


Burnout Nation


A black and white photograph of a person in a white lab coat sitting at a desk. They are covering their face with their right hand, suggesting stress or exhaustion. On the desk in front of them are a smartphone, a pair of glasses, a spiral notebook, and some papers. To the left, there is a vase with some dried flowers and a pen holder with pens.

From personal financial stress to global events, employee stress levels are rising.

According to a 2025 commissioned study conducted by Forrester Consulting on behalf of Spring Health, 65% of employees are more stressed or as stressed as they were five years ago.

Managers are your first line of defense against burnout. But let's be real: Your managers are tired too. More than half of managers say they are burned out, and those experiencing exhaustion are twice as likely to leave their jobs, according to research by Microsoft.

The end result? Absenteeism increases. Leaves of absence surge. Resignations pile up. And your organization falls short of its business goals.



65%

of U.S. workers say they
are burned out
isolated

67%

of managers admit to
struggling with heavy
workloads

Top Workplaces

41%

of employees lack confidence
in their manager's ability to
address mental health
concerns

Forrester Survey, 2025

Burnout isn't a one-off issue for HR to handle

It's a business-critical workforce crisis that needs to be addressed at the organizational level. Organizations need to build resiliency, and how they approach it carries a real bottom-line impact.

Burnout is evolving so are the solutions

Burnout isn't just about workload or deadlines. It's shaped by the complex pressures employees navigate both at work and beyond.

But here's the good news:

Organizations have more power than ever before to proactively shape a supportive, healthy work environment that directly counters these stressors.



While offerings like recharge days and mental health breaks are valuable short-term relief, they're just the beginning. True burnout resilience emerges from intentional, holistic strategies that address root causes. Leading organizations are increasingly embracing comprehensive mental healthcare, investing in emotionally intelligent leadership, and embedding wellbeing directly into their cultures.

The path forward is clear: By proactively addressing systemic stressors, organizations can **transform burnout** from an inevitable challenge into an **opportunity to build** a healthier, more engaged workforce and, **ultimately, a stronger business.**

Top 5 takeaways

In this guide, you'll learn what steps you can take to prevent burnout while focusing on these five themes:

1. Burnout is a business mega-trend

this is a serious organizational risk and not just an HR issue.

2. Early recognition and intervention

are essential to preventing burnout from escalating.

3. Managers are your frontline defense

support their mental health and develop them into wellbeing champions.

4. Meaningful mental health investment

that's integrated into your core business practices to drive sustainable outcomes and measurable ROI.

5. Effective crisis support includes continuity

from urgent response to building long-term resilience.

What exactly is burnout?

The term is used a lot, but according to the World Health Organization, it refers to a specific condition resulting from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed.

It's characterized by the following dimensions:

Feeling exhausted or lacking energy

Feeling less effective or productive at work

Increasing mental distance from one's job, or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job

Employees who experience workplace burnout have a:

57%

increased risk of workplace absence greater than two weeks due to illness

40%

increased risk of hypertension

180%

increased risk of developing depressive disorders

2.8x

higher likelihood to be actively searching for a new job

\$4.6 billion

Burnout costs the U.S. healthcare system at least **\$4.6 billion** annually

JAMA Network Report

Understanding the root causes of burnout

Contemporary behavioral health research emphasizes that burnout is rooted in chronic work stressors such as workload, lack of autonomy, misalignment of values, and lack of recognition.

Burnout can also be exacerbated by cultural influences such as global instability or community trauma.

Organizations have a **powerful opportunity to shape the conditions of work** that either mitigate or magnify these external pressures by addressing the root causes and developing progressive strategies.

That means:

Diagnosing systemic drivers of distress, not just individual symptoms, using tools like pulse surveys, structured manager check-ins

Redesigning work environments to promote equity, flexibility, and autonomy; invest in manager training for emotionally intelligent leadership; and embed mental health into the fabric of organizational culture.

Offering accessible support for mental well-being across the acuity spectrum (i.e., self-guided tools and community-based peer support to professional counseling and crisis care).

Intervening with immediate solutions like focus weeks and mental health days can reduce short-term cognitive load. But to truly prevent and address burnout, organizations must commit to a holistic, systemic approach, one that not only promotes mental health, but also advances trust, belonging, and sustainable performance.

