

Mental Health Benefits for Washington Caregivers

Expanding Support for Mental Health



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Group Trustees and Employees only

Lisa R.
Caregiver, Marysville



Agenda

- Introduction.
- Who We Serve.
- Understanding the Issue.
- Benefit Implications.
- Opportunities & Recommendations.



Tamra M.
Caregiver, Spokane

Laura Reding

Chief Operating Officer, SEIU 775 Benefits Group

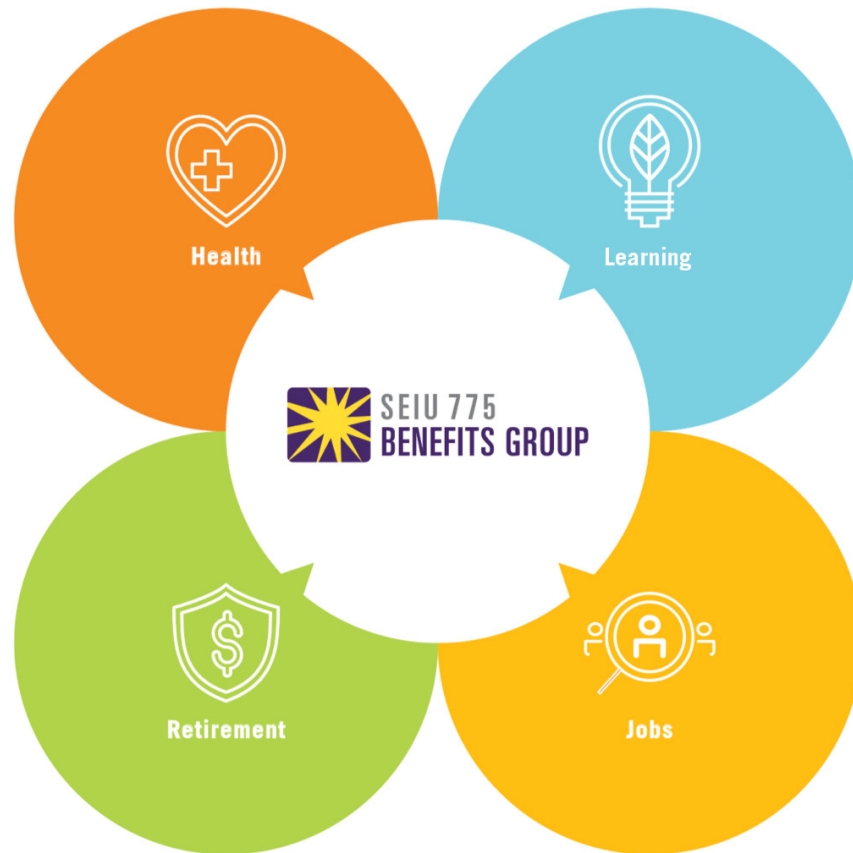
Laura Reding is the Chief Operating Officer of SEIU 775 Benefits Group. In this role she oversees the Health, Retirement, and Training Trusts which deliver health insurance, retirement, and training benefits to more than 55,000 home care workers in Washington state.

Laura has 20 years of healthcare experience including care delivery, benefit purchasing and administration, utilization management, and healthcare operations. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from the University of Notre Dame, a Master of Science in Counseling from University of North Carolina at Greensboro and earned her Master in Business Administration from the University of Washington.



SEIU 775 Benefits Group is a nonprofit that partners with the SEIU 775 union, government, and private-industry partners to ensure that Washington state caregivers have access to the benefits and programs they need to thrive.

Organization Overview



Who is SEIU 775 Benefits Group?

- Leading the nation in improving the skills, health and sustainability of the caregiving workforce.
- Provide high-quality learning, health and retirement benefits as well as jobs through independent trusts.
- Each trust has a board and governance structure.

