



Absence and Well-Being: Challenges and Opportunities

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Session Overview

Before the pandemic, a mental health crisis was brewing in the U.S., with one in five individuals exhibiting diagnosable conditions.

Overall leave of absence requests have spiked nearly 150% over the past five years, while leaves related to mental health are up an extraordinary 300% during that same period.

Now more than ever, employees need the right level of support at the right time and in the right way.

In this session, we will discuss recent absence trends related to behavioral health and use real-life scenarios to discuss the challenges related to administering these leaves, providing practical strategies and innovative care solutions that can address a broad range of mental health, physical health, and well-being issues.

These tools serve as preventive resources to reduce overall leave for employers, as well as a care resource for employees on leave to accelerate recovery and help them get back to work more quickly.





Introductions



Sara Galle

- Vice President, Absence Account Services
- Close to 15 years of absence administration experience
- Leads our account services, implementation and reporting and analytics teams
- Drives strategic product initiatives to support our customers' absence administration needs
- Master's in Health Communication

Beth Brown

- Director, Health & Well-Being Programs
- More than 16 years of experience in healthcare and well-being
- Responsible for health and well-being program operations and product strategy
- Oversees a multi-disciplinary team of coaches and well-being experts
- Master's in clinical social work; trained therapist; and certified health coach
- Pursuing a Ph.D. in Organizational Leadership





Goals:

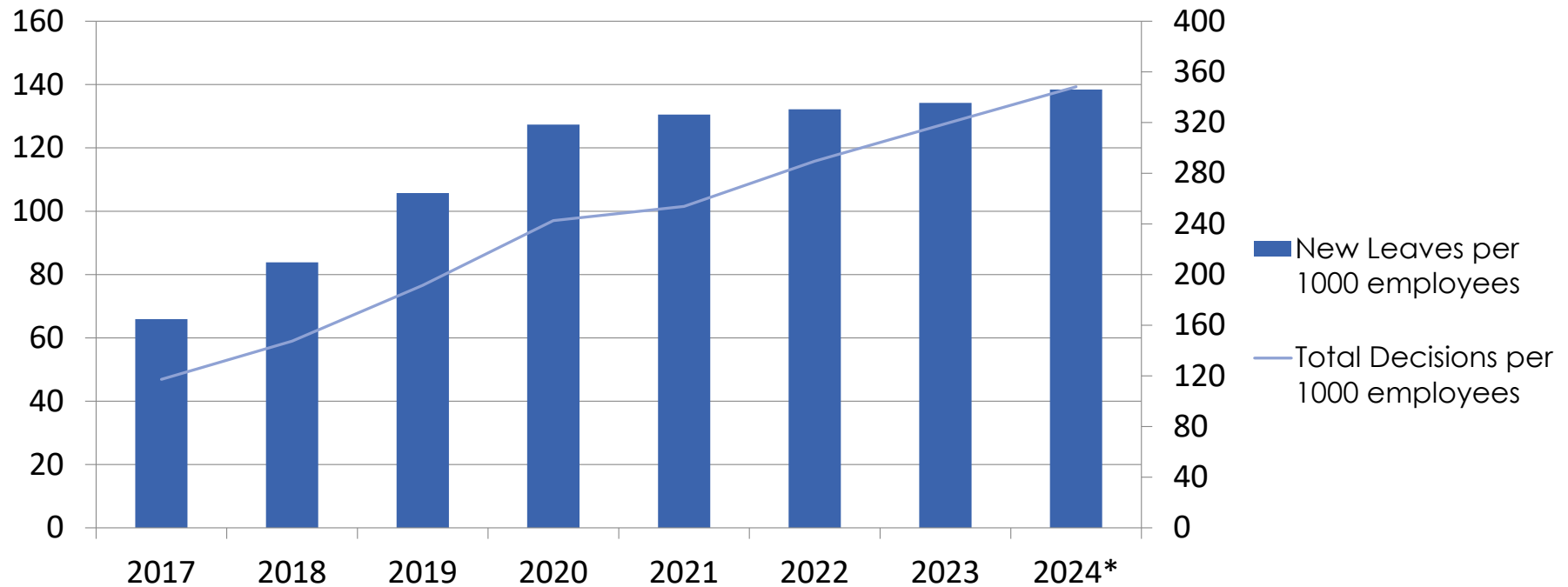
- ❑ Review recent absence and well-being challenges facing employers and their workforce
- ❑ Discuss how innovative, holistic care solutions can address a broad range of mental health, physical health and well-being issues
- ❑ Understand how preventative resources can reduce need for absence and accelerate recovery – helping employees stay at work or return more quickly