The top causes of burnout

According to the Forrester Consulting study, the top factors impacting employee mental health are:

37%

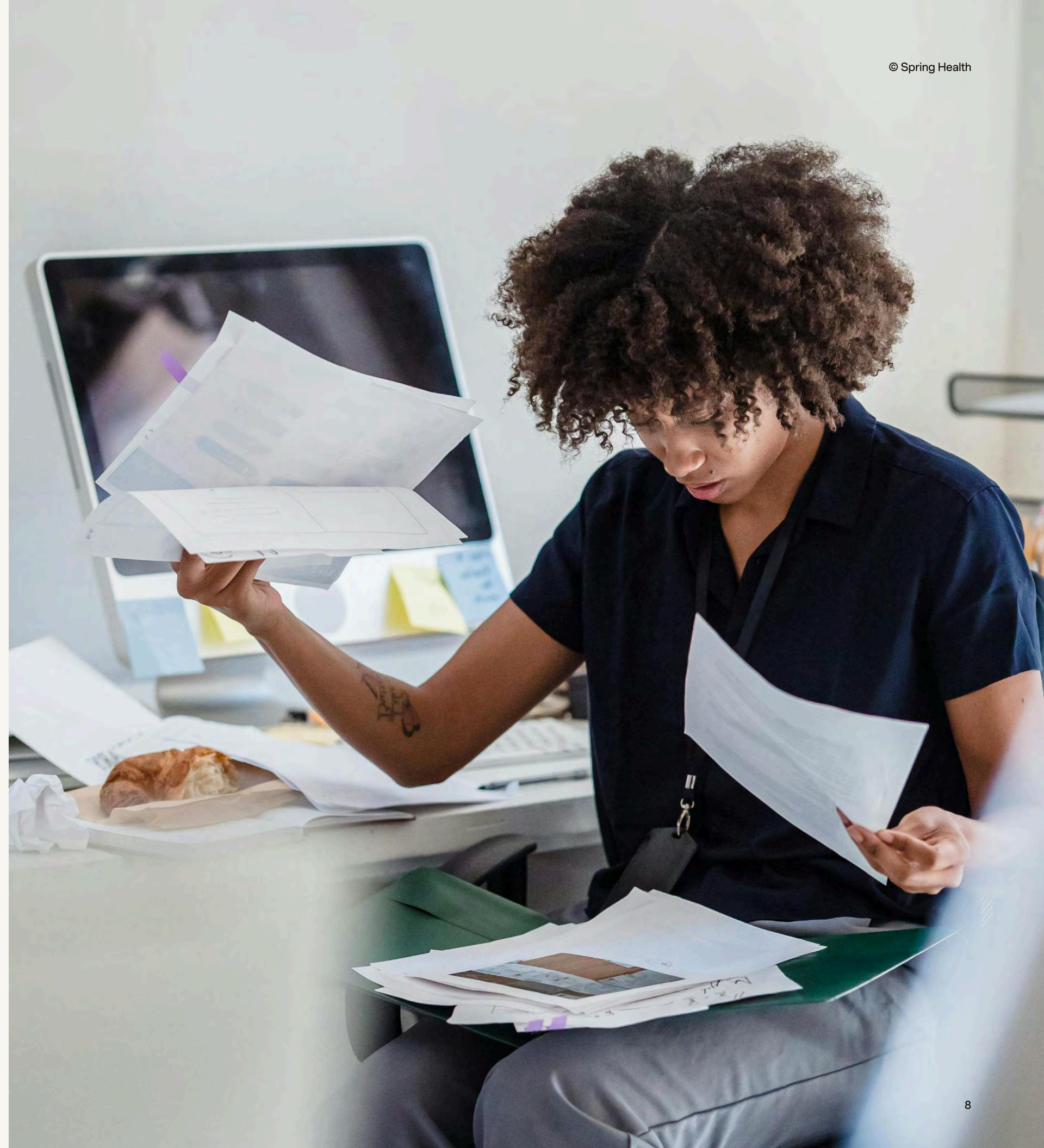
Financial stress

17%

Work-related stress
(workload, deadlines, etc.)

14%

Work-life balance



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Burnout isn't a personal failing it's a systemic issue that requires organizational change. Leaders who embrace comprehensive, proactive mental healthcare will not only support their employees' wellbeing, they'll unlock better performance, lower costs, and lasting resilience.

