



Scott is wearing a TruHearing® 7 hearing aid.



The healthcare solution you're overlooking.

How hearing care can improve employee well-being, productivity, acquisition, and retention.

Hearing Loss in the Workplace Survey, 2024.

TruHearing®



I am so fortunate to have hearing aids, so I can hear the sweet and often quiet voices of the young children I am entrusted to care for in my school nursing practice. The hearing aids make me a better nurse, and I can relate to the children in a more efficient and personable way!"

– School nurse with hearing loss

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Introduction

Hearing loss is often considered something that impacts only older adults. This unfortunate misconception has contributed to a lack of awareness around hearing health among working-age people and those that provide healthcare for them. Because of this, hearing care is frequently omitted from research when exploring whole-health needs.

Attempting to close this gap in research, TruHearing launched its annual Hearing Loss in the Workplace survey in 2021. You'll find

data from these surveys highlighted in green throughout this ebook.

Our goal is to shed light on the fact that hearing loss happens at any age and negatively impacts people's personal and professional lives. Offering hearing care solutions to employees and commercial health plan members can help companies attract and retain top talent while boosting employee satisfaction and focusing on whole-person health.

Hearing loss doesn't discriminate and can have devastating effects.

Modern living is loud. Everyday life, work, and recreation often involve noise—whether it's commuter traffic, the seemingly constant use of devices and headphones, having fun playing video games, or attending concerts. According to the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), noise pollution affects millions of people and can cause negative health effects, including noise-induced hearing loss.¹

While hearing loss has often been thought of as an “old person” condition, that's simply untrue. In fact, TruHearing found **32% of employees aged 25–64 report at least some degree** of hearing loss in its fourth annual Hearing Loss in the Workplace survey.²

When people struggle to hear and communicate well, it can have devastating impacts on their health and well-being. Untreated hearing loss has been associated with serious mental health concerns such as increased depression and anxiety.³

Hearing loss may also lead to social isolation and loneliness,⁴ which can have significant impacts on an individual's ability to show up to work as their best self. Research shows lonely employees express a greater intention to quit their job within the next year and miss more workdays per year than those who don't identify as lonely.⁵

The days missed by lonely employees are estimated to cost employers more than \$154 billion annually.⁵ This suggests employers have an opportunity to support employee engagement and performance through promoting programs that help employees take care of their physical and mental health.

The good news is that treating hearing loss makes a positive impact. **Before wearing hearing aids, employees with hearing loss reported feeling less engaged in life, isolated, and exhausted from social situations. After getting hearing aids, these feelings decreased by 75%, 52%, and 50% respectively.**⁶

32%

of employees aged 25–64 report at least some degree of hearing loss.²



Untreated hearing loss at work impacts productivity.

With hearing loss comes a struggle to hear well at work, particularly in group settings or noisy workplaces. Yet, the ability to fully engage with the people around us is critical to feeling engaged and capable at work.

As untreated hearing loss takes a toll on employees, productivity issues can arise. **Surveyed employees reported concerns like asking coworkers to repeat themselves and frequently missing parts of conversations.**⁷ This can result in misunderstandings, feelings of frustration for both the individual with hearing loss and their colleagues, and decreased participation in meetings and discussions.

These challenges can have a staggering impact on employee productivity. In fact, **37% of surveyed employees with hearing loss said they lose five or more hours per week making up for these issues, while 20% said they lose ten or more hours per week.**⁷ It's easy to imagine how an employee may not be able to fully contribute if

they're constantly playing catch-up. Additionally, one unproductive employee could impact the effectiveness of their team or entire organization.

Hearing aids bolster productivity.

For many people with hearing loss, the solution is wearing hearing aids which can fortunately make workplace challenges easier to manage and overcome.

After employees with hearing loss started wearing hearing aids, 79% participated more and understood conversations better, 64% felt more collaborative and more likely to work efficiently and effectively in a team environment, and 63% more easily maintained concentration and focus.⁷



Almost

80%

of employees participated more and understood conversations better with hearing aids.⁷



Linda is wearing a TruHearing 7 hearing aid.

TruHearing asked employees how they felt their hearing aids changed certain workplace scenarios and behaviors.⁶

Scenario	Before wearing hearing aids	After wearing hearing aids
Pretended to understand something someone said	67%	31%
Embarrassment from asking others to repeat themselves	57%	28%
Frustrated colleague(s) after misunderstanding or not responding to something they said/asked	42%	17%
Avoided socializing with colleagues	34%	14%
Participated less in meetings	29%	11%

Why employees aren’t getting the hearing care they need.

Despite the negative impacts on overall well-being and work performance, **90% of employees with hearing loss haven’t pursued treatment.**⁶ Why is that?

People often stigmatize hearing loss and associate hearing aids with the bulky plastic devices their grandparents may have worn rather than the sleek, smart devices they are today.

Two major concerns employees had prior to wearing hearing aids were how their professional capabilities would be perceived and being perceived as old. However, over half of employees indicated they no longer had concerns in the workplace after getting hearing aids.⁸

Hearing plays a fundamental role at work and beyond. It isn’t out of the ordinary for employees to seek treatment for a toothache or show up to work wearing glasses to correct their vision. Similarly, addressing hearing loss shouldn’t be abnormal or out of reach for anyone.



Yet without hearing health coverage, the average cost for a pair of hearing aids is nearly \$4,700,⁹ which can make treatment impossible for many people. In fact, 37% of US adults wouldn’t be able to fully cover a \$400 emergency expense with cash (or its equivalent).¹⁰

Cost is the top barrier to treatment, and having insurance is the top motivator for treating hearing loss.¹¹ This means employers have a unique opportunity to add value to their healthcare offering by making hearing loss treatment more attainable and affordable for their workforce.



