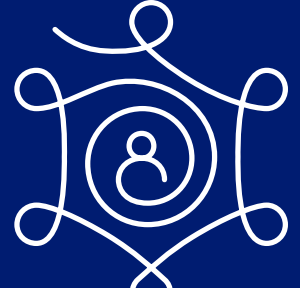
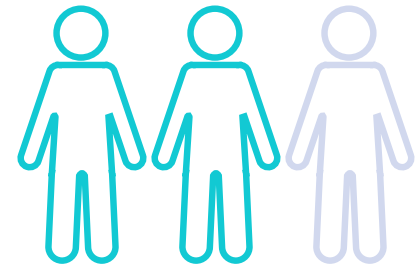
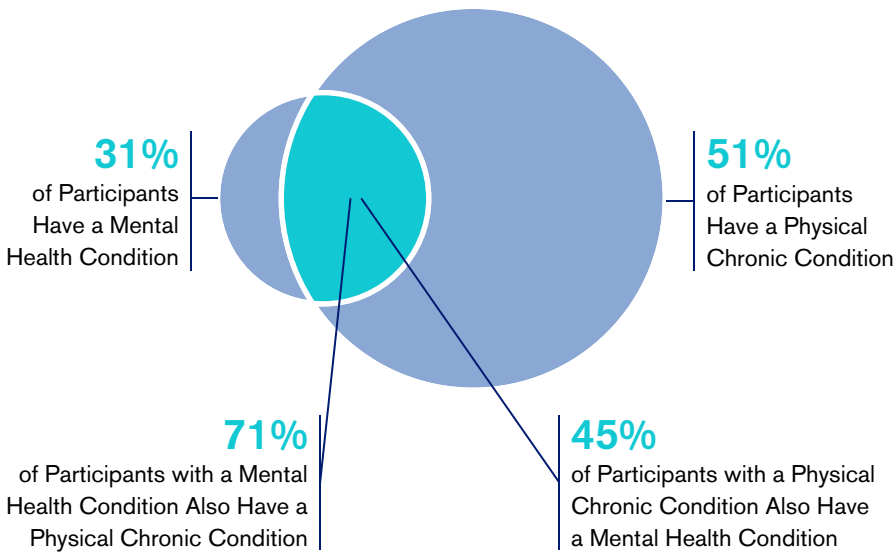


# Make a Sound Investment in Supporting Mental Health



Although demand for mental health/substance use disorder (MH/SUD) services has decreased from the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is considerable. Adequately addressing that need is important for improving participants' health *and* for managing your costs. A large majority of employees (92 percent) believe mental healthcare coverage is important to creating a positive workplace culture, according to a 2024 survey conducted by the National Alliance on Mental Illness.

## Mental health *and* medical conditions are complex and interrelated.



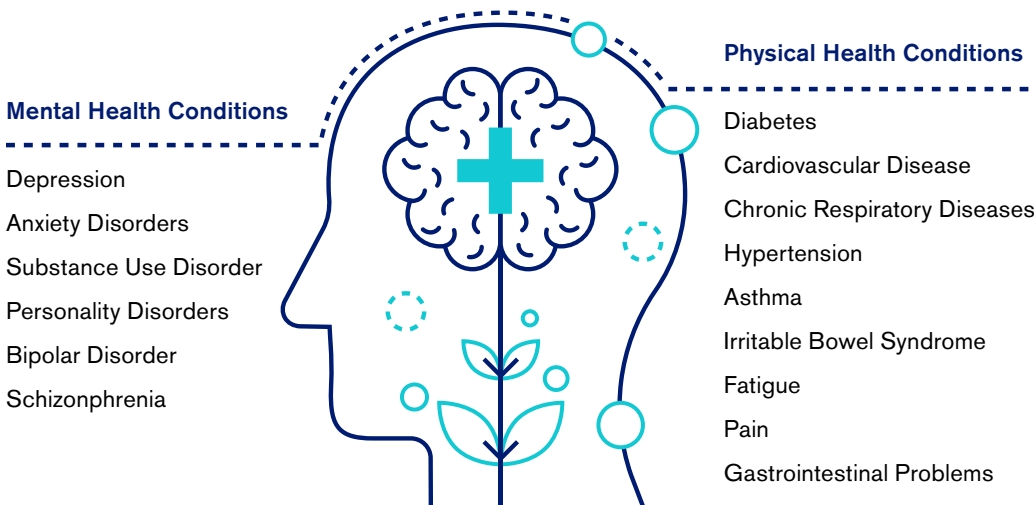
Nearly **two-thirds (64%)** of workers reported struggling with mental or behavioral health issues.