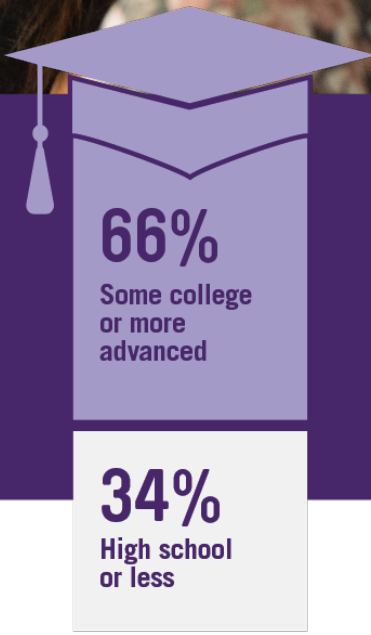
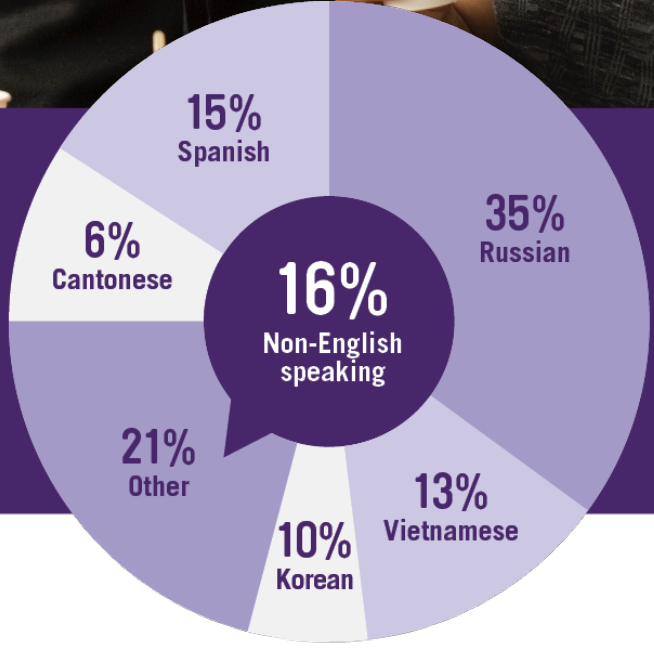
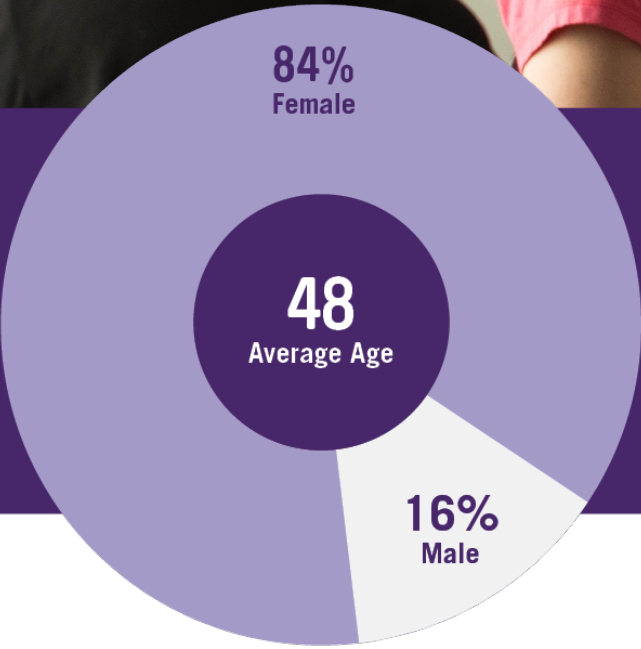
Who We Serve

Caregivers provide care to our most vulnerable individuals, helping them live as independently as possible.

- Support includes activities of daily living:
 - Personal Hygiene.
 - Shopping.
 - Food prep.
 - Medication assistance.
 - Transportation to medical appointments.
- Caregivers in Washington State work for one or more agencies and serve those whose in-home care is covered by Medicare.
- Caregivers may care for a family member or be unrelated to those they care for.



Melissah W.
Caregiver, Seattle



Our Caregivers: A Snapshot

Challenges Affecting Caregivers

- History of being uninsured or underinsured.
- Limited access to and/or distrust of health care systems.
- Lower rates of preventative screenings.
- No centralized workplace.

- Higher rates of depression and anxiety.
- Greater on-the-job injury risk.
- Higher rates of pre-existing conditions.
- Higher Rates of ACEs.