Only 11%
of employees
report being
offered hearing
coverage.²



Phillip is wearing a TruHearing 7 hearing aid.

Employees want hearing coverage, yet most don't have it.

Alongside medical insurance, dental and vision coverage are often considered a requirement for today's employee healthcare offerings. But hearing healthcare solutions are offered at remarkably lower rates, with only **1 in 10 employees reporting being offered a hearing solution by their current employer.**²

Is it something employees even want? The answer is a resounding yes. **Employees believe eye exams, dental cleanings, and hearing checks are all highly important to their quality of life and wellness.**²

Additionally, **79% of employees aged 25–64 agree it's important for employers to offer a hearing care solution as part of their overall employee wellness package.**² This number skyrockets to **99% among those aged 25–44,**² clearly demonstrating hearing loss and hearing health are on the minds of younger employees. As younger generations continue to enter the workforce, hearing solutions can demonstrate a commitment to prioritizing whole-person health.

Interest in hearing health is only rising regardless of current hearing status. For example, there was a **65% year-over-year increase in employees without hearing loss wanting to see hearing included in healthcare offerings** when comparing 2024 to 2023.²

Not only is the demand for hearing healthcare increasing, but offering a hearing solution can be a win-win for both employees and employers. Employees get a comprehensive healthcare package that enables them to fully take care of their health. And employers can close the gap in offerings with hearing solutions implemented or enhanced at little to no cost.



Hearing care can boost satisfaction, acquisition, and retention.

Employees want to work for companies that value them both as workers and individuals, yet just 24% of US employees strongly believe their organization cares about their overall well-being.¹²

Employees who strongly agree their employer cares are less likely to search for a new job or experience burnout and are more likely to be engaged at work.¹³ Fostering a workplace environment focused on health and wellness can go a long way to improving positive perceptions of an organization among its employees and potential hires alike.

Recruitment and retention are priorities for many employers. And it's no secret that healthcare offerings are a huge part of attracting and retaining top talent, often right behind compensation in terms of importance.

But it's crucial to know what's going to make the biggest impact, especially as supplemental healthcare solutions continue to grow in popularity. **Nearly half of employees rated hearing care solutions as more important than less health-oriented solutions** such as legal counseling, identity theft monitoring, or pet insurance.⁸

Hearing can help create a competitive wellness package.

Hearing healthcare is a strongly desired solution with **34% of employees reporting they'd be more likely to consider working for an employer who offered a hearing care solution.**² This jumps up regarding retention with **40% of employees saying they'd be more likely to stay with their current employer if offered hearing health coverage.**² Addressing hearing health demonstrates a commitment to prioritizing high-demand solutions while looking more attractive to current employees and potential hires.

Additionally, promoting hearing health awareness and care can help destigmatize the conversation around hearing loss. When employers prioritize this aspect of health, they create a culture that values inclusion, health equity, and employee well-being.

There's a gap in whole-person health without hearing, which makes it a solid place to start when enhancing healthcare packages. Ultimately, offering a hearing solution is not just a perk. Hearing is a vital component of employee health and including it in healthcare offerings can enhance workplace dynamics. By addressing hearing health, employers invest in their most valuable asset, their employees.



34%

of employees reported they'd be more likely to consider working for an employer who offered a hearing care solution.²



40%

of employees said they'd be more likely to stay with their current employer if offered hearing health coverage.²



Jana is wearing a TruHearing 7 hearing aid.

About TruHearing

In 2003, TruHearing set out to solve the high cost of treating hearing loss. Because health plans didn’t historically cover hearing healthcare, TruHearing partnered with forward-thinking insurance companies to offer this solution, bringing affordable hearing healthcare to millions of Americans.

Today, TruHearing is the #1 market share leader in hearing health¹⁴, working with a vast ecosystem of health plans, hearing health professionals, employer groups, and unions—particularly those with 5,000 or more lives.

Our mission is to reconnect people to the richness of life through industry-leading hearing healthcare solutions.

- 20+ years partnering with the nation’s largest payors
- #1 rated customer experience¹⁵
- 160+ million lives covered¹⁶
- 110+ health plan partners¹⁷
- Largest provider network with 8,850+ locations¹⁸
- Partner satisfaction rating of 4.9/5¹⁹



About the 2024 survey.

TruHearing’s 2024 Hearing Loss in the Workplace survey was a blinded survey that included 524 US full- and part-time employees ages 25–64 and 243 people within TruHearing’s consumer database.

Answers were segmented by those who do not have hearing loss; those who suspect hearing loss but have not sought treatment; those with confirmed hearing loss but do not wear hearing aids; and those with confirmed hearing loss who currently wear hearing aids.



To learn more about hearing solutions, contact us at
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Sources

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- ¹⁴ Based on an analysis of hearing aid units sold by TruHearing and its affiliates compared to other hearing benefits providers. September 2021.
- ¹⁵ Blinded survey among audiologists and hearing instrument specialists conducted by TruHearing, 2024.
- ¹⁶ 2023 TruHearing analysis based on aggregate of total lives covered by health plan and other benefit partners.
- ¹⁷ 2024 internal analysis of TruHearing's health plan partners.
- ¹⁸ 2024 internal analysis of TruHearing's provider network.
- ¹⁹ Tenured client CSAT survey, August 2024.

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