DR. MILL BROWN

Chief Medical Officer, Spring Health



Your keys to building burnout resilience

Early identification is vital

Employee burnout can present on a spectrum. At its earliest stages, burnout can be remedied more easily. Once an employee reaches the complete burnout stage, though, recovery can become a challenging and long-term process that significantly disrupts both the employee's life and the organization's efficacy. **That's why it's important to address burnout early.**

Three of the most common burnout symptoms are:

Exhaustion

Cynicism and detachment from work

Reduced productivity and performance



Specialized support to lift up your managers



Your people leaders require multi-faceted and special attention because they play such an important role in preventing burnout.

Take these actions:

Provide support

When managers have access to dedicated mental health support, they're more equipped to perform at their best. Provide them with leadership training so they develop the skills needed to recognize and respond to burnout early.

Encourage them to truly know their teams

It's vital that your people leaders know their employees. They need to know who their people are inside and outside of work, understand their patterns of behavior, and be observant to any behavioral changes.

Celebrate wins

Acknowledge positive behavior and moments when your managers have made a difference in reducing burnout. They are helping, often more than they ever know.

Personalized mental health that drives business outcomes

Check-the-box mental health solutions, such as traditional EAPs, are no longer enough to support today's workforce. Plus, as CFOs and business leaders provide increased scrutiny of benefits budgets, addressing burnout needs to be achieved in a way that delivers demonstrated ROI and impact.

The right mental health solution for your organization can drive meaningful outcomes and proven business results by reducing health plan and leave-of-absence costs, increase productivity, and reduce burnout by supporting employees.

When evaluating solutions, look for:

Fast access to care

With self-care options and appointments available in days, not weeks.

*Data-driven
precision care fit*

To deliver faster, lasting outcomes for members.

*Independently
validated ROI*

With guaranteed savings that grow year-over-year.

A purpose-driven culture can boost engagement

Burnout isn't always driven solely by workload or exhaustion. Often, it stems from a deeper void: A lack of meaning or purpose in an employee's daily responsibilities.

When employees feel underutilized, stuck in repetitive tasks, or disconnected from their professional growth and the organization's larger purpose, disengagement quickly follows. This disengagement can mirror traditional burnout, showing up as apathy, lower productivity, and increased detachment from work.

38%

of employers anticipate offering a traditional EAP in three years, down from 45% that offer one today
Forrester Survey, 2025

Leaders should:

Proactively connect employee's roles to the broader organizational mission.

Regularly provide opportunities for career growth and learning.

Foster an environment where employees feel their contributions matter.

By addressing workload balance and purpose, organizations can more comprehensively prevent burnout and sustain employee engagement.

At work, belonging matters

Belonging is a condition for creating high performance. It's not just an outcome.

Strong ties—deep, meaningful relationships—are essential for wellbeing. But research also highlights the surprising power of casual connections with a coworker or neighbor, which play an important role in making life more satisfying and connected.

Employees who feel a strong sense of belonging at work are 2.5 times less likely to feel burned out, according to SHRM. Aon research also found that higher belonging is linked to a 56% improvement in job performance.

While you can't manufacture friendships, you can create a culture that welcomes connection, vulnerability, and attentiveness through:

Structured activities

such as icebreakers, to invite everyone to bring their personal interests into work.

Mentorship programs

that allow for shared learning and cross-team collaboration.

Occasional games, trivia, or virtual happy hours

so employees have a chance to talk to each other about something besides work.

