

Tackling Chronic Pain by *Meeting People Where They Are*

Although 80% of business leaders [surveyed](#) recognized that chronic pain was a concern for their organizations, the same number (80%) did not know how to deal with employees in pain. Almost all (77%) wanted to know they they can do as leaders to help. The National Alliance offers a video and resources to support employers in creating an inclusive, empathetic workplace.

Understanding Chronic Pain

- ▶ Persistent pain that lasts for over three months and interferes with daily life
- ▶ Can occur anywhere in the body
- ▶ May be present at all times or may come and go
- ▶ Often caused by injury or illness, but can happen for no obvious reason

Facts about chronic pain

\$560–\$635B

National annual economic cost associated with chronic pain



116M

US adults living with chronic pain (17M of whom have high-impact chronic pain)

[National Library of Medicine](#)



79%

People with chronic pain who screen positive or moderate to severe for a mental health condition

[Mental Health America](#)

Demonstrating the importance of meeting people where they are

- ▶ Patients who received materials to accommodate limited reading skills were more than three times as likely to experience significant improvement in chronic pain severity.
- ▶ Cutting edge technology and non-opioid solutions to manage musculoskeletal pain led to a staggering 92% of participants affirming the program's efficacy.

Key insights from experts in the National Alliance chronic pain video

Mohannad (Ned) Kusti, MD

Optimal Workplace & Environmental Wellness Corporation



- ▶ Employers are greatly concerned about how to effectively support employees suffering from chronic pain.
- ▶ Chronic pain is of paramount importance for employers as it impacts 40% of the workforce and leads to billions of dollars in health care costs.
- ▶ There is an imperative need to create an environment of trust where employees are comfortable talking about their condition.

Sharon Eloranta, MD

Washington Health Alliance



- ▶ Patients often experience frustration and depression because they are not getting better. This impacts a person's ability to take in and accept messaging.
- ▶ Another barrier is literacy challenges, with about 21% of US adults not reading at all, and 54% reading at or below a 6th grade reading level.

Russell Dubose, CHVA, ShRBP

Phifer Incorporated



- ▶ Left unaddressed, chronic pain can lead to chronic absenteeism, disengaged employees, unhappy employees, and depression and other mental health conditions.
- ▶ Early intervention and equitable, no-cost access to treatment through onsite navigators and patient advocates creates opportunities to communicate and build relationships to improve condition management.

Beverly Thorn, PhD

Professor Emerita University of Alabama



- ▶ At the end of this study, people who did not read well did much better. It has to do with the treatment materials and the way we approached the treatment to meet patients where they are at. You not only have to change the materials, you have to change your approach.
- ▶ Research evidence is critical in making healthcare benefits decisions.