Health Benefits Trust (HBT)

Serving the Whole Person

Health Insurance for over 23,000 Caregivers:

- Medical and behavioral health coverage with zero or low co-pay.
- Prescription drug benefits.
- Dental coverage.
- Vision benefits.
- Hearing aid coverage.
- Virtual behavioral health visits.
- Bariatric surgery benefits.
- Infertility coverage.

Wellness & Safety Programs for over 55,000 Caregivers:

- Annual slip-resistant safety shoes.
- Virtual behavioral health text-based coaching.
- Referrals to social supports.
- Web-based mindfulness coaching.

Child Dependent Coverage:

- Dental only coverage for children added August 2022.
- Expansion of coverage to child dependents with coverage beginning in August 2023.

HBT Benefits

Serving the Whole Person

Subscribers are assigned to a plan based on zip code:

Carrier	Enrollment
Kaiser Permanente of WA	18,238
Kaiser Permanente Northwest*	2,410
Aetna	2,663

*KPNW is a fully insured plan



Understanding the Issue

Population Risks and Research

Population Risk Factors

Understanding the Research

- Stressful life situations, such as financial problems, a loved one's death, or divorce.
- A chronic medical condition, such as diabetes.
- Traumatic experiences, such as military combat or being assaulted.
- Being abused or neglected as a child.
- Low social support, having few friends or few healthy relationships.
- Isolation and loneliness.
- Low income.

Data Sources: World Health Organization, Risks to Mental Health: An Overview of Vulnerabilities & Risk Factors Aug 2012, http://www.who.int/mental_health/mhgap/risks_to_mental_health_EN_27_08_12.pdf; and Mayo Clinic, Diseases & Conditions: Mental Illness – Risk Factors, <http://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/mental-illness/basics/risk-factors/con-20033813>;

Surveying Caregivers

Understanding the true size of the need

- In 2016 & 2017, Kaiser reported a very low number of caregivers calling to initiate mental health treatment.
- In contrast, HBT was receiving a high volume of complaints about poor access to mental health care at Kaiser.
- HBT fielded more than 6,600 depression and anxiety screeners from 2016-2018.

**33% endorsed
depression
symptoms**

**35% endorsed
anxiety
symptoms**

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) Survey

Study Population	≥4 ACEs	≥1 ACE
HCA Survey	28%	67%
Original Kaiser Study	13%	64%
BRFSS Multi State	14%	59%
WA State BRFSS	19%	64%
CA Female Inmates	32%	84%

What are ACEs?

An adverse childhood experiences score is a tally of abuse, neglect, and other hallmarks of difficult life experiences occurring before the age of 18.

Why is it important?

High ACEs scores (4+) elevate your risk for many health problems later in life, from increased headaches to depression to heart disease.

Findings

28% of caregivers reported 4+ ACEs, putting them at higher risk.

Data Sources: CDC, Division of Violence Prevention, ACE Study, <https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/acestudy/index.html>; SEIU 775 Benefits Group - KPWHRI, Home Care ACE Survey, May 2017; Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) Multistate & Washington, 2010-2011 survey data; Messina, et al., Childhood Trauma and Women's Health Outcomes in a California Prison Population, Am J Public Health, 96(10): 1842-48, Oct. 2006.



John R.
Caregiver, Seattle

Benefit Implications

Building out a more robust benefit offering

Preventative Care



- None.

Access to Clinical Care



- Urgent Access (48+ hours).
- Access to Counseling and Psychiatry (35+ days).
- Some non-English speaking providers.
- Little to no virtual access to care.

Marketing



- Not caregiver focused.
- Not addressing stigma associated with mental health care.
- Localized in top 4 languages.

Preventative Care

Tools for Calm

- Six-week, six-hour mindfulness training program.
- Developed through pilot starting in 2016 and launched as a training in 2019.
- Live online mindfulness course available to all caregivers.
- Tools for Calm can help caregivers:
 - Learn practical exercises and tools to manage stress and life's challenges.
 - Identify when and how to find moments to relax.
 - Join a community of other caregivers that can offer support and encouragement.

