



News Release

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New HERO Research Demonstrates Effectiveness of Assessments in Protecting Employee Mental Health

Article published in the American Journal of Health Promotion shows how assessments can help identify conditions associated with absenteeism, presenteeism, and employee attrition plus lay the groundwork for increased productivity and engagement levels, and improved recruitment and retention.

RALEIGH, NC (January 30, 2024) —The Health Enhancement Research Organization (HERO) recently published research detailing how assessments play a crucial role in helping employers protect their employees' mental health. HERO Research Fellow Dr. Mary Imboden, Senior Research Fellow Dr. Sara Johnson, and Emily Wolfe, then Director of Learning Experience, were among a group of HERO member co-authors whose article, ["Evaluating Workforce Mental Health and Well-Being: A Review of Assessments"](#) was featured in the December issue of the *American Journal of Health Promotion*.

Key Role for Employers in Protecting Employees' Mental Health

The World Health Organization (WHO) recently emphasized the crucial role of employers in employee mental health outcomes, given a global 25% increase in prevalence of anxiety and depression triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic. And it's these employers who can specifically help quantify and protect employee mental health with the use of readily available assessments while adhering to the highest standards of confidentiality and data privacy.

Mental health conditions that can be ascertained using assessments are associated with employee attrition, absenteeism, and presenteeism – continuing to work in a performative measure, despite reduced productivity levels or negative consequences. Further, improved mental health has been shown to increase employee productivity and engagement levels, and can help with attracting and retaining employees. Data from the 2022 American Psychological Association's (APA) *Work and Well-Being Survey* indicated that 81% of workers agree that support for mental health is an important deciding factor in looking for future work.

Mental Health Assessments as a Key First Step in Evaluating and Developing a Broader Corporate Well-Being Strategy and Program

The *American Journal of Health Promotion* [article](#) notes that employee mental health assessments can provide benchmarking, enable evaluation of the impact of well-being plans administered by third-party vendors and service providers, and help determine which elements of the workforce well-being strategy and programs need to be adjusted. As such, the assessments are a key first step in developing an overall corporate health and well-being strategy and initiatives. The mental health assessments, however, need to be aligned with Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs) and other ancillary programs.

Listing of Available Resources and Ongoing Contributions to the Workplace Mental Health Knowledge Base

The *American Journal of Health Promotion* [article](#) provides employers with an overview of resources that can help them understand their workforce's mental health and well-being status across multiple domains. It lists tools related to burnout, stress, resilience, and others associated with general mental health. And the surveys reviewed can serve as a needs assessment, facilitate strategic planning of mental health and well-being initiatives, and optimize evaluation efforts.

HERO's contributions to the employer knowledge base on workforce mental health extend well beyond the [article](#) and include a [report of best practices](#), [case study videos](#), and several recorded [webinars](#). The [most recent update](#) to the HERO Health and Well-being Best Practices Scorecard in Collaboration with Mercer® includes three new best practice scores, one of which focuses on best practices for mental health.

Review Approach

The 66 publicly available mental health and well-being assessments featured in the published HERO research were vetted by respected organizations, like the APA; available in English as a stand-alone tool; utilized in an employer setting; and did not have the primary purpose of diagnosing a mental health condition. All assessments were reviewed by a minimum of two expert reviewers to document number of questions, subscales, fee structure, international use, translations available, scoring/reporting, respondent (i.e., employee or organization), and the target of the assessment (i.e., mental health domain and organizational or individual level assessments).

"Normalizing conversations about mental health is the only way to reduce stigma, and this research helps us make great strides in HERO's commitment to advancing workforce mental health," says HERO President & CEO Karen Moseley. "I'm so appreciative of the thoughtful, diligent work HERO staff and our Research and Workforce Mental Health Committee members put into summarizing and publishing the research. The findings will most assuredly help employers continue advancing overall employee health, well-being, and performance through their ongoing leadership and focus on mental health."

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About HERO

HERO (Health Enhancement Research Organization) is a not-for-profit, 501(c)(3) corporation that was established in 1996. HERO is dedicated to identifying and sharing best practices that improve the health and well-being of employees, their families, and communities. To learn more, visit www.hero-health.org. Follow us on **[LinkedIn](#)**.