



CASE STUDY

# How Genentech delivered a best-in-class mental health solution for the top minds in biotech

lyra

**OVERVIEW:** Genentech, a member of the Roche Group, is a world-renowned biotechnology company known for advancing groundbreaking scientific research that improves patients' lives. The company is committed to offering best-in-class, value-driven benefits to support the top talent in biotech.

**CHALLENGES:** The behavioral health offering available to Genentech employees and dependents through the company's previous EAP didn't align with their desired member experience expectation for benefits. There were in-network provider access gaps, challenges around measuring employee utilization of the EAP's mental health service, generic requirements and credentialing standards for providers, and minimal transparency into care outcomes or member satisfaction.

**SOLUTION:** Genentech partnered with Lyra to provide life-changing mental health care and support for its best-in-class workforce and their dependents. The company has also gone above and beyond in building a culture of awareness and support for members' mental health. Today, employees and their dependents can quickly access behavioral health care, and 88 percent of those in care experience clinical improvement or recovery.

**For over four decades, Genentech, a Roche Company, has pioneered the discovery and development of medicines that help people with serious diseases. Widely recognized as the founder of the biotechnology industry, the organization has consistently pushed the boundaries of medicine in the pursuit of that foundational goal.**

Whether they spend their days in the laboratory or the boardroom, Genentech's 14,000-plus professionals are united in their mission to improve the lives of patients worldwide. But it's not just the mission that draws people to join its ranks—the company's reputation as an outstanding place to work also precedes it. Among its workplace accolades are spots on Fortune Magazine's "100 Best Companies to Work For" list for 22 consecutive years, Science Magazine's "Top Employers" list for eight years, and ComputerWorld's top prize for "Best Place to Work in IT" for 11 years running. The steady recognition is unsurprising given the company's commitment to offering enviable benefits to attract and retain talent in ultra-competitive Silicon Valley.

"When we look at different benefits programs, it's always about understanding what our competitors are offering and how we can eliminate any barriers and support our employees to be their best," said Deborah Olson, principal benefits manager for U.S. Roche & Genentech.

But, in recent years, Genentech benefits leaders became increasingly aware of one element their benefits package was lacking—a comprehensive offering to support employee mental health.

## The challenges

Genentech and its parent company, Roche, rely on various data to evaluate how their population is engaging with their benefits. But, when it came to the mental health counseling service available through their existing employee assistance program (EAP), they were in the dark.

The company couldn't measure how many employees were using the mental health service, since the EAP didn't distinguish between types of utilization in its recordkeeping. "Utilization" was tracked identically, whether someone completed a counseling session or only dialed the EAP's call center. Employees who tried to access the service faced a cumbersome process: they would have to call a 1-800 number just to get a list of providers' phone numbers, with no guarantee that the providers had available appointments, let alone expertise in treating their particular issue.

For those who did receive counseling, there was no way to know whether it had helped them, or how they would rate their experience, since the EAP didn't effectively measure patient outcomes or satisfaction. Another concern was the apparent lack of clinical standards for the EAP's mental health care providers.

“We had no way of knowing if this service was of benefit to our employees, and there was no bar set for provider quality,” said Olson. “[Our EAP] couldn’t tell us if our employees were even progressing in care. For all we knew, someone could attend five sessions and get absolutely no benefit from them.”

Stigma added another layer of murkiness to the already tough-to-measure care options, since employees who used the EAP’s mental health service were reluctant to broach the subject with their human resources colleagues. Genentech’s benefits team rarely heard from employees seeking information about their behavioral health care options, even though government statistics show that nearly one in five<sup>1</sup> U.S. adults experiences a mental health condition in a given year, and access to in-network therapists is notoriously difficult<sup>2</sup> under traditional health insurance plans.

“Employees didn’t want to call me and complain about a mental health provider so instead, they continued struggling and didn’t get the help they needed,” Olson said.

## The solution

Genentech’s benefits team knew it needed a better way to support their people’s mental health—with a frictionless path to effective care, and transparency to evaluate whether the program actually worked. Partnering with Lyra not only made these goals achievable—it was simply “the right thing to do,” said Olson.

### Rapid access to life-changing care

99%

of Roche and Genentech members searching for care with Lyra are instantly matched with a recommended provider.

7

days: the median wait time for a first appointment with a Lyra provider

11%

The share of Roche and Genentech members who have a first appointment with a Lyra provider within 24 hours of searching

## **An easy digital platform and numerous care options unlock access**

Genentech's human resources team got to work ensuring employees were well aware of their new mental health benefit and how to use it when needed. Lyra's offering quickly proved to be a fit for employees' needs—with a notably high level of engagement with the benefit during the six months post-launch.

Members looking for care for themselves or a dependent were introduced to Lyra's intuitive online platform. In minutes, they were able to get recommendations for nearby providers with experience treating their unique needs. The average wait time for their first appointment with a Lyra provider was about a week.

In addition to in-person care options, Genentech's members who opt not to attend in-person sessions get recommendations for therapists offering live video sessions. And, depending on their needs, some are matched with mental health coaches, who also provide sessions via video.

“Lyra is so flexible and makes it easy to access care on the go,” said Olson.” That means we don't have to stop our lives in order to get the help we need.”

