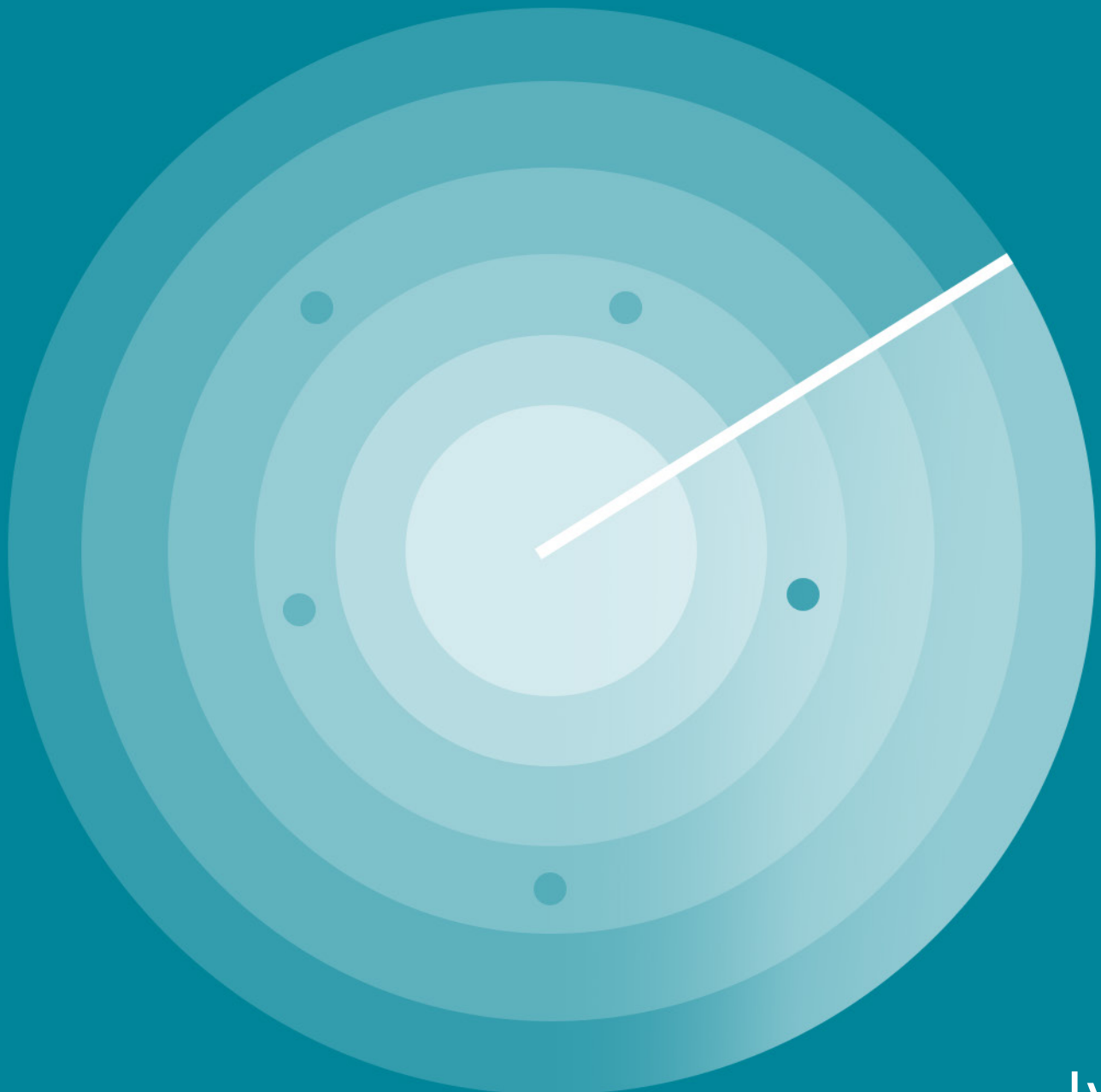


APRIL 2020

# Under the radar: Impact of COVID-19 on mental health of US workers

Analysis of the pandemic's impact on  
mental health care providers and  
US workers seeking care



lyra

## Introduction

In just a few weeks, the COVID-19 pandemic has drastically changed workplace culture and dynamics. This shift is impacting employee mental health, well-being, and productivity. Employees are struggling to adapt amid fears about health, job security, and the economy.