Agenda:

- Absence Trends and Challenges
- Holistic Health and Well-Being Approach
- Health & Well-Being Trends
- Opportunities to Impact Absence with Scenario Reviews
- Key Takeaways and Q&A

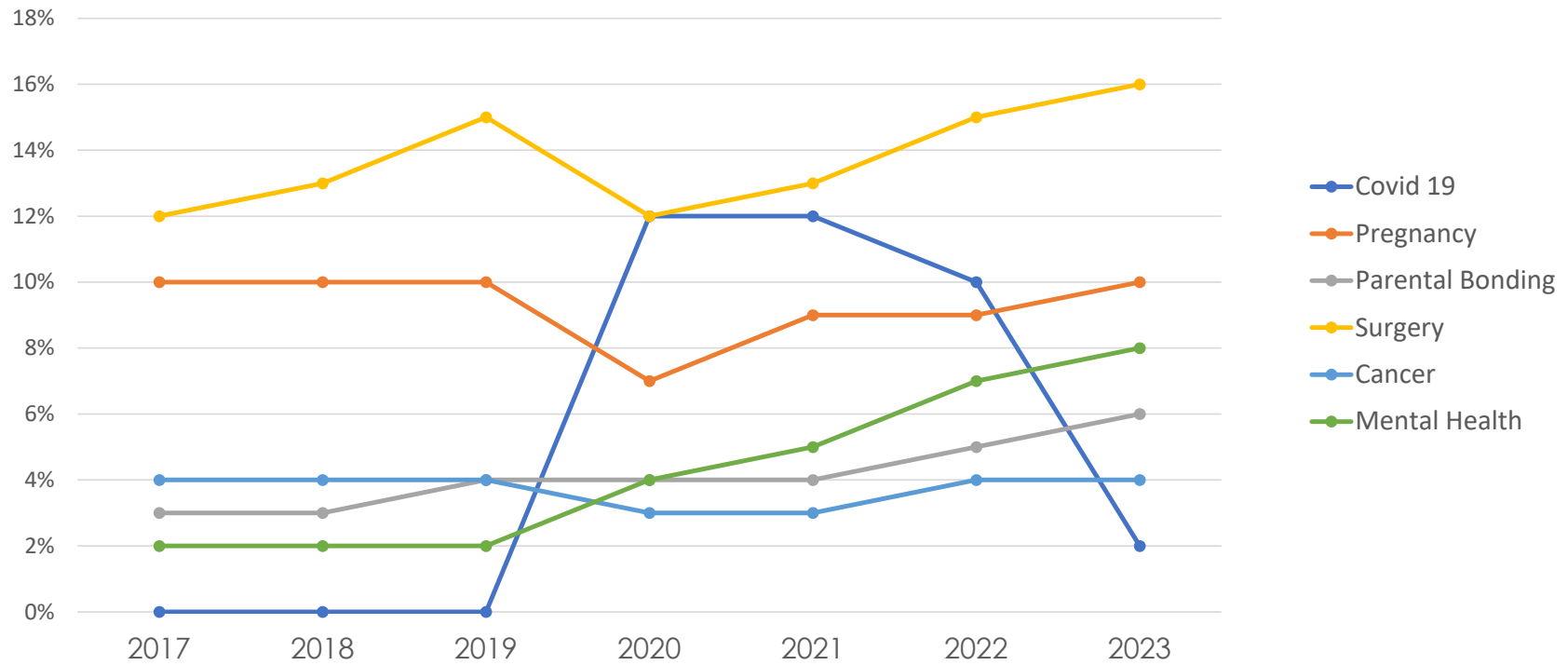


Absence Trend: Increased Utilization and Complexity

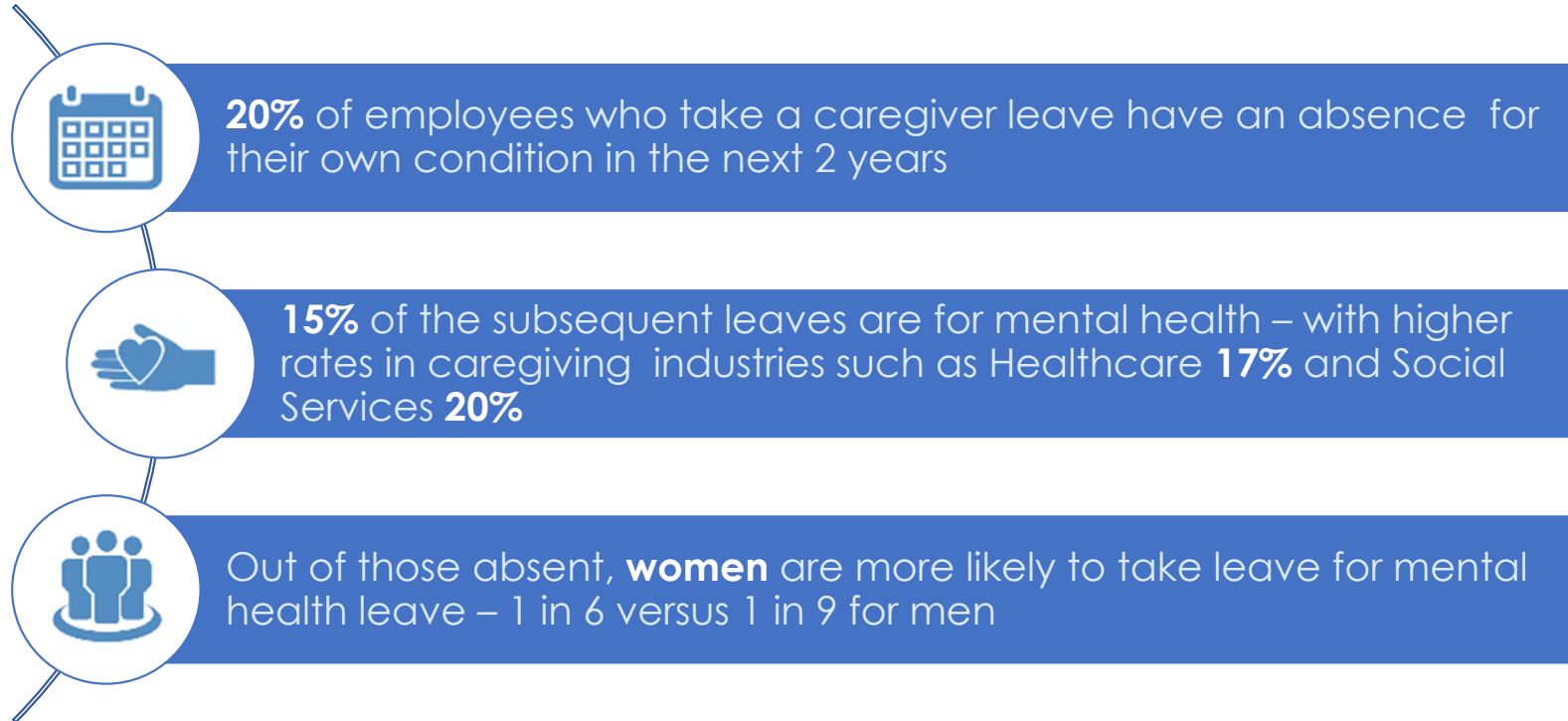


* Projected based on YTD results

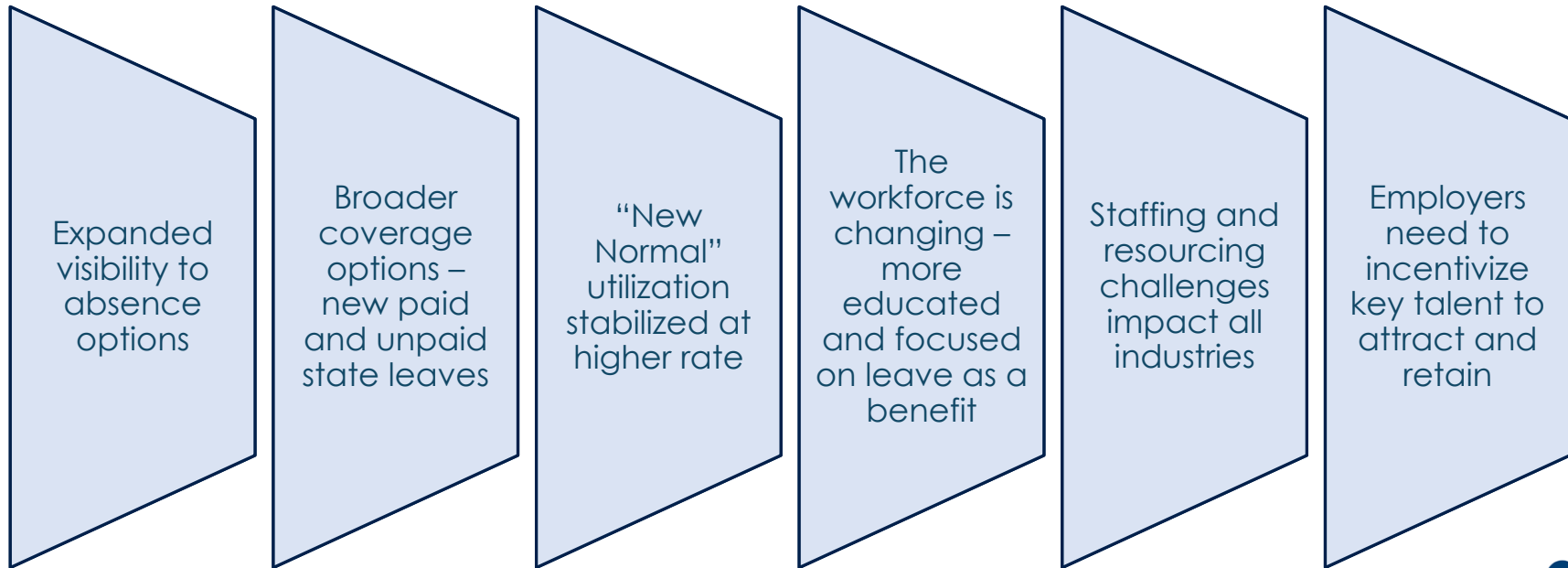
Absence Trend: Reasons for Leave



Absence Challenge: Caregiving Impact



Absence Challenge: Awareness, Landscape



Holistic Approach to Health & Well-Being



Counseling



Well-Being Coaching



