffering with a substance use disorder seek help.⁹ Even when sufferers do seek help, their families rarely receive the support they need to manage the stress, financial and other burdens associated with their loved ones' behavioral health challenges.

However, the good news is that when people with behavioral health needs do engage with the help they need, they are likely to improve.





Envisioning a Solution

Despite the stigma surrounding mental and behavioral health struggles, they are healthcare issues, and it's important for employers to provide solutions. The Narus Health behavioral health management program aims to provide employers with a turnkey solution to deliver help to members who want it.

Narus Health offers compassionate care management specifically related to behavioral and mental health. Members enrolled with case management services can be referred to behavioral health services for an assessment and support. Additionally, Lucent Health recently announced its partnership with Youturn Health, a mission-driven company committed to helping individuals and families impacted by mental health challenges and related substance misuse issues.

Treating behavioral health issues through the employer-provided health plan makes sense because Narus Health already has knowledge of health plan members and access to healthcare data. Narus Health's compassionate care, powered by daily data, enables members in need to be discovered and, when appropriate, guided to the plan's behavioral health experts. Lucent Health members who need support addressing substance abuse issues can conveniently access education and support virtually—no matter where they are in their journey.

The behavioral health solution includes a three-part program:

Education: Lucent Health members have access to Youturn Health's online learning management system, which features an extensive library of educational, inspiring and insightful videos designed to increase understanding of stress, anxiety and wellness.

Peer Coaching: Youturn Health's trained coaches can help members access community resources and programs that best fit their situation. All coaches are state-certified, credentialed by NAADAC (the Association for Addiction Professionals) and specially trained in Assertive Community Engagement (ACE) principles.

Family Support: Youturn Health's family recovery program consists of coaches who have experienced being a family member of a loved one who has struggled with, or lost their life as a result of, mental health challenges. These coaches facilitate family healing with the understanding that family support can increase the likelihood that their loved one will seek help for mental health challenges and maintain their recovery journey.



Engaging Members in Need

Statistics show that behavioral health programs are desperately needed, but it can be challenging to get people to take advantage of the solutions that are available.

That's another reason that integrating behavioral health with health plan administration makes sense. "Many people enroll in this program through the nurse," Goode says. "They have built a relationship with their provider, who can tell them about the behavioral health programs available to them."

For example, Winkler worked with one member who had been dealing with trauma for many years and had never been able to speak with anyone about it. After sharing with a nurse that she'd been looking for a counselor for 10 years, the nurse referred her to the behavioral health program. "I always tell people that I can't take away the event that caused trauma, but I can walk back through it with you," Winkler says. "This member was able to share and take care of things that she'd never been able to deal with before."

Other members who need behavioral health programs can be identified through claims data. When an individual's claims data shows a potential behavioral health concern, the Narus Health system will alert behavioral health case managers, who can reach out to the member and explain the behavioral health options that are available to them.

The Narus Health development team built a secure charting platform just for the behavioral health program, which is locked down to keep sensitive matters private. "Not even nurses see these charts," Goode says.

Members also find out about the behavioral health program through information that Narus Health sends out, and many self-identify their need for help. "Members can always call us and ask about the program and whether they might benefit from it," Goode says.

Finally, employers have direct access to their employees and may be able to promote the behavioral health program to them. For example, employers can offer access to webinars that address dealing with stress, grief, trauma, depression, anxiety and other behavioral and mental health concerns. Employees who are interested in learning more can be matched with a coach.

Because counselors and therapists are difficult to find and coaches are not well known, many individuals in need go without care for months and years. And when addiction or mental health concerns are involved, help is often needed immediately. "When members have an urgent request, our care team is passionate about acting quickly and effectively," Winkler says. "When we help change one person's life, they're going to teach someone else how to live differently. Eventually, we change generations."



Get Started

Choosing a self-insured health plan administrator that offers integrated behavioral health care management is a powerful way to improve members' health outcomes and productivity, while cutting healthcare costs.



To talk with a care team member from Narus Health, a Lucent Health Company, call: 888-585-3309, Monday–Friday from 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. CT. To learn more about Lucent Health's complex care management program, visit lucenthealth.com/members.

1. <https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/10/26/nearly-half-of-americans-have-a-family-member-or-close-friend-whos-been-addicted-to-drugs/>
2. <https://www.mindsharepartners.org/mentalhealthatworkreport-2021> 3. <https://mhanational.org/research-reports/2021-state-mental-health-america#:~:text=51,.hit%20the%20U.S.%20in%20March> 4. <https://www.nami.org/mhstats> 5. <https://youturnhealth.com/we-help/employers/>
6. *Ibid* 7. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/267416/substance-abuse-hits-home-close-half-americans.aspx> 8. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/357134/drugs-problem-family-americans.aspx> 9. <https://www.ama-assn.org/delivering-care/overdose-epidemic/90-who-need-substance-use-disorder-treatment-don-t-get-it#:~:text=Why%20it%20matters%20for%20patients,receive%20treatment%20for%20the%20condition.>