Adding to this strain, the public health measures of social distancing and self-isolation make mental health threats and challenges much harder to identify. As a result, employees' mental health issues are more likely to fly under the radar of leadership and management teams.

Mental health providers are on the front lines of supporting patients dealing with fear, anxiety, depression, and more complex issues such as self-harm. To get a pulse on the current state of mental health in the workforce, we surveyed more than 450 private practice therapists in the Lyra network across all 50 states at the end of March.

We also analyzed anonymous aggregated data from thousands of people who receive care from Lyra to understand how the pandemic is affecting mental health.

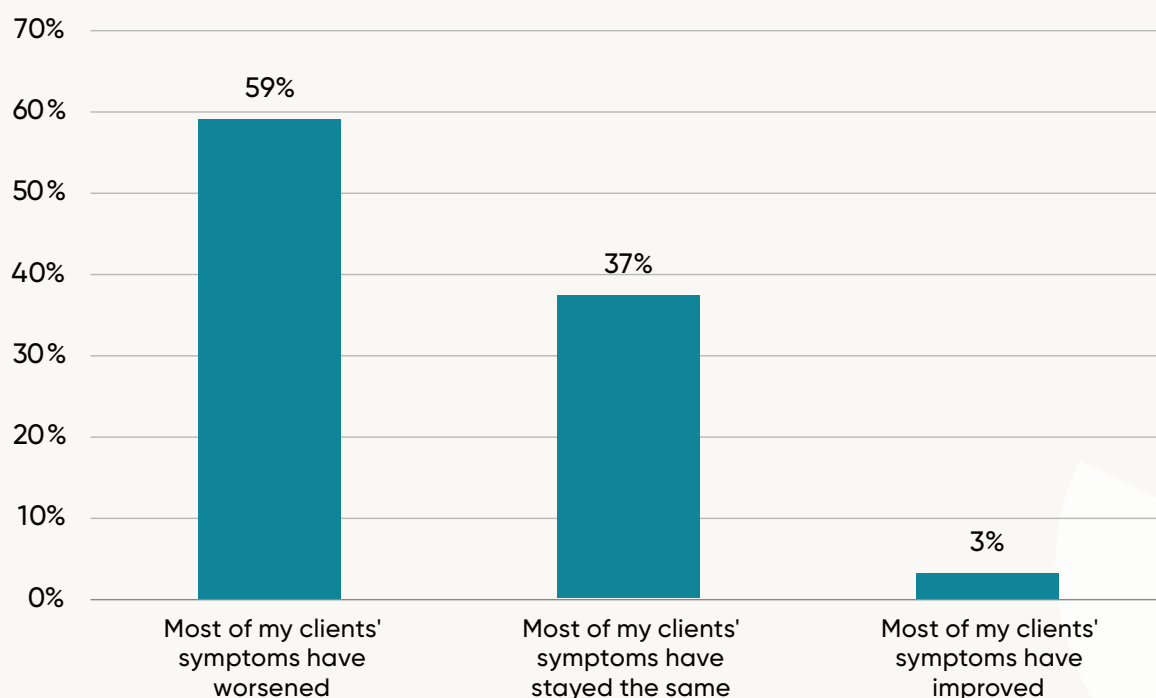
Here are the key takeaways from our study, along with guidance for leadership teams to best support their workforces.

## Anxiety, depression, and mental health issues are on the rise

As employees cope with worries and anxiety related to the coronavirus pandemic, while juggling obligations such as conference calls and child care, their mental capacity is strained.

