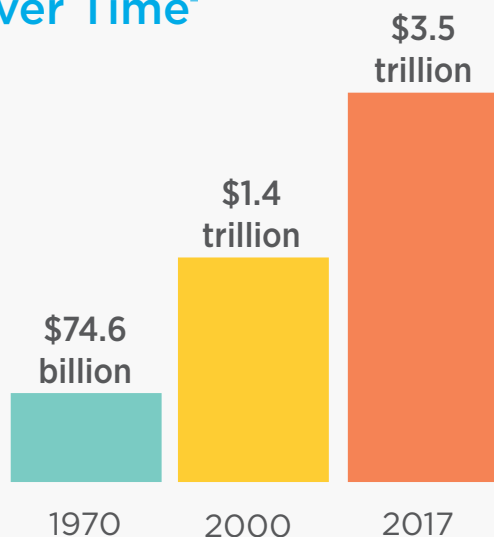


# Engaging the Right People

## *Leveraging the “Who” and “How” of Digital Health Coaching for Employee Engagement*

For much of recent history, employers’ healthcare costs have been rising exponentially. For every 100 employees in an organization, chronic conditions such as Type 2 Diabetes and obesity can cost an employer almost \$90,000 per year. The need for health and wellness initiatives in the workplace is more pressing than ever, with some occupations requiring more intervention than others. Personalized digital health coaching has shown to positively impact individuals with chronic conditions and lower overall healthcare costs.

### Health Care Expenditures Over Time<sup>2</sup>



However, one critical question remains: how does a company ensure they are reaching the right people - those [20% that account for over 80% of your healthcare costs](#)? Defining a clear target is as important as developing measurable goals and outcomes when it comes to curbing healthcare spending and improving health outcomes for employees.

This paper will dive into the way digital health coaching impacts populations by risk level, as well as the strategies, theories, and models used to ensure you are reaching the right people with the right services at the right time.

# POPULATION HEALTH RISK STRATIFICATION

Risk stratification is a way of grouping patients in order to better predict their care needs and prevent worsening health outcomes. Risk levels are defined based on factors such as health status, health behaviors, and quantity and complexity of care needs. The [National Association of Community Health Centers](#) identifies the four groups of population health management risk stratification: highly complex, high risk, rising risk and low risk. Each of these categories requires a different amount of care and the type of intervention implemented will provide a different return on investment. Here's what you need to know.

## Low risk employees

are generally healthy and their health status is stable. These employees that have little to no family medical history and are at low risk for developing a chronic condition. Costs: Not a lot. They're the most likely to participate in fitness incentives and wellness programming, from your step challenge to your on-site gym, but they don't need (and won't want) digital health coaching for a chronic condition.

## Rising risk employees

are newly diagnosed or at high risk of developing a chronic condition. These employees are often the most motivated, and the most likely to sign up for a digital health coaching program - either specific to a diagnosis they're grappling with, or in an attempt to lose weight. If engaged with evidence-based tools and resources, they may be able to prevent or slow the development of chronic conditions and expenditures down the line - making them a key target to maximize long term ROI.

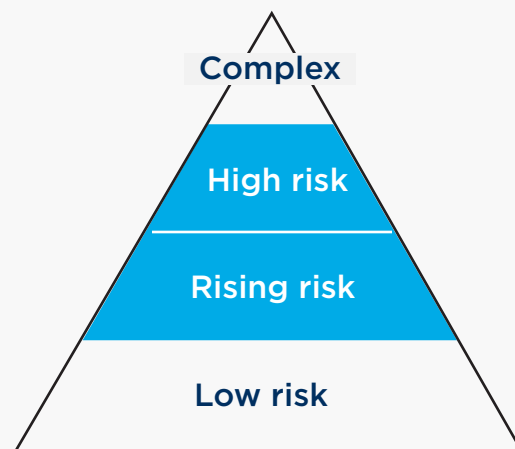
## High risk employees

are those with one or more chronic conditions, who cost you thousands in medical and pharmaceutical costs each year. With a high touch, diagnosis-specific digital health coaching program, they can achieve behavioral and clinical improvement, with meaningful implications for your bottom line. There are two keys for demonstrating impact in this segment. First, providing condition-specific examples - for example how members with RA report 50% fewer flares per month. Second, by highlighting how digital health coaching can simplify the employee's experience - from providing personalized meal plans to coordinating key doctor's appointments.