**28%** of U.S. adults report having been diagnosed with depression at some point in their lifetime.

**More than one in five American adults experienced mental illness in 2021**

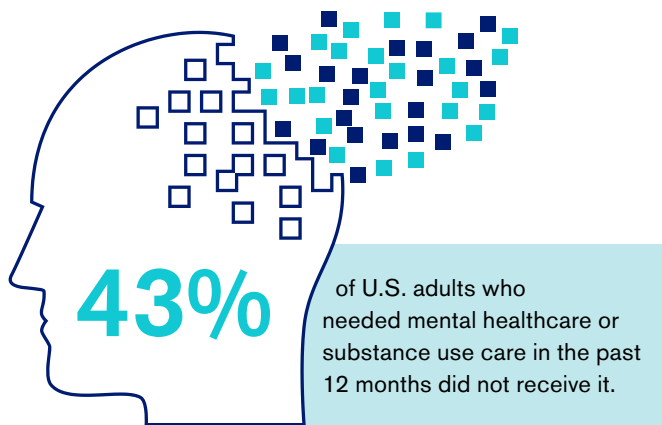
**= 57 million+**

## These conditions are often present simultaneously:



Mental health conditions related to physical conditions, such as depression related to fatigue, often go undiagnosed or untreated. This is also true of substance use disorders that deteriorate health and impede effective treatment.

Citations for the statistics featured and statements made in this handout are available upon request.



## What's at stake when mental health conditions aren't managed?



Higher Healthcare Costs Associated with Increased Utilization and Poor Medication Adherence



Diminished Productivity



Lost Earnings



Higher Costs Associated with Premature Death and Disability

## Addressing mental health may reduce risks related to medical conditions

Here are some reasons why:

- People whose MH/SUD conditions are unaddressed are less likely to receive and benefit from preventive services. These services can include immunizations, smoking cessation programs, cancer screening and other early detection of health risks. This is a lost opportunity because early detection and intervention are associated with positive outcomes.
- Drug overdose is the leading cause of accidental death in the U.S.
- Depression and stress account for the greatest difference between individuals who are low- vs. high-risk for increased overall healthcare costs.
- Substance dependence significantly increases the financial burden of already costly medical conditions.
- Depression is a risk factor for diabetes and many other chronic conditions.
- One-third of heart attack patients develop depression, which doubles the risk of poor outcomes.
- Medication adherence for individuals with chronic mental health conditions, diabetes or both reduces ER visits and hospitalizations.

**The workforce and culture are evolving to increase awareness of and demand for benefits and practices that support mental health.**

## Segal can help

Segal can work with you to build an effective MH/SUD strategy that:

- Includes educational and training resources to help leaders of your organization prepare to manage individuals with MH/SUD conditions
- Designs benefit programs to maximize efficiency while containing costs, including targeting prevention of and early interventions for MH/SUD issues
- Incorporates a "total health" focus that coordinates vendors by including behavioral health in other health-related programs, such as wellness and work/life programs and in communications
- Follows best practices for communicating MH/SUD benefits to promote utilization
- Provides toolkits for dependents in college to help them understand how to get help with MH/SUD conditions
- Increases access to providers, including by implementing telehealth services
- Ensures legal compliance with the state and federal requirements applicable to the provision of mental health benefits, including the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act

Our approach encompasses plan design that targets prevention and early intervention.

To discuss how your plan can better manage its mental health benefits, contact [Sarah Gunderson](#), MSHI, RN, NI-BC.