**60% of mental health practitioners report that their clients' symptoms are worsening.**

Since the pandemic began, how have your clients' symptoms of anxiety, depression, or other mental health issues changed?

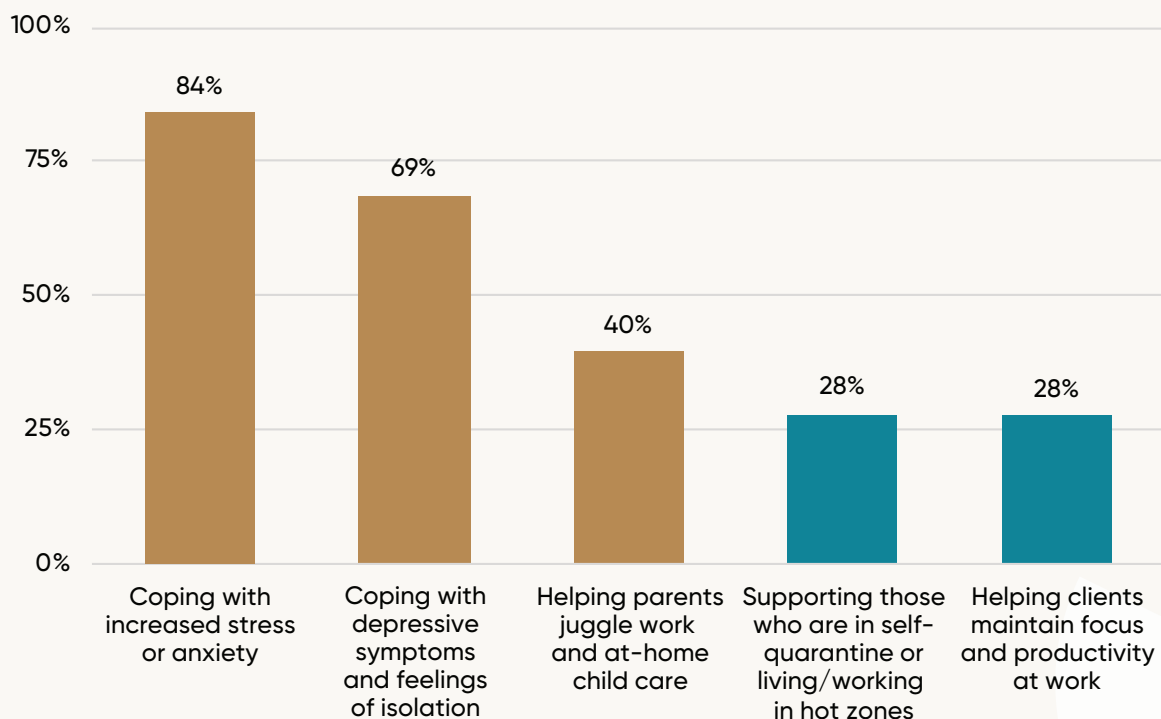


## Stress and anxiety are a significant concern

Many employees are adjusting to working from home under challenging conditions.