Computerized Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CCBT)



Digital Well-Being Portal



Organizational Trainings



Work-Life Services

Preventative and Holistic Socio-Emotional Support



Health & Well-Being Trends: Well-Being Coaching

2023 Top Requested Coaching Programs:

- Weight Management
- Building Resiliency
- Coping with Stress
- Nutrition

2024 Top Requested Coaching Programs:

- Weight Management
- Finding Motivation
- Coping with Stress
- Nutrition



Health & Well-Being Trends: Self-Care Tools, Digital Resources

Computerized Cognitive Behavioral Therapy

- 21% improvement in well-being (WHO-5)
- 34% reduction in sleep issues (MISS)
- 10% improvement in resiliency (CD-RISC10)
- 9/10 users reduced their perceived stress after two weeks
- 2-14% increase in EAP Program utilization
- Highest engagement between 10pm-12am

Digital Health & Well-Being Portal

- Organizations investing in HRAs more than doubled from 7% in 2023 to 15% in 2024
- Organizations continue to invest in rewards and incentive programs to boost engagement and kick start healthier behaviors & increase resiliency
- Online coaching modules:
 - Top Chronic Conditions: Asthma, Hypertension, Diabetes, CAD
 - Top Lifestyle Goals: Balance Your Diet, Enjoy Exercise, Back Health, Work Life Balance

