

**INFORM.  
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EMPOWER.**

**February 2026**

WORKPLACE OPTIONS

**MARKETING  
NEWSLETTER**



## International Women's Day: a toolkit for workplace leaders



This International Women's Day, let's ask ourselves a harder question: Are our workplaces truly designed for the full reality of women's lives, or just the version that's easiest to accommodate? Burnout in women is rarely about a single stressor.

It's about the pressure to perform without pause, to lead without rest, to give without replenishment, and to succeed without acknowledging the cost. It's time to move beyond symbolic support and towards structural empathy.

Our new International Women's Day toolkit offers practical guidance to help organizations:

- Create flexibility as a strategic investment, not a concession
- Build proactive, accessible support systems
- Design workplaces that account for caring, health transitions, and life complexity

**[Available in 12 languages, download for free now](#)**

## ERG Leader Certificate Program

Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are a powerful driver of DEI impact. They serve as a source of employee feedback, strengthen engagement and belonging, and create opportunities for professional development. But this impact is only possible when ERGs are built thoughtfully, with clear structure and strong leadership.

On April 28, 2026, The Center for Organizational Effectiveness (COE) and The Diversity Movement (TDM) will host a virtual public cohort for its ERG Certificate program. This 4-hour, instructor-led experience is designed to equip ERG leaders with the skills to drive sustainable impact.



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# ERG Leader Certificate Program

## PUBLIC COHORT

with Susie Silver, CDE

April 28, 2026 | 10am-3pm ET



### Participants will:

- Strengthen inclusive leadership skills and lead across differences
- Clarify ERG structure, governance, and executive sponsorship roles
- Use data and metrics to demonstrate ERG impact
- Develop sustainable leadership habits that prevent burnout
- Gain confidence in setting goals, managing priorities, and building momentum
- Align ERG initiatives with broader business objectives and DEI goals

The program features an interactive, team-based learning approach and includes continued access to TDM resources as well as a certificate upon completion.

Explore the full program details and [\*\*reserve your spot today.\*\*](#)

## Stories from the front: Promoting Heart Health month

The month of February is devoted to prevention, marked by observances like Preventive Health Month in Canada and American Heart Month and Cancer Prevention Month in the U.S.—calling on individuals to take better care of their health and urging community players, like employers, to do their part in expanding access to the care, information, and tools people need to protect themselves from disease.

Many of today's most common drivers of morbidity—cancer, heart disease, diabetes, and obesity—are, in fact, preventable through a combination of healthy habits and regular screening. Yet for many, getting started—and staying consistent—can be a challenge.

That's exactly where wellness coaching comes in, providing access to a global network of credentialed coaches who offer tailored guidance across core areas like nutrition, fitness, sleep, weight management, and stress—placing people on the path to better health with small, sustainable steps.

Building a healthier life doesn't need to happen overnight. As this case shows, incremental adjustments are often the surest way to bring about lasting change.



With a **structured plan** in place, the participant was put in a stronger position to ward off future cardiac events—**not only protecting but actively fortifying both his mental and physical health.**



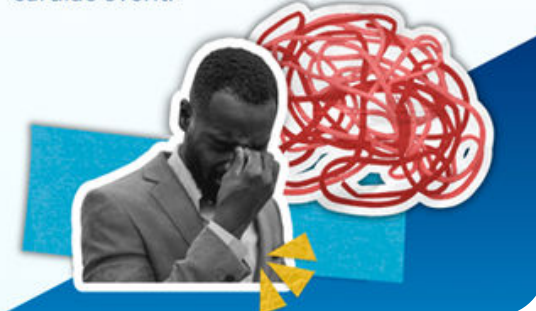
Be the reason for success stories like this by **partnering with Workplace Options.**

\*Disclaimer: Some details in this story have been changed to ensure anonymity.

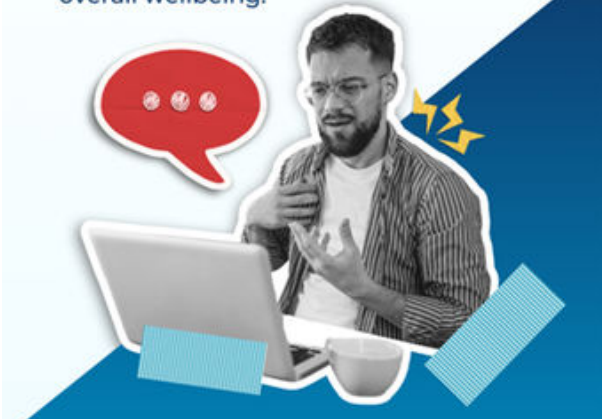


**Heart attacks are a health threat of a particularly insidious nature:** surviving one only primes a person for another—due not only to the physical damage done, but the **emotional trauma** caused.

**Anxiety, stress, fear, and uncertainty all heighten the risk of heart attack or stroke,** and are often the very emotions that surface in the aftermath of a cardiac event.