**84% of providers are most concerned about the stress and anxiety of their clients.**

### What are your top three concerns for your clients during the pandemic?

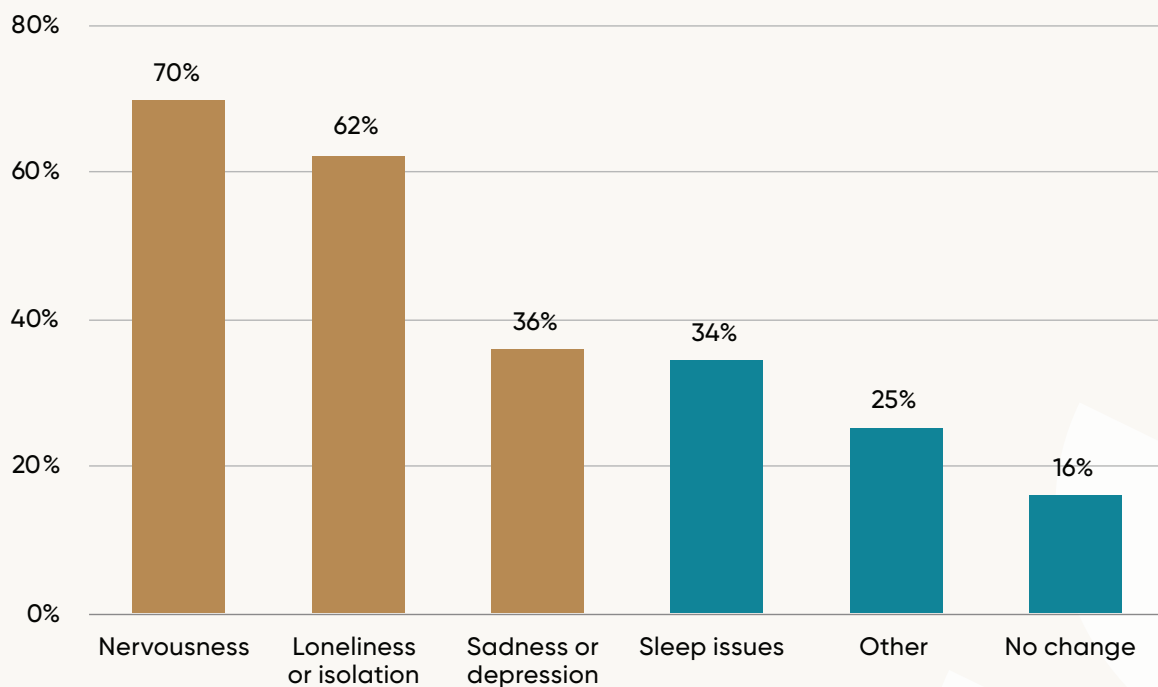


## We are also seeing more urgent, critical needs

COVID-19 has reduced the emotional support individuals may have had at work or within the community. Public health mandates to shelter at home or quarantine are making it harder for employees to get the care and support they need.

**Individuals have expressed that their top concerns are feeling nervous, lonely and isolated, or sad or depressed.**

**If your clients' symptoms have worsened, what concerns have they shared most with you**



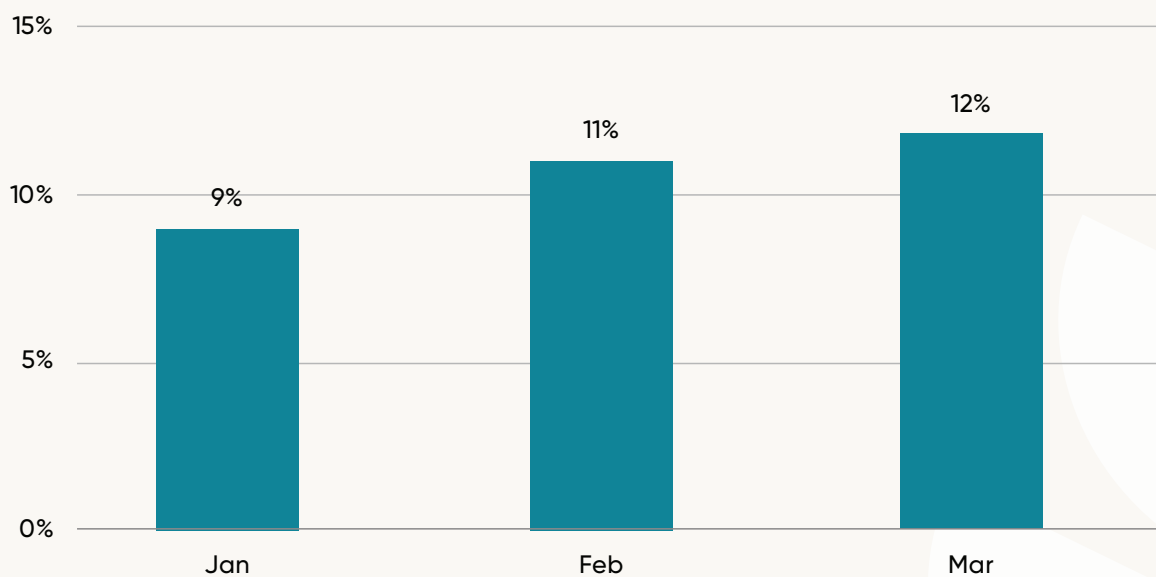
# Thoughts of suicide or self-harm are climbing up

