



## COVID-19

### 3 QUESTIONS TO ASK YOUR WORKFORCE

Working with a virtual workforce comes with many challenges, but considering emotional health and checking-in on employees is now more important than ever. Dr. Douglas Nemecek, Chief Medical Officer for Cigna Behavioural Health, suggests three questions to ask your workforce.

#### **‘How are you staying connected with your co-workers?’**

People didn't realise how important those daily interactions in the office were until now they can't happen due to social distancing. But these everyday interactions are very important and not just vital to your engagement with work, but also for your own health and well-being. It's important to schedule time with co-workers to just talk and have a cup of coffee. Don't talk about work, talk about what's going on at home, what you did at the weekend. Building these connections and having the opportunity to maintain relationships with co-workers will be vital in maintaining your emotional health and making you feel hopeful of the future. Building these relationships will also minimise the risk that your employees will start to feel lonely, afraid and alone.

#### **‘How are you dealing with working at home?’**

Are members of the team dealing with children? Do they have a spouse or significant other that is working from home or not working at all? Maybe they have loved ones that they can't take care of because they live far away? Everyone has personal stresses at home and all of these are pulling on them in ways they never have previously, so getting an understanding of how they are balancing work and home life will really help your entire team to function better, to be more engaged and to give them the opportunity to support each other.

#### **‘How often are you feeling lonely or anxious during the day?’**

Not everyone will tell you when they're feeling stressed or having issues at home so it's important as a manager that you ask. Even more important than asking, is listening to your employees to fully understand the stresses that they're having so you are able to help them access the support they need and are aware of the resources available to them. Many employees may not ask because of the stigma associated with feeling that way and being embarrassed about what's going on and the stresses they're feeling. Others may just feel the stresses they're feeling don't warrant asking for help, so it's vital as a manager that you take time to ask, and take the time to listen.

[Watch the video here](#)

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