

SYMPOSIUM 2025

Humanizing benefits: Real people, real issues



Wednesday, June 11

11:00 a.m. ET

Welcome

11:05 a.m. ET

Michael Landsberg
President and CEO
Empaath Inc.

What happens before help happens

What makes someone finally ask for help? For many —it's not a pamphlet or a policy. It is a moment of connection.

In this talk, Michael will explore how real stories and emotional resonance can guide employees toward support that's already in place. It's not always about more resources. It's often about the right *invitation*.

12:05 p.m. ET

Marni Hefner (Moderator)
Director, Workplace Solutions
IDC WIN

Supporting pediatric mental health: Awareness, resources, benefits, and reducing stigma

This session will focus on raising awareness of pediatric mental health, its impact on children and families and the available resources.

Matthew King (Panelist)
Head of Group Distribution
RBC Insurance

We will discuss barriers to accessing support and how group benefits plans can assist families in navigating these resources.

Jim English GBA (Panelist)
Regional Vice President
North and Southwestern Ontario
RBC Insurance

The session will also address misconceptions and biases surrounding pediatric mental health, aiming to foster a compassionate, informed approach and reduce stigma for both advisors and parents.

Ashton Thornton RN, BScN (Panelist)
Director of Clinical Services
Kixcare

1:05 p.m. ET

Financial literacy: Understanding the gap and the opportunity

Brent Hines
Chief Executive Officer
Foundation for Financial Wellness

Financial wellness isn't just a buzzword; it's here to stay. Employers know that financially stressed employees are expensive, impacting productivity, health outcomes, employee turnover, to name a few. But they're not sure how to fix it. Leading financial professionals are harnessing this movement to grow their practice and their influence in the employer space.

Finances are the number one source of stress for employees. By prioritizing financial wellness today, employers and plan sponsors can equip their employees to better navigate their financial well-being. Brent Hines, CEO of the Foundation for Financial Wellness will cover:

- What's working, what's not in financial wellness programs and services
- How employee stress is showing up at the workplace and why employers care
- The business case for employee financial wellness programs

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David Emanuel (Moderator)
VP and Head of Workplace Solutions
IDC WIN

Jovana Budisin BScPhm, PharmD (Panelist)
Director of Pharmacy Benefits
Equitable

Neda Nasser PharmD, M.Sc, MBA (Panelist)
Product Director, Drug Insurance
Desjardins

Jean-Marc Assaad Ph.D. (Panelist)
Director of Training Services & Psychologist
PsyVitaliti

Reframing obesity: A chronic disease with far-reaching impact requiring a strategic, holistic approach

Obesity is not just about weight, it's a complex, chronic disease that requires a complete shift in mindset, treatment and policy.

This panel will explore the true scope and impact of obesity, challenge persistent myths and stigma and introduce process-based approaches to care.

We'll also examine international models of success and discuss how benefit plans can be reimagined to support long-term, holistic obesity management—ultimately improving health outcomes, workplace productivity and quality of life.

2:35 p.m. ET

Don Hart (Moderator)
VP Training and Development
IDC WIN

Li Zhang MBA, PMP (Panelist)
Director, Social Impact
Financial Literacy Leader
CPA Canada

Money, meaning and mindset: Rethinking financial literacy for advisors

In a rapidly evolving financial landscape, traditional notions of financial literacy no longer meet the needs of modern clients — or advisors. This dynamic session will challenge advisors to rethink what financial literacy really means and how it's delivered. We will explore how psychology, communication style, generational shifts, and behavior science can reshape how we educate, connect with, and empower clients. Li and Don will offer real-world insights and actionable strategies to make financial guidance more human, relevant, and lasting.

3:05 p.m. ET

Joe Roberts
Keynote Speaker, Author, Humanitarian

From skid row to CEO: Building resilience one step at a time

In this empowering keynote, Joe teaches audiences how to build the resiliency needed to succeed in the face of adversity and change by taking small, attainable steps. Sharing the story of his catastrophic failure and extraordinary success, Joe inspires each of us to see beyond our perceived limitations to overcome life's challenges and embrace change.

4:05 p.m. ET

Wrap-up