During this challenging time, individuals are experiencing much more high-risk mental health conditions, such as suicidality and self-harm.

**By the end of March, the month when most stay-at-home orders went into effective, 12% of individuals signing up for care through Lyra indicated self-harm or thoughts of suicide. This is a 33% increase from January, before the pandemic had a significant impact on American lives.**

*Note: When someone signs up for Lyra online, they are prompted to share their symptoms. If they select self-harm or thoughts of suicide, our system triggers a "high alert" to our care team who reaches out to stabilize the individual. Figures reported here remove false positives and only reflect actual "high alerts" situations, representing one high alert per person per day of new registrations.*

## Percentage of individuals who indicate thoughts of self-harm or suicide

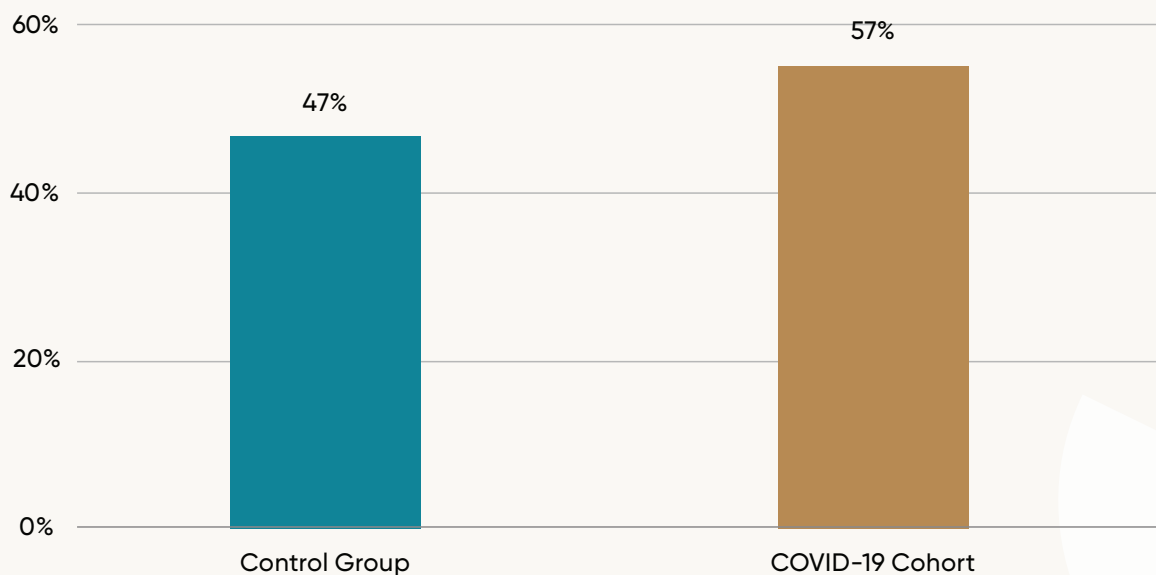


## More clients who start therapy have more severe symptoms

10% more clients starting care have more severe symptoms.

As demonstrated in a comparative analysis pre- and post-pandemic, individuals seeking care through Lyra are experiencing more severe symptoms. In aggregate, the symptom severity scores are higher for 10% of clients when the pandemic took hold throughout March.

