

## 5 Tips for Curing Pandemic Burnout

**2020 may be over, but  
the pandemic isn't**



**And while the distribution of the first vaccines brings a glimmer of hope, there's a long way to go before life returns to some semblance of normal.**

We're still socially distancing, wearing masks and staying vigilant. Millions of Americans are still working partially or completely from home, many of them simultaneously having to look after children who aren't in daycare or school. Essential workers and health care workers are facing new levels of stress in their roles.

Meanwhile, many people have lost friends or loved ones to COVID-19, and don't have the solace of togetherness with friends and family. The political unrest of 2020 has spilled into the new year as well. It's no wonder people are feeling burnt out—including, most likely, some of your employees.

How can you support your workforce as we enter year two of the pandemic? We've got a few ideas.

## 1 Keep it real

Staying positive is good but pretending everything is fine isn't. It's important for leadership to openly acknowledge that times are tough, and express empathy for what employees may be feeling and experiencing.

## 2 Encourage people to respect work / home boundaries

Just because employees are working from home doesn't mean work should become a 24-hour affair. Expecting employees to check email at all hours or work straight through lunch every day is a recipe for burnout. Encourage your staff to respect boundaries, and not expect replies to email or calls at nine p.m., for example. And don't forget to make it clear to employees that they can and should make use of their vacation and personal days, even just for a "staycation." Taking a breather from work is as important now as it ever was—and maybe even more so.



### 3 Make space for team-building and fun

Just because in-person birthday celebrations, lunches and company-wide activities or initiatives (participation in charity walks or company outings, for example) are off the table, that doesn't mean you can't find ways to sustain workplace camaraderie and morale. Consider activities like a weekly raffle, fundraising drive or friendly fitness competition. If you have an intranet or use project management software, create a place for employees to share photos of what they've been up to. Depending on the size of your organization, you can also occasionally hold group lunches, snack breaks or happy hours via video conference.

### 4 Make sure employees are aware of their health and wellness benefits

Tufts Health Plan includes a wealth of ways to help your employees alleviate stress and take care of their physical and mental health. But often employees aren't aware of what those are. Now is the time to remind them! Tufts Health Plan commercial plan members<sup>1</sup> can access a **range of virtual resources for mind and body wellness** at a discounted rate, including live online yoga and meditation classes. The COVID-19 section of our website also includes a **number of resources**, including **tips for restlessness and boredom** while stuck at home, and **tips for staying active at home**.

<sup>1</sup> Excluding Tufts Health Direct members



## **5 End mental health stigma once and for all**

If there's one lesson we should all take away from the pandemic, it's that there is no shame in seeking out professional care for mental and behavioral health issues. Many people have been and still are suffering from increased stress and anxiety or struggles with substance use. On the upside, thanks in part to the current situation it's easier and more convenient to access behavioral health care than ever before.

Tufts Health Plan commercial members can use our telehealth partner, [Teladoc](#).<sup>2</sup> Many behavioral health care practices have their own telehealth options as well. Send a clear message to your employees that help is available—and anyone who wants it should take advantage.

**There's light at the end of the pandemic tunnel. As we head toward it together, Tufts Health Plan is here to support our members and employers however we can.**

**To learn more, call your broker or account representative, or visit us at: [tuftshealthplan.com/employercontact](https://tuftshealthplan.com/employercontact)**

<sup>2</sup> For all Fully-insured members (not including Tufts Health Direct) and members of Self-insured groups that did not opt out; cost share may apply to some Self-insured groups.