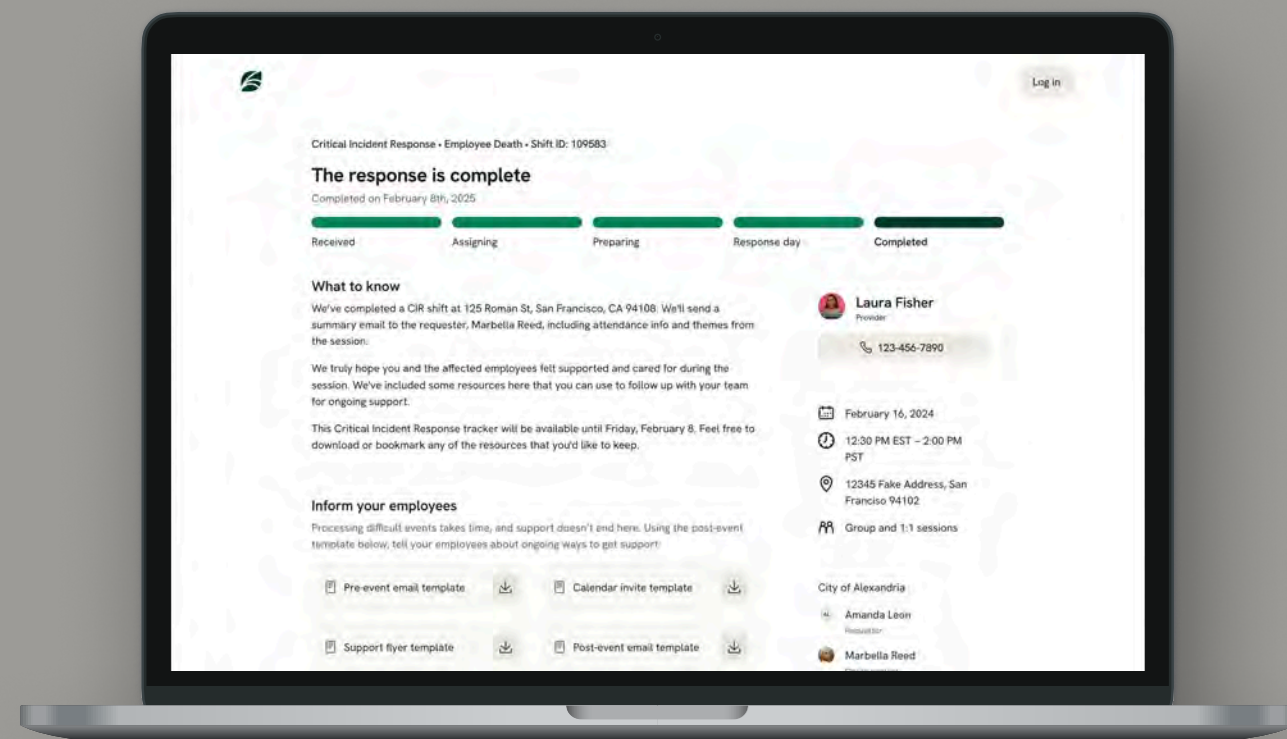
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DR. MILL BROWN

Chief Medical Officer

Spring Health

Addressing burnout means more than just responding **when a crisis hits**—it’s about embedding mental health into the fabric of your organization. When businesses prioritize early identification, personalized support, and continuous care, they're investing in their most valuable asset: their people. And it's good for business, too.



When burnout has reached a crisis point

Having a high-quality provider network in place with little-to-no wait times takes on added importance. You also want the assurance that when your employees are turning to therapy to help, they’re experiencing longitudinal care so they feel supported before, during, and after the crisis.

Turn burnout prevention into a strategic advantage

A clinically backed, personalized approach to mental health doesn't just relieve symptoms. It **helps organizations prevent burnout altogether.**

With early identification through validated assessments, tailored care plans, and dedicated manager support and training, your organization can transform itself with an effective burnout prevention approach.

Seek a mental health solution that:

Seamlessly integrates AI-driven technology with high-touch clinical support

To ensure employees receive personalized mental health care that improves outcomes and reduces long-term costs.

Goes beyond primary care to include specialty mental health services

Addressing substance use disorders, eating disorders, high-acuity cases, and crisis intervention to support the entire workforce.

Demonstrates net-positive ROI

validated by peer-reviewed research, proving that investing in mental health reduces total healthcare spend, lowers disability claims, and improves workforce productivity.

Delivers real-time analytics and predictive insights

To HR and finance leaders, empowering them with data on engagement, cost savings, and population risk trends.

Provides the industry's most advanced crisis response system

With a fully owned provider network, proactive planning tools, and longitudinal care that ensures sustainable recovery.

Transform mental health into a business advantage by reducing healthcare costs, improving workforce stability, and making care more effective and accessible.

About Spring Health



Spring Health is the leading, global behavioral health solution **proven to change people's lives and deliver net-positive financial return for organizations.** Through Spring Health's Precision Mental Healthcare, individuals and families are connected with personalized interventions and compassionate, culturally-responsive mental health care. Certified by the Validation Institute for demonstrating net savings for customers,

Spring Health also equips global business leaders with intelligent technology, real-time insights, and clinical expertise to **support diverse and evolving organizational needs.**

Today, more than 20 million people worldwide have access to Spring Health. We're trusted by leading employers, health plans and channel partners, including Adobe, Bumble, General Mills, Moda Health, Wellstar, and Guardian, **to drive cultural impact at scale.**

For more information, please visit
<https://www.springhealth.com>.