Health & Well-Being Trends: Organizational Training, Work-Life

Training Sessions

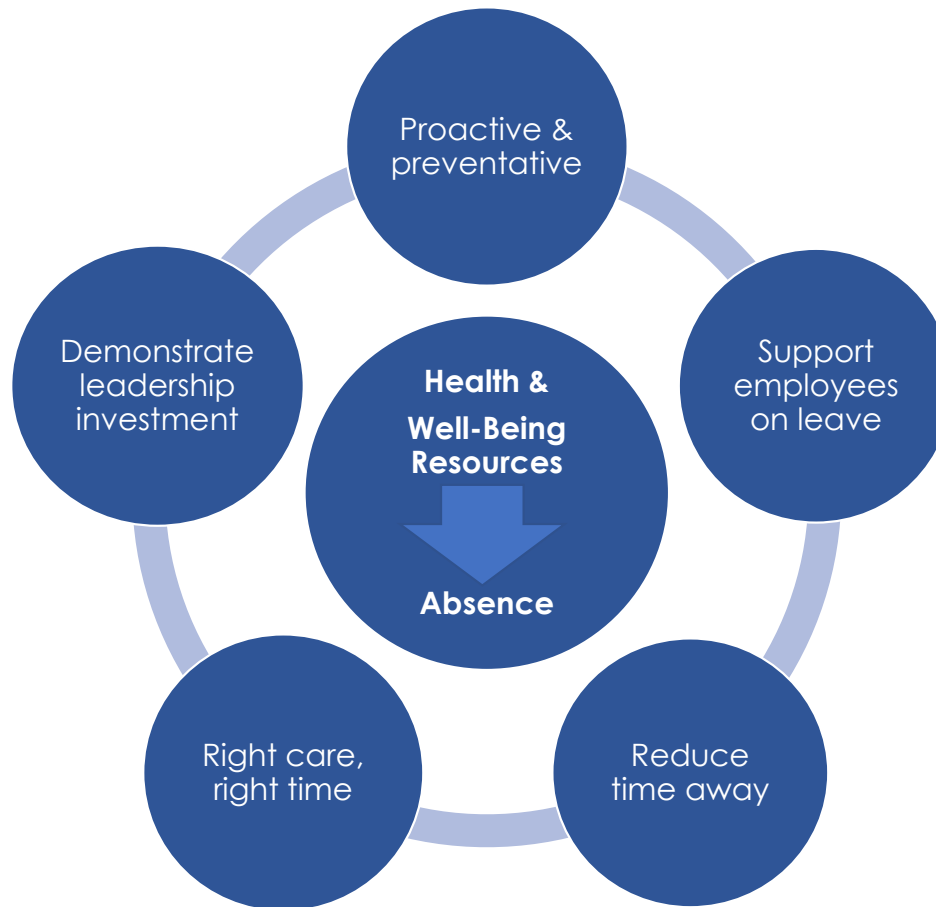
- 14,506 sessions in 2023
- Over 500,000 attendees
- Top trainings: Mental Health Awareness for Leaders, Mental Health Awareness, Tools to Handle Stress, Balancing Work and Life

Work-Life Services

- 17,345 cases in 2023
- 38% urgent cases
- Top services: Childcare, Eldercare, Moving, Government Services, Support Groups



Opportunities to Impact Absence



Scenario – Caregiver Fatigue

Name: John Smith

Age: Late 40s

Gender: Male

Residence: Suburban area

Occupation: Manufacturing Supervisor

Work Environment: Factory floor, moderate physical demands

Years in Current Position: 15 years

Health History and Habits:

- John suffers from chronic lower back pain due to herniated disc diagnosed 8 years ago
- Sometimes he has to limit physical activities, particularly lifting and prolonged standing

Absence Need:

- John's mother was recently diagnosed with cancer
- She is in her late 60s but otherwise healthy
- She is undergoing a surgery followed by chemotherapy

Impact & Considerations

- Physical and Mental effects of chronic back pain
- Generational/gender stigma with seeking support
- Life event: facing mother's mortality, impact to mental health

Well-Being Resources

- Well-Being Coaching: Back Care, Healthy Aging, Resiliency Building, Developing Self-Compassion
- Computerized Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CCBT)
- Resiliency training
- Work-life support



