

# Medtronic & Headspace

Redefining Access to Care: How Medtronic Evolved Its Mental Health Strategy with Headspace



## About Medtronic

Medtronic is a global leader in medical technology, dedicated to its mission: to alleviate pain, restore health, and extend life. With more than 95,000 employees globally, Medtronic's population spans corporate offices, manufacturing sites, sales teams, and frontline roles — many of which are non-desk workers.

As workforce needs diversified globally, Medtronic sought a mental health solution designed for flexibility and scale — not a one-size-fits-all program.

When Medtronic first partnered with Headspace, the world — and the workplace — were changing rapidly. The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the shift toward virtual care while exposing long-standing gaps in access to mental health support. Medtronic's workforce spanned geographies, roles, and work environments, with many employees lacking regular access to email or traditional benefits communications. At the same time, cultural attitudes toward mental health varied widely, influencing how — and whether — employees felt comfortable seeking support.

Traditional employee assistance programs alone were not designed to meet this level of complexity. Medtronic needed more than another benefit — it needed an approach that normalized mental health support, provided confidential and on-demand access, and offered multiple paths into care for employees and family members. That meant delivering consistent, high-quality support at scale, while giving Medtronic's population the flexibility to engage in the moment or pursue deeper support over time.

“We recognized early on that mental health views and needs differ widely — not just by geography, but by personal preference. We wanted to offer something that truly met employees where they were in the moment.”

— Jeanne Hermes, Medtronic Benefits Consultant

## The Challenge

Medtronic needed a mental health solution that could:

- Scale equitably across a global and diverse workforce
- Provide easy, flexible access to virtual care that employees would actually use
- Support employees through everyday stress and moments of crisis alike

## The Approach

- ✓ **Multiple entry points to care, from self-guided content to coaching, clinical services, and work-life support**
- ✓ **Digital-first access that reaches global and non-desk population wherever they are**
- ✓ **On-demand support, including AI-powered mental health companion, Ebb**
- ✓ **Responsive care when it's needed most, from everyday anxiety to critical events**

Medtronic's partnership with Headspace began with a clear principle: mental health support should meet employees where they are — culturally, geographically, and personally. Rather than relying on a one-size-fits-all approach, or requiring employees to begin their journey with therapy, Medtronic adopted a stratified model of care with Headspace that supported a broad range of needs across its workforce. Employees could engage at the level that made sense for them — whether managing everyday stress, navigating a life transition, or accessing higher levels of clinical care when needed — while still having the option to connect with a real human through coaching services. This layered approach helped employees address concerns early, before they escalated, while ensuring more intensive support was readily available for those who needed it. Together, this flexibility reduced friction, lowered stigma, and made mental health support feel more approachable and relevant across the organization.

“When we looked at where we were headed, it made sense to bring everything together,” the team shared. “Having one access point for EAP and mental health resources reduced barriers and helped employees get the right kind of support more quickly.”

– Amy Johnson, Sr. Benefits Director

## The Headspace Impact

Medtronic’s focus on equity, access, and responsiveness has translated into strong engagement and measurable outcomes – particularly in the U.S., where Headspace EAP is available.

**10.2%**  
app enrollment,  
compared to a 5.1% industry benchmark

**7.0%**  
program engagement,  
more than double the 2.7% industry benchmark

**Over 65%**  
of participants reported  
improvements in depression,  
anxiety, and stress

But for Medtronic, success isn’t measured by metrics alone. It’s measured by real-life, human impact.

*“What we hear from employees – the stories of how Headspace helped them through a difficult moment – that’s what stays with us,” the team noted. “That’s how we know this work matters.”*

## Responding in times of crisis

This approach proved especially effective as Medtronic navigated moments of crisis. During the COVID-19 pandemic, Medtronic accelerated its rollout of Headspace in India to provide immediate access to on-demand emotional support during a devastating surge. Beyond the pandemic, Headspace has continued to support Medtronic employees through reorganizations, grief events, and other critical incidents – delivering timely, human-centered care when it matters most.

“That moment really shaped how we thought about our strategy,” the team reflected. “It showed our employees that we would act quickly and thoughtfully when their well-being was at stake.”

## Reaching non-desk and dispersed populations

Equitable access meant designing support for employees who weren’t easily reached through traditional benefits communications. Medtronic partnered closely with Headspace to reimagine how to engage a diverse, dispersed workforce to support their mental health – collaborating to create a functional approach that would resonate beyond email or intranet channels. One result of this work was the Mindful Shift program, introduced at manufacturing sites in the U.S. and Ireland, which focused on simple, daily actions employees could take during the workday to support their well-being. By emphasizing practical behaviors over clinical language, the program helped make mental health feel more approachable and relevant for non-desk employees.

Building on this foundation, Medtronic created targeted campaigns aligned with global awareness moments, along with onsite materials designed to reach employees across roles and regions. And more recently, the partnership expanded to include a pilot mailer at select U.S. sites where employees had returned to the office full time to share quick, actionable tips to support this transition while reinforcing Headspace as a trusted, always-available resource.

“Headspace doesn’t say no. They collaborate, they listen, and they help us build what our employees actually need.” – Amy Johnson, Sr. Benefits Director

## Evolving from benefits partner to trusted EAP

As the partnership matured, Medtronic saw an opportunity to further simplify and strengthen access to employee support by consolidating care into a single experience. In July 2024, the company transitioned to Headspace as its Employee Assistance Program (EAP) in the U.S., bringing together everyday mental health support and traditional EAP services within a unified platform.

This evolution reduced fragmentation, created a single point of access for employees, and made it easier to move seamlessly between levels of care, without having to navigate multiple vendors.

Since adopting Headspace as its EAP, Medtronic has continued to build on this foundation by introducing new capabilities aligned with its broader innovation strategy. That same year, Medtronic became one of the first global clients to pilot Ebb, Headspace’s AI-powered companion – integrated directly into the app to provide 24/7, personalized support that helps employees manage anxiety, navigate challenges, and find relevant resources in the moment.

## Why It Works

- ✓ **Access before intensity:** Employees are more likely to engage when support is easy to find, easy to start, and available on their terms.
- ✓ **Choice reduces stigma:** Offering multiple paths into care – beyond traditional therapy – helps normalize mental health and meet employees at different comfort levels and needs.
- ✓ **One ecosystem builds trust:** Bringing EAP, coaching, clinical care, and self-guided resources together creates continuity and reduces drop-off between services.
- ✓ **Responsiveness matters:** Timely support during moments of disruption strengthens credibility and reinforces that mental health is a real organizational priority, not just a benefit on paper.