DMEC
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CONFERENCE

Unlocking the Full Value of Benefits: Connecting programs to maximize support

Introductions



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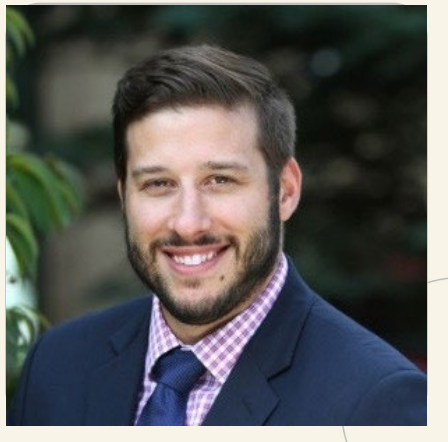

Brandon Castel
VP Head of Employer Sales @ Sword



Griffen Kelly
Sr. Director Partnerships & Consultant Relations @ Cariloop

Leave is no longer a moment — it's a movement

42%

Of employees have taken a leave of absence

56% **of employees who needed healthcare didn't receive it, and 1 in 3 of those who didn't said it was because of cost**

#1 **Physical pain is the top driver of disability leave**

3/4 **of the US population is a caregiver but only ~37% actually identify as one**

Sources: Alight 2025 Employee Mindset Study (42% taken a leave; 56% didn't receive healthcare); Sword (physical pain disability leave); Cariloop (caregiver stat)



Employees expect connected support — most aren't getting it

57%

of employees want a one-stop shop for benefits

15%

actually have access to one

27% of employees don't ever come back from a leave because of the challenges of re-acclimating to a work environment as a caregiver.

70% of patients do not complete their in-person physical therapy programs. With easier access to programs, that percentage goes down.

Sources: Alight 2025 Employee Mindset Study (87% want one-stop shop; 15% have access); Cariloop data (27% of employees don't return from leave); Sword data (70% of patients do not complete their PT programs)



Support doesn't start (or stop) with a leave request

At Work

Know before you need it.

Employees need to know what's available before they need it. Proactive communication and a unified platform reduce confusion and build trust.

Off Work

Benefits don't pause because work does.

While on leave, employees still need access to care for themselves and dependents. Timely, personalized outreach keeps them connected to the right resources.

Back to Work

Returning isn't the finish line.

59% need accommodations to return to work. Partner solutions (MSK, caregiving, health navigation) extend the journey.

75% more likely to stay 5+ years when employees report a good leave experience.

Sources: Guardian Life (75% more likely to stay 5+ years with a good leave experience); Alight 2025 Employee Mindset Study (59% need accommodations to return to work).



Moderated Discussion

Panel Q&A with our speakers



Five ways to unlock the full value of benefits

1. **Start earlier** — support employees before they need leave
2. **Connect the ecosystem** — identify opportunities to integrate the experience
3. **Engage in the moment** — for the employee and the manager
4. **Know your populations** — understand who has access to what
5. **Measure what matters** — track outcomes across experience and productivity



Questions?

Thank you.

