THE STATE OF MIGRAINE DISEASE IN THE WORKPLACE 2021

How organizations perceive migraine disease, provide accommodations, and incorporate practices to help improve the chances of success

Many managers and HR professionals lack knowledge about migraine disease

- 60% of HR professionals agree or strongly agree that migraine disease can be considered a disability in their organization.
- Further, 71% of direct supervisors lack knowledge about migraine disease.
- 21% say they themselves lack knowledge.

Does migraine disease carry a stigma?

- 40% of participants say direct supervisors think that employees who report migraine attacks are “faking it” or “exaggerating.”
- 39% also say supervisors do not think migraine attacks are a valid reason for missing work.
- 36% say direct supervisors do not view the disease as debilitating.

In short, yes! Especially among direct supervisors.

Employee well-being and company productivity is affected by migraine disease

- 64% report that employees with migraine disease have worked even while suffering attacks.
- 86% say migraine attacks sometimes or always impair employees’ ability to work.
- 75% say employees with migraine disease use paid or unpaid sick days sometimes or more often.

How do employers accommodate employees with migraine disease?

- Only 56% of HR professionals agree or strongly agree that their organization does a good job of helping and accommodating employees with migraine disease.
- The three accommodations organizations offer to employees with migraine disease are:
  - Flexibility in schedules/breaks 56%
  - Ability to telecommute 51%
  - Alternative lighting (e.g., replace fluorescent lights) 50%

Especially among direct supervisors.
The “Migraine in the Workplace 2021” survey ran from July to October 2020, and was produced in partnership with Aimed Alliance. Aimed Alliance received sponsorship from Amgen and Novartis. There were 309 usable complete and partial responses gathered from U.S.-based HR professionals in virtually every industry vertical. The participants represent a broad cross-section of employers by number of employees, ranging from small businesses with fewer than 50 employees to enterprises with 20,000+ employees.

What health coverage restrictions are imposed on medications used to treat migraine disease?

Some HR professionals believe that their organizations’ health plans impose restrictions on care:

- 49% impose quantity limit restrictions
- 43% impose prior authorization requirements
- 34% impose step therapy requirements
- 18% allow mid-year formulary changes
- 17% implement copay accumulator programs

What types of support are organizations most inclined to offer in the future?

- 44% think their organization will offer migraine training and education for the employer and employees
- 30% think their organization will offer a migraine management program
- 24% think their organization will offer patient navigation services to help employees understand health benefits

What do migraine management leaders* do differently?

Migraine management leaders are more likely than migraine management laggards to offer health insurance that covers migraine disease:

- 73% vs 42%

Migraine management leaders are less likely to have restrictions on medications to treat migraine disease:

- Prior authorization: 19% vs 29%
- Quantity limits: 16% vs 34%

Consider these strategies:

- Create a training program to educate managers about migraine disease, associated stigmas and disability law
- Review and update the organization’s culture
- Review or consider offering benefit plans and wellness programs
- Consider a migraine management awareness campaign
- Take actions to minimize stress in the workplace
- Provide personalized accommodations (when needed and within reason) to those with migraine disease
- Stay up-to-date on regulations, policies and procedures
- Incorporate non-stigmatized terminology
- Offer comprehensive health coverage with sufficient access to medications, treatments, and health care providers

About the Survey

The HR Research Institute tracks human resources trends and best practices. Learn more at hr.com/featuredresearch

Established in 2013 and based in Washington, D.C., Aimed Alliance is a nonprofit health policy organization that works to protect and enhance the rights of health care consumers and providers. Aimed Alliance achieves this mission by conducting legal research and analysis; developing sound, patient-centered policy recommendations; and disseminating its findings to inform policymakers and increase public awareness. Learn more at aimedalliance.org

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The State of Migraine Disease in the Workplace 2021

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* Migraine management leaders: respondents who strongly agree or agree that their organization does a good job at helping and accommodating employees with migraine disease
* Migraine management laggards: respondents who strongly disagree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree that their organization does a good job at helping and accommodating employees with migraine disease
* In actuality, these numbers may be much higher