## **Top-notch providers and evidence-based treatments raise the bar**

Unlike the providers under Genentech's former EAP, the therapists and mental health coaches in Lyra's network are committed to practicing evidence-based therapies, or EBTs. These are treatments that have been rigorously tested in multiple randomized controlled trials and proven to reduce symptoms in people with mental health conditions. Some commonly practiced EBTs include Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT), Dialectical Behavioral Therapy (DBT), and Motivational Interviewing.

The dedication to EBTs is a high bar—in fact, only five percent of applicants are accepted into Lyra's provider network. Those who are hired undergo initial training from Lyra clinicians and receive guidance to ensure that the care members receive aligns with leading clinical quality guidelines.

## **Sparking a company-wide conversation around mental health**

High engagement with the Lyra benefit post-launch underscored a clear need for accessible, comprehensive mental health care, and Genentech's HR leaders took notice.

Since launching Lyra in late 2018, the organization has doubled down on its commitment to workers' mental wellness with awareness and de-stigmatization campaigns that have rallied support and participation from the C-suite and beyond. In one initiative, several Genentech leaders discussed their own mental health-related experiences in short videos shared company-wide. On each Wednesday of Mental Health Awareness Month in May 2019, employees wore T-shirts that read "R U Ok? Let's talk" as an additional awareness-raising strategy. And, late last year, Genentech and Roche launched a "Mental Health Champions" program, in which volunteers across the company take actions to ensure that employees at all levels are aware of the mental health resources available to them.

Bolstered by Lyra-provided workshops and communications to educate managers and employees, Genentech's staunch leadership on the issue is fostering a company culture of understanding and support for mental health challenges.

## The results

Today, Genentech has full visibility into how its mental health benefit is working for members, thanks to data-filled quarterly reports that include the number of members who seek care with Lyra, overall clinical outcomes, and client satisfaction ratings. The impact of adopting the benefit has been undeniable.

“Lyra is saving lives—it’s saving families,” said Olson. “It’s helping us to focus and function in ways we wouldn’t have before.”

As of late 2019, 88 percent of Roche and Genentech members in care with a Lyra provider showed significant clinical improvement or recovery, compared to 83 percent of Lyra clients overall. And a 93 percent satisfaction rate reveals that the vast majority of Genentech and Roche members are happy with the care they're getting. The numbers support what company HR leaders are hearing from members receiving care from Lyra.

“What’s significant for me is the calls and emails I get from employees saying, ‘Thank you, this is a big step toward saving my family,’ or, ‘Thank you for implementing this new benefit; it’s profoundly better than what we had before,” said Olson.

88%

The number of Genentech and Roche members in care with Lyra who experience reliable clinical improvement or recovery from a mental health condition

93%

The number of Genentech and Roche members in care who say they are “satisfied” or “very satisfied” with Lyra

**Reliable clinical improvement:** an improvement in symptoms of at least four points on the Generalized Anxiety Disorder 7-Item Scale (GAD-7) or at least six points on the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), which measures depression symptoms.

**Recovery:** when a patient moves from the clinical range to the subclinical range on either the GAD-7 or PHQ-9.

## What Genentech members are saying about Lyra

*“Lyra made it really easy to find someone to talk to when I really needed it. This was truly an amazing experience. Thank you!”*

*“Quick and easy to use. Got in contact with a great therapist right away that I continue to work with.”*

*“I’ve never sought out counseling before, mainly because of the hassle of finding someone and scheduling. By having access to this program, I was able to get what I needed without any barriers. I’ve been so thankful to be able to talk to someone. It’s not only helped tremendously in my personal life but allowed me to focus on what I needed to at work.”*

## References

1. National Institute of Mental Health. (2019, February). Prevalence of Any Mental Illness (AMI). Retrieved from [https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness.shtml#part\\_154785](https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/statistics/mental-illness.shtml#part_154785)
2. Melek, S., Davenport, S., & Gray, T.J. (2019, November). Addiction and mental health vs. physical health: Widening disparities in network use and provider reimbursement. Retrieved from: <https://www.milliman.com/insight/Addiction-and-mental-health-vs-physical-health-Widening-disparities-in-network-use-and-p>

## About Lyra

Lyra is the leading mental health benefit partner for influential and innovative companies. Supporting 1 million members nationwide, Lyra brings together technology and an elite provider network to improve access, quality, and outcomes for your employees.

**7x engagement | Next-day appointments available | 82.7% improve or recover**

- **Frictionless member experience**  
Our online platform helps members find care in just a few clicks. They can sign up and book appointments instantly, choose to meet virtually or in person, and tap into digital tools to build new skills.
- **Elite providers and proven treatments**  
Lyra works with only the most qualified and effective providers. Our therapists and coaches use only evidence-based methods proven to help people feel better.
- **Personalized care for every member**  
Lyra uses technology to intelligently match individuals with the right providers and treatments based on their symptoms, severity, and preferences.
- **Gain insight into effectiveness**  
Get visibility into member utilization, satisfaction, recovery and improvement rates, and the mental health needs of your workforce.

**Support for issues that are simple, complex, routine, or unexpected.**

- Coaching
- Therapy
- Medication
- Self-care app
- Training workshops
- Critical incident support
- Work-life services
- 24/7 Member support

**Featured customers**



Ready to reimagine your mental health benefit? Get in touch with us.

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