### Percentage of individuals seeking care with moderate to severe depression or anxiety pre- and post-pandemic

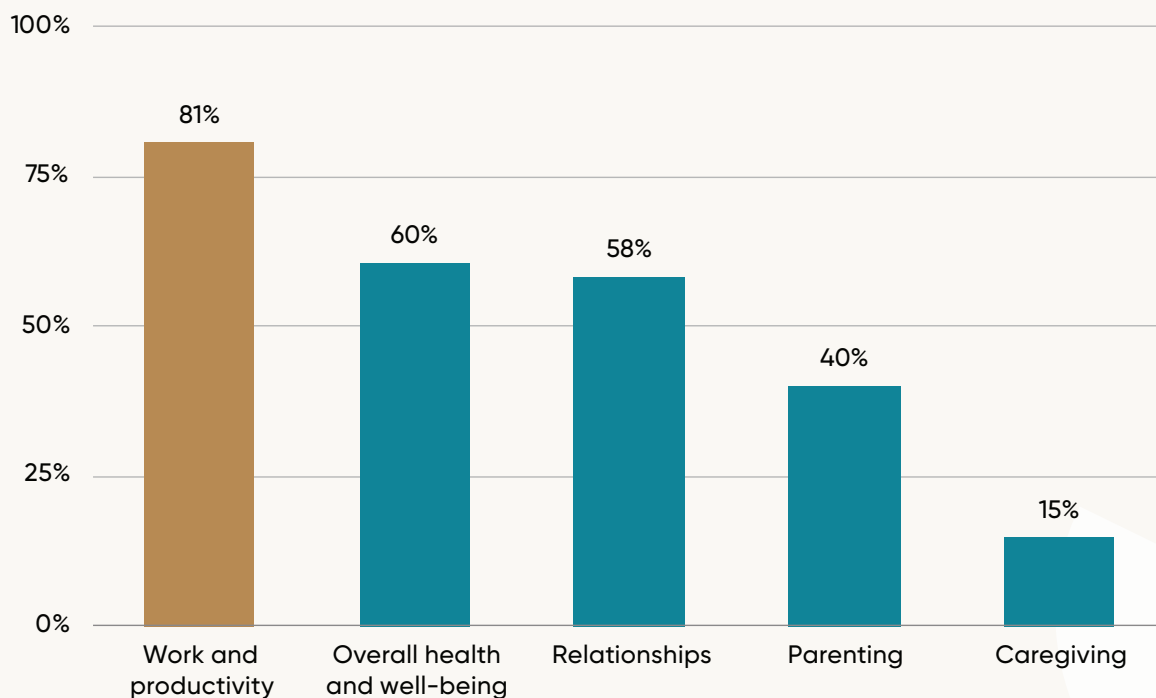


## Work and productivity are profoundly impacted

Employees bring their whole selves to work, and those with untreated mental health issues are more likely to have difficulty functioning on the job.

**80% of Lyra providers surveyed said the pandemic was taking the biggest toll on their clients' work and productivity.**