Preventative Care

Tools for Calm

Surveys performed 3 months following completion of the class showed 87% of participants were still using the skills and continued to experience a reduction in anxiety, depression, and stress measures.

Results from online pilot show statistically significant improvements in key behavioral health measures:

Key outcomes ¹	Average score reduction (course end)	Average score reduction (3 months after course end)
Anxiety	↓ 26%	↓ 40%
Depression	↓ 21%	↓ 31%
Perceived Stress	↓ 9%	↓ 24%

¹ Scales used for each measure: BAI, CES-D, PSS

Due to the popularity and efficacy of the Mindfulness classes, HBT turned this into a regular class CE offered through the Training Partnership.

Preventative Care

Group Sessions and Peer Support

Balint Groups (2016)

What: Balint Groups are discussion groups used to prevent burnout and create a sense of empathy among medical professionals.

Format: A structured group focused around sharing relational experience with clients or patients led by a trained facilitator. One person shares a story that happened in their work, and others offer different perspectives on what might have happened, avoiding giving advice.

Outcome: Mixed, attrition, format issues, sample not large enough to determine statistical significance.

Caregiver Conversations (2019)

What: A convenient and meaningful opportunity for caregivers to connect and improve behavioral health.

Format: A Zoom, peer-facilitated, drop-in model, 4 75 minutes groups offered per week, (morning, afternoon, evening, weekend) using psycho-education and open discussion.

Outcome: High attrition, difficulty recruiting, sample not large enough to determine statistical significance.

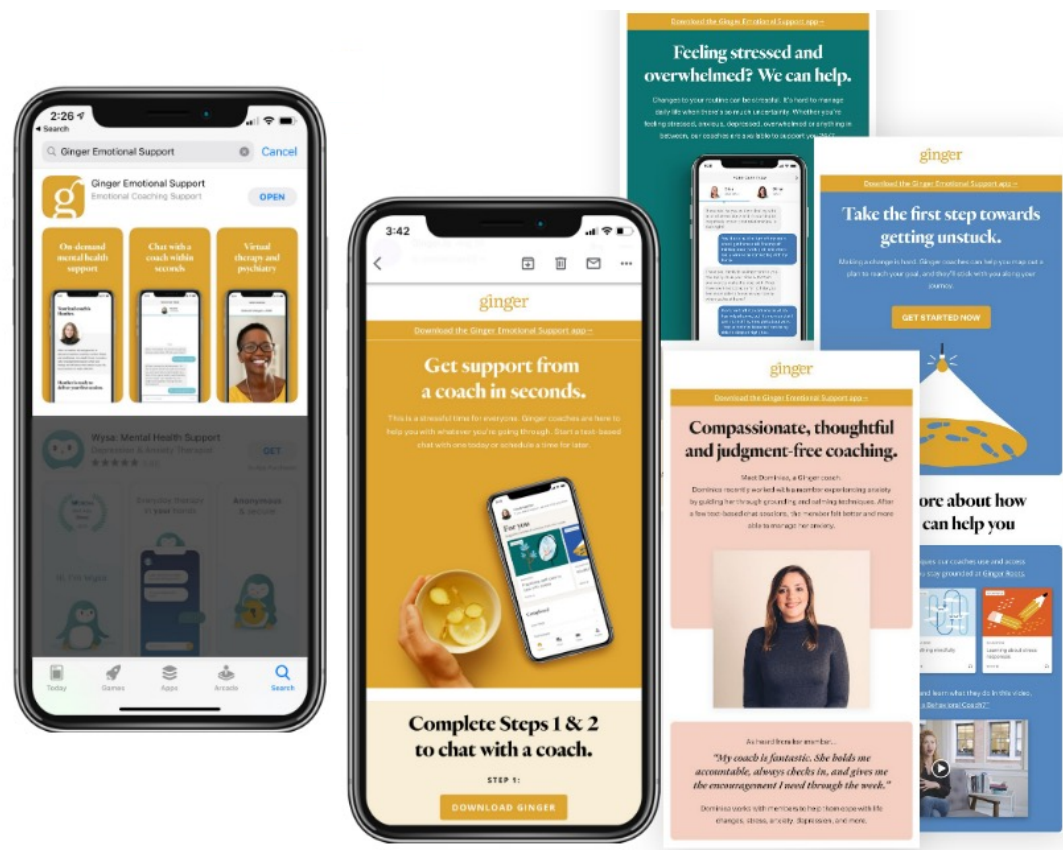
HBT did not move forward with group sessions due to issues with scalability.