Absence Experience: Caregiver Fatigue

Employee's mother is ill and requires care

Employee begins to take intermittent leave

Employee is overwhelmed and struggling to focus at work

Employee takes 2 weeks off

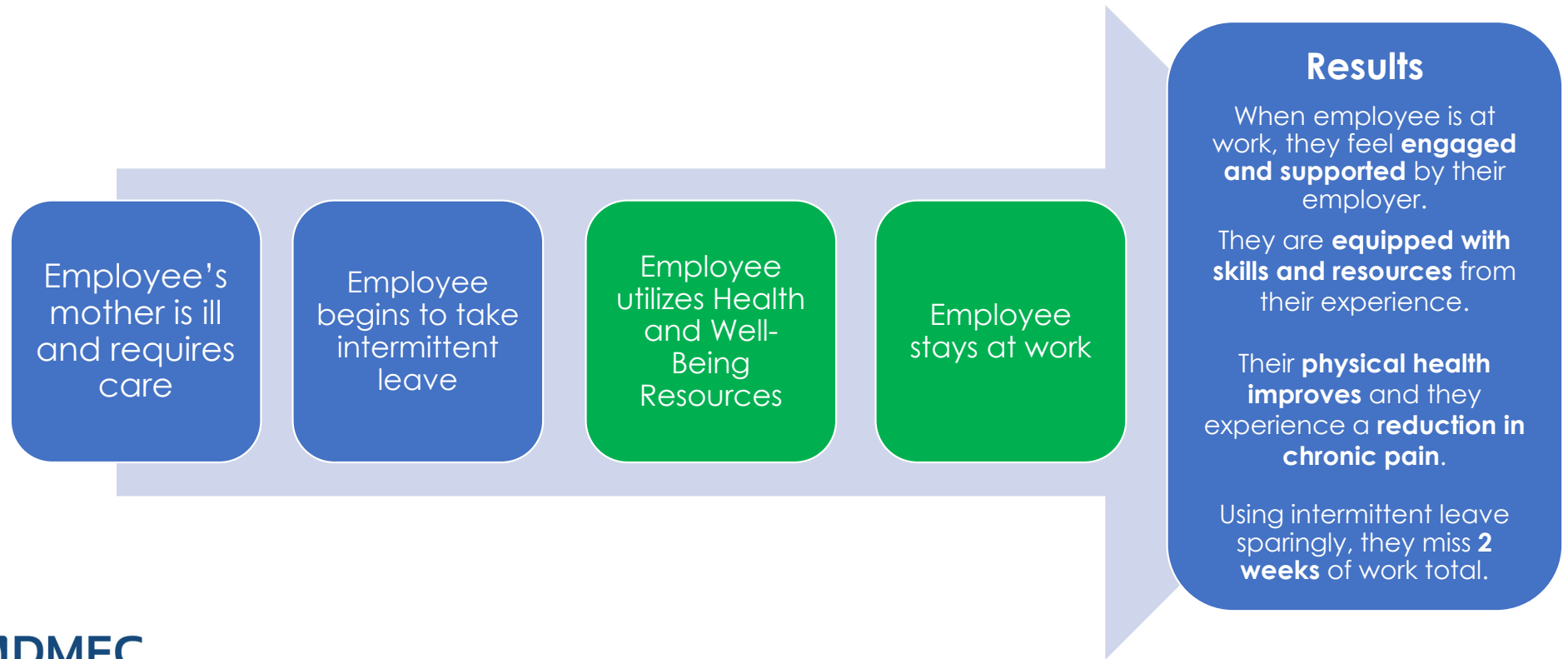
Results

When employee is at work, they are in pain, **distracted and disengaged.**

In addition to physical and mental well-being issues, they **experience financial strain being out of work** for an extended time.

They begin to cycle in and out of leave and miss **8 weeks** total.

Absence Experience: Caregiver with Well-Being Resources



Scenario – Pregnancy

Name: Emily Johnson

Age: Early 30s

Gender: Female

Residence: Urban area

Occupation: Registered Nurse

Work Environment: Hospital Setting, rotating shifts

Health History and Habits:

- Emily is in her second trimester of pregnancy, expecting her first child
- She is generally healthy with a routine pregnancy
- Her work duties have shifted slightly during pregnancy, focusing on administrative work while still working rotating shifts

Absence Need:

- Emily is taking time off intermittently for pre-natal appointments and wants to make sure she has time available for post-partum recovery and bonding with her child
- She hopes to return to work after that period

Impact & Considerations

- First time parent – can be overwhelming
- Women often believe they must “do it all” and often do not seek mental health support
- Emily is specifically seeking guidance on health habits during pregnancy

Well-Being Resources

- Well-Being Coaching: Healthy Pregnancy, Healthy Families, Nutrition & Fitness, Balancing Competing Needs
- Online Coaching via digital portal: Healthy Pregnancy
- Work-life support for child care resources
- Support post-partum