## Highly complex employees

are a small portion of the population, but they require the highest amount of care. These individuals generally have multiple, complex conditions, high levels of barriers, and require

## Population Health Risk Pyramid



*Maximize the impact of a digital health coaching intervention by targeting communications to rising risk and high risk employees.*

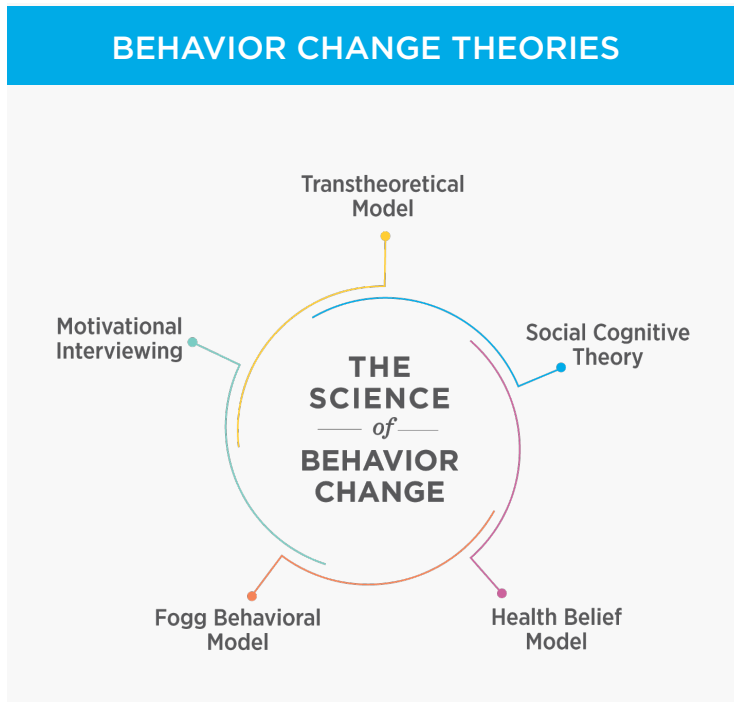
regular, intensive care. They are likely to be on medical leave, and working with a clinical case manager. Digital health coaching is a helpful tool to keep them on track when they are on the mend and returning to work.

## THE SCIENCE OF BEHAVIOR CHANGE

At Pack Health, we focus on 5 core behavior change theories to deliver evidence-based support. As valuable as these frameworks are for coaching individuals on their journey to better health, they can also inform strategic communications at an organizational level to reach the right people, with the right messages, at the right time.

### The Transtheoretical Model

states that individuals move along stages of behavior change. A person moves from a stage of precontemplation, or complete unawareness of a needed change, to a termination stage, or a point of complete change with no intent to relapse. At Pack Health, Health Advisors assess where a member falls on the stages of change for a certain behavior, and leverage the appropriate process(es) of change at any given stage of their member's health journey. At an organizational level, the transtheoretical model reminds us that receptivity and readiness to engage is one of the biggest predictors of success in behavior change initiatives.



**Use the transtheoretical model to maximize ROI:** *Choose programs that are opt-in, rather than opt-out, with engagement-based pricing models to ensure that your wellness budget goes towards programs that motivate and move the needle for employees.*

### Social Cognitive Theory

focuses on how personal experience, observation, and perceived control influences health behaviors. It's central to how we help members set health goals, both big and small. Health Advisors coach individuals to set specific and achievable goals taking into account previous attempts, barriers, and motivators. Success metrics are assessed in order to build self efficacy and take on new challenges. What about in the workplace?

**Use Social Cognitive Theory to create a culture of wellness:** *Invite employees to provide feedback on resources or actions at an organizational level would be helpful for their health goals. Find ways to be responsive, and empower employees to regain control of their health.*

## The Health Belief Model

describes how individual beliefs influence health decisions, including factors such as the perceived severity of the health threat and self-efficacy. Pack Health Advisors ask specific questions to gauge health beliefs and coach around barrier action plans to increase self-efficacy. Are you addressing your employees health beliefs or health self efficacy?

**Provide opportunities to enhance knowledge:** *Provide educational opportunities for employees to learn more about the factors that could impact their health. Include disease education, accessibility options and regular prevention tips.*

## The Fogg Behavioral Model

centers on the elements of motivation, ability, and triggers. When these three elements converge simultaneously, behavior change can occur. Pack Health members are taught to identify “triggers” such as putting a daily medication next to their tooth brush or keeping their gym bag in the passenger seat as a reminder to exercise after work. How might you trigger employees to remember and act on healthy options?

**Maximize touchpoints to trigger participation:** *Consistency and ease are the cornerstone of an effective program. Providing reminders across multiple communication channels can increase participation in programming. For each activity or initiative you organize, end with a call to action and schedule a time to follow up.*

## Motivational Interviewing

involves asking open-ended questions and providing information in a neutral and non-judgemental way to empower individuals to make health decisions on their own terms. This technique is used by Health Advisors to help members increase self-awareness, find personalized solutions, and build healthy habits that stick.

**Use Motivational Interviewing to increase engagement:** *Invite employees to share feedback on lifestyle goals and interventions by asking open, reflective questions. Provide affirming responses to empower employees to regain control of their health. Ask permission to share resources, and help employees recognize their successes and motivation to change.*

## THE BOTTOM LINE

Reaching the right people with the right care at the right time is a unique challenge, but risk stratification and behavior change science can help you maximize the impact of your efforts and the return on your spending. Digital Health Coaching is a flexible and turnkey solution to help you reach people with chronic conditions and make wellness work.

### Learn more:

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