Preventative Care and Expanded Network

Text and Virtual Support

- Ginger is an emotional health vendor app that offers:
 - Text-based coaching 24 hours a day.
 - Video-based therapy and psychiatry appointments 7 days a week.
 - Self-care resources and activities.
 - Available in English and Spanish.

ginger



Preventative Care and Expanded Network

Text and Virtual Support



- HBT began offering Ginger to caregivers in 2017.
- Over 2,000 sign-ups since launch in 2017 (3.7% sign-up rate).
- Average clinical appointment wait time in 2023 Q1 is 7.7 days.
- Outcomes:
 - 75% of members with moderate to severe depression at intake had improved symptoms after care.
 - 71% of members with moderate to severe anxiety at intake had improved symptoms after care.

Preventative Care and Expanded Network

Employee Assistance Program 2017-2021

Goal:

- To provide access to phone-based counseling for caregivers uncomfortable with digital technology.
- To provide services to caregivers' families and dependents.
- To provide referrals for services that can positively impact social determinants of health.

Engagement:

- Extremely low utilization despite heavy marketing.
- Only 77/55,000 participants used the service in a 12-month period.

Outcomes:

- Ended EAP benefit.
- Added a referral services for free and low-cost community services.

Marketing and Communications

Strategy, Testing and Research

Goals: Increase awareness, knowledge and comfort with mental health topics and self care.

Address Stigma

- Consistent use of friendlier terms. “Emotional Wellbeing” not “Mental Health”.
- “Emotional health is like physical health”.
- Share that many other caregivers experience anxiety, depression.
- Share caregiver stories.

Test and Invest

- A/B testing has included messaging, subject lines, copy, images, gain/loss framing and channel tests.
- Evaluate results over age, preferred language and other characteristics.

Qualitative Research

- Most recent research: Fall 2022, conducted 47 interviews in 8 languages, with 8 sets of key messaging takeaways.
- Gained caregiver insights and learnings for mental health terms and communications recommendations.

Cultural Relevance

- Localized materials into 8-10 languages.
- Specify what offerings are available in-language.
- Use qualitative research to develop messages addressing knowledge, attitude, behavior, motivators and barriers for different language groups.

Marketing and Communications

Caregiver Stories



Self Care

Preventative Care

- Tools for Calm.
- Text-Based Coaching (English and Spanish).
- Calm App: Daily meditation and mindfulness app.
- MyStrenth App: self-guided CBT programs and tools.

Access to Clinical Care

- Access to Counseling and Psychiatry.
 - Kaiser = 13.4 days
 - Ginger: 7.7 days
- Kaiser Integrated Care.
- Mental Health Chat: Chat online with a mental health care professional.
- Two Chairs: Online counseling services for adults.
- Growing network of BIPOC providers.

Marketing

- Caregiver focused.
- Framed to reduce stigma.
- Localized in up to 10 languages.



Sean B. & Jules D.
Seattle

Opportunities and Recommendations

Building out a more robust benefit offering

Ongoing Work and Opportunities

Ongoing work:

- Access to culturally competent care.
- Benefit navigation.
- Mental health care for kids and teens.

Opportunities:

- Virtual care.
- Changes by Kaiser.
- Data segmentation by race, ethnicity, and language.

Recommendations

Metrics and Questions for Carriers

- Meet with Senior Leadership at Kaiser or your mental health service provider.
- Ask for metrics:
 - % of pts with wait times less than 72 hours for Emergent Care.
 - Average wait for Urgent Initial Appt.
 - % of wait times \leq 10 business days for Routine care.
 - Average wait for Routine Initial Appt.
- Ask about check back/return visit access.
- Explore preventative care for mental health.
- Consider how to market benefits to increase access across diverse communities.
- Ask carriers about network diversity.

Questions?

Thank You

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