Absence Experience: Pregnancy

Employee is pregnant with her first child

Employee takes intermittent leave for appointments while working full-time

Employee is overwhelmed balancing preparation for delivery and her new child

Employee takes leave for post partum recovery and bonding then returns to work

Employee takes additional leave for post-partum depression

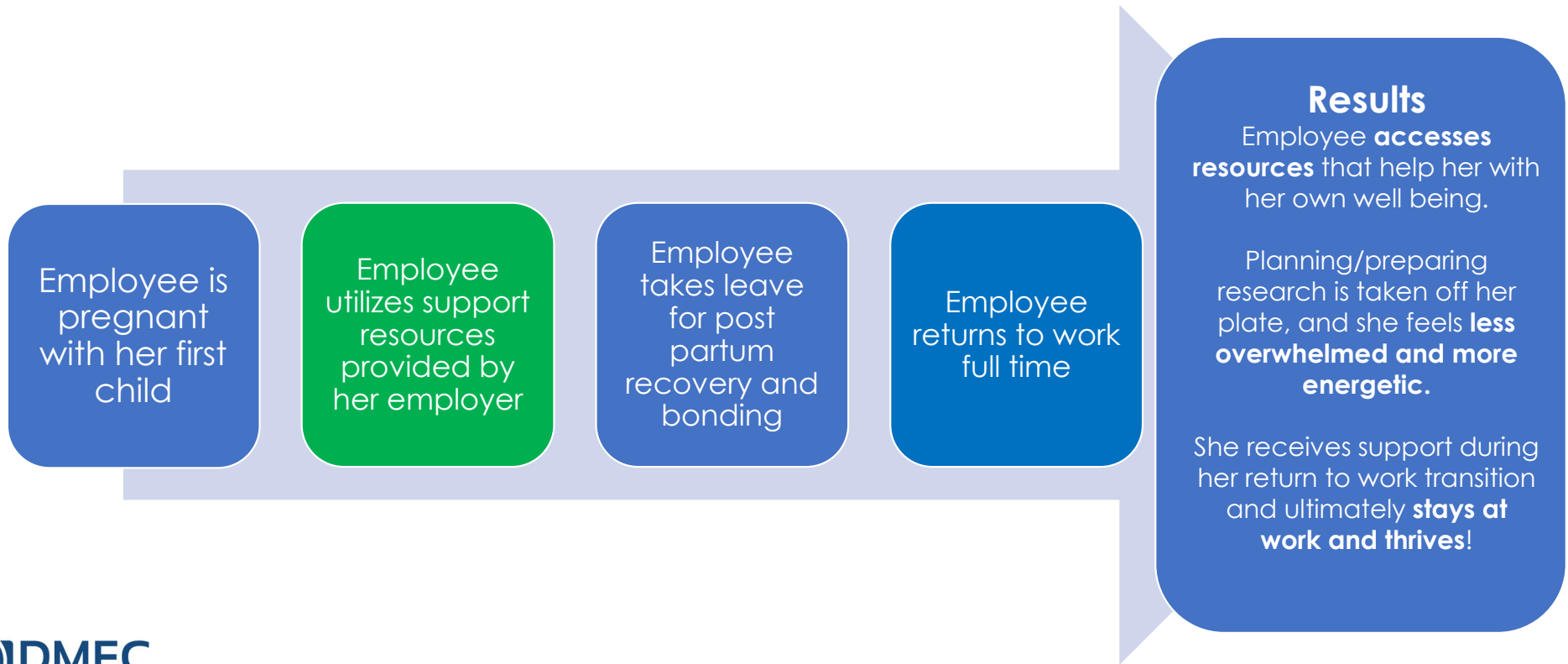
Results

When employee is at work, they are **overwhelmed and distracted**.

Upon returning to work, they **struggle through post-partum recovery** – physically and mentally.

They end up taking **more time off work** and ultimately **does not return from extended leave**.

Absence Experience: Pregnancy with Well-Being Resources



Key Takeaways

Absence Challenges

- Absence Trends indicate a “new normal” with more employees exploring and leveraging leave options than ever before
- Absence Landscape has changed – more opportunities for coverage through expanded state and company leave options

Employee Needs

- Employees are looking for employers to invest in their overall well-being through leave of absence options and benefits
- Innovative care solutions to address a broad range of socio-emotional and physical well-being challenges

Health and Well-Being Opportunities

- Preventative, proactive approach can reduce the need for overall leave
- Resources, such as Well-Being Coaching, accelerate recovery, employees return to work more quickly
- Investing in employee health and well-being results in more engaged, fulfilled workforce



Questions?

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