**Which areas in your clients' life have most been impacted by the pandemic?**

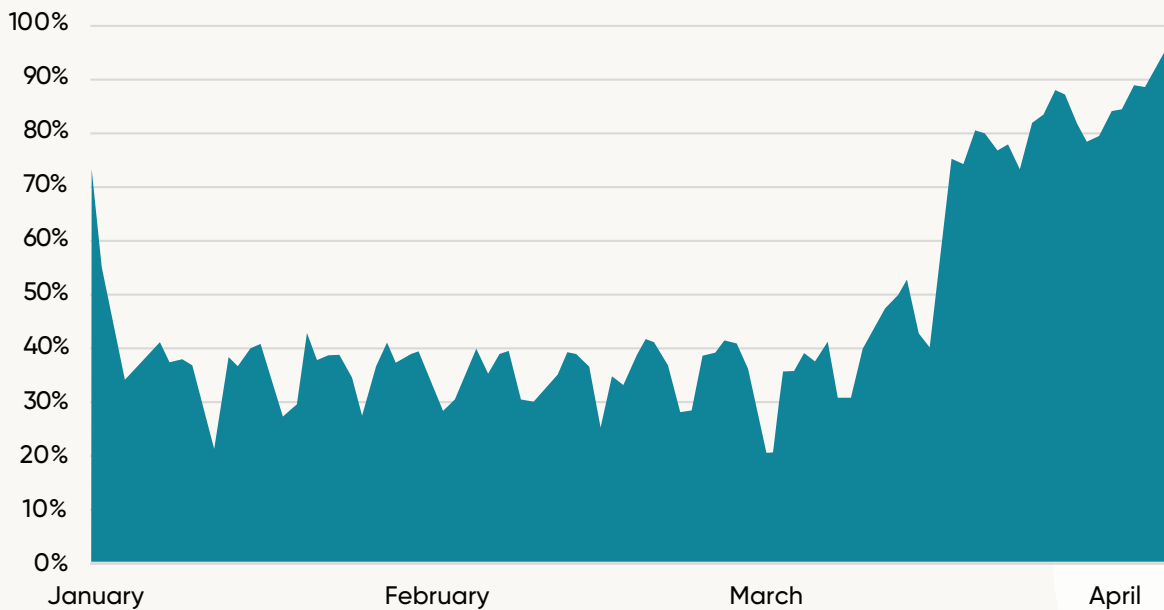




## More people are seeking mental health support virtually

While meeting with a coach, therapist, or psychiatrist in person these days is either not allowed or not recommended, we are seeing a huge rise in adoption of virtual care. Lyra has seen a 190% increase in the percentage of video and phone sessions held compared to January before shelter-in-place orders went into effect. **In January, only 33% of sessions were conducted over live video or phone, whereas in April, 96% of sessions were conducted virtually.**

### Percentage of sessions via video or phone



## Employers have an important role in supporting employee mental health

US workers are experiencing heightened stress, anxiety, and depression, with an alarming rise in high-risk symptoms, such as self-harm and suicide, among those seeking help. Meanwhile, many more who are in distress are forgoing professional mental health support while they attempt to adjust to “this new normal.”

COVID-19 is a rallying call to provide effective, comprehensive mental health support for employees. This public health crisis is amplifying the urgent need for workforce mental health support, giving CEOs and CHROs an opportunity to address long-standing shortfalls in behavioral health coverage.

As employers look to shore up gaps in their existing mental health benefits, they would also do well to ensure access to care that addresses the high-risk, critical needs of individuals with more severe conditions.

# Best practices to support employees' mental health

The following are recommended criteria for an effective employee mental health care offering that will make a meaningful impact now and for the long term:

- **Offer treatments for every mental health issue, from stress, anxiety, and depression to self-harm,** as well as safety protocols to help stabilize those who are at high risk.
- **Prepare to offer in-person care as restrictions lift.** While virtual care is the best during stay-at-home orders, in-person care may be more appropriate for individuals in the future. It is especially essential for individuals experiencing conditions such as thoughts of self-harm, personality disorders, severe eating disorders, psychotic disorders, and substance abuse.
- **Ensure that the care provided helps people get better,** with clinically validated measures that quantify symptom improvement and recovery.
- **Deliver care beyond the session.** Building coping skills requires more than an hour per week. Digital tools and resources can make care even more effective when integrated into the care journey with a provider.

## About Lyra Health

Lyra helps companies improve access to effective, high-quality mental health care for their employees and their families. With Lyra's digital care platform and network of high-caliber coaches, therapists, and psychiatrists, finding care is easier, more personalized, and more effective. Lyra has raised over \$170 million, and partners with large employers such as Starbucks, uber, Amgen, LinkedIn, and Genentech to support our 1.3 million members nationwide.

To learn more, email [partners@lyrahealth.com](mailto:partners@lyrahealth.com) or visit our Coronavirus Resource Center at [www.lyrahealth.com/coronavirus](http://www.lyrahealth.com/coronavirus).