



Keeping Your Members and Employees Engaged During Uncertainty:

Quick Tips to Help Them Feel Supported



As a health plan, you're in a unique position to put your members' minds at ease, direct them to appropriate resources, and ensure that they have the support they need during periods of uncertainty.

Communication

Maintain high visibility to keep clients and members informed, aligned, and engaged. Consider leveraging your CEO, Chief Medical Officer, Vice President of Pharmacy, and Vice President of Customer Service as crucial contributors to any communication plan. A unified message from the C-Suite helps members better understand what to expect of their health plan and health benefits while fostering confidence that everyone is working together on their behalf.

Communicate often, across mediums, and be clear about how you are partnering across the healthcare ecosystem to reduce uncertainty. In some situations, it's not just what you say, but what you do, that matters. Take steps to increase visibility and ease of access to benefits, resources, and programs to ensure your members feel supported. Examine customer service agent scripts for opportunities to turn transactional requests such as those for member ID cards as an entry point to proactively answer questions or help navigate care. Strengthen partnerships by offering regular touchpoint webinars or launch an exclusive newsletter edition to stay connected.

For health plan employees, a proactive communication approach can establish an open environment. Regularly updated member-facing templated communications or FAQ documents ensure message alignment. Lead with facts and keep the focus on how employees can stay informed, give appropriate guidance and simple ways they can protect themselves.

Please continue to encourage healthy habits to help your members and employees to maintain their physical and mental health. Your wellbeing program and platform can be a highly effective way to communicate and keep members and employees engaged during periods of uncertainty. Virgin Pulse members engage with the app an average of 21 days a month. By putting your communications, programs, and services front and center where members and employees are already going for their wellbeing, you'll break through the noise and be a trusted resource.

Depending on the event, health plan challenges can foster camaraderie and awareness and help members focus on daily goals and tasks to support their health and happiness.



Guidance and Templates for Crisis Communication

1. [Crisis Communication Plan - Ready.gov](#)
2. [Communicating with Employees During a Crisis - SHRM](#)
3. [6 Crisis Communication Plan Examples & How to Write Your Own - Hubspot](#)

Be a Resource

Disruptive events can cause employees and members to worry about unknowns. These feelings of stress and anxiety may require immediate support. Consider elevating awareness or removing barriers to telemedicine, health coaching, medication or pre-authorization requirements, benefits concierge services, or extending customer service hours to support your members' needs.

For internal health plan employees, helpful reminders of time off benefits and employee assistance program (EAP) can give peace of mind. Plan for a remote work policy for affected employees during times of travel or large gatherings of people should be avoided i.e., extreme weather events or infectious disease outbreaks.

Some people may cope more effectively and recover from stressful events more quickly than others. A facts-forward, solution-oriented approach is the best avenue to communicate, but managers and executives should mobilize with a heavy dose of empathy for every individual's unique situation.

If you are a Virgin Pulse client, see specific recommendations below on how you can leverage your wellbeing platform to communicate health events and information, including plans and activities specific to COVID-19:

1. **If you're holding an all-company meeting or webinar about your plans, be sure to promote it through the calendar functionality in your Virgin Pulse app for your internal employees**
2. **Promote healthy habits related to maintaining good health (handwashing, wiping down commonly touched objects, etc.)**
3. **Launch a challenge to keep members engaged in healthy habits**
4. **Encourage department leaders and clients to launch challenges for their teams, especially if employees need to work from home or if they are geographically distributed**