**For one individual who reached out to WPO's Clinical Team, this was exactly the predicament he faced.** A history of both heart attack and stroke had left him with crippling health anxiety, which was paradoxically placing strain on his overall wellbeing.



The clinician worked with him on a plan to **restore emotional balance and regain a sense of control over his health.**



This included **psychoeducation** on the importance of detaching from worries and focusing on the present, as well as **guided mindfulness exercises** designed to calm his heart rate and quiet his fight-or-flight response.

## LATEST RESOURCES

### Latest Podcast: The Value Proposition of Mental Health Support for Insurers

Mental health claims are placing increasing pressure on disability insurers, accounting for a significant share of claims and ranking among the most complex and costly to manage.

Across global markets, these claims continue to rise and frequently result in prolonged absence, decreased engagement, and even turnover. For insurers, this shift demands a reassessment of how mental health is managed across the claims lifecycle.

In a recent podcast conversation, Kay Burd, Director of Business Solutions at Workplace Options, explores what is driving this evolution and why counseling solutions are becoming a critical component of modern disability management. Once viewed primarily as high-risk or difficult to adjudicate, mental health claims are now receiving greater attention as awareness grows and expectations around employer duty of care evolve. Safe and healthy workplaces increasingly encompass both physical and psychological wellbeing.

Listen to the full conversation with Kay Burd to learn how mental health support is becoming a strategic lever in disability risk management: [\*\*The Value Proposition of Mental Health for Insurers - Workplace Options\*\*](#)



The image shows a podcast cover with a dark blue background. At the top, there are two circular headshots of women: Emily Fournier on the left and Kay Burd on the right. Below the headshots, the title 'THE VALUE PROPOSITION OF MENTAL HEALTH FOR INSURERS' is written in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. Underneath the title, the text 'WITH EMILY FOURNIER, MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER AND KAY BURD, DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS SOLUTIONS AT WPO' is also in white, all-caps, sans-serif font. At the bottom left, the 'WORKPLACE OPTIONS' logo is displayed, featuring a white circle with a dot inside above the text. At the bottom right, the text 'WELLBEING AT WORK' is written in white, all-caps, sans-serif font, with 'A Workplace Options Podcast' in a smaller font below it.

**THE VALUE PROPOSITION OF  
MENTAL HEALTH FOR INSURERS**

WITH **EMILY FOURNIER**, MARKETING AND  
COMMUNICATIONS MANAGER AND **KAY BURD**,  
DIRECTOR OF BUSINESS SOLUTIONS AT WPO

**WORKPLACE OPTIONS**

**WELLBEING AT WORK**  
A Workplace Options Podcast

## The Case for Cancer Support in Disability Insurance: Why Recovery Doesn't End at Medical Clearance



As survivorship grows, cancer is increasingly recognized as a long-term disability risk, not a singular medical event. It requires structured psychosocial and vocational support to ensure sustainable recovery and return-to-work stability.

The risk now lies in what happens after treatment ends. Return-to-work support is critical to stabilizing claims and mitigating long-term risk, yet many strategies still treat medical clearance as the endpoint of recovery.

The transition back to work is often the most fragile phase of the journey. Cancer survivors frequently face lingering physical, cognitive, and emotional symptoms that complicate reintegration. Without coordinated psychosocial and vocational support, recovery can become unstable, resulting in repeated leave, prolonged claims, or permanent workforce exit.

In a recent conversation, Yara Maria Kamel, Global Clinical Solutions Manager at Workplace Options, explains why insurers must rethink the return-to-work milestone as the beginning of a new phase of risk management and recovery. Through Cancer Care Compass, WPO provides a clinically guided pathway that bridges medical recovery and professional reintegration, helping insurers support durable outcomes while minimizing claim volatility.

This shift repositions insurers from passive payers to proactive partners in recovery, supporting durable reintegration while mitigating long-term claim risk.

Read the full interview to explore how oncology-informed support is redefining return-to-work stability and long-term claim outcomes: [\*\*The Case for Cancer Support in Disability Insurance: An Interview with Yara Maria Kamel, Global Clinical Services Manager - Workplace Options.\*\*](#)

## **WPO in the News: World Cancer Day - Why action plans matter more than benefits alone**

This World Cancer Day, Workplace Options President and CEO Alan King spoke out about what cancer-affected employees really need in the workplace, and it's not what most organizations think.

In a featured interview with Benefits and Pensions Monitor, Alan discussed why comprehensive cancer support goes far beyond traditional benefits. The reality? Employees facing cancer need structured action plans, flexibility, and genuine organizational commitment to thrive during treatment and recovery.

Generic benefits packages miss the mark. What makes the difference is intentional workplace support—clear policies, manager training, peer support networks, and individualized care plans that acknowledge the unique challenges cancer presents.

Discover Alan's perspective on building cancer-inclusive workplaces and the actionable steps organizations can take today. **[Read the full article on Benefits and Pensions Monitor.](#)**

**Thanks for reading.**

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