

# The ROI of Employee Wellbeing

How wellbeing initiatives drive business success in the UAE



Insights from Bupa Global

**Amidst the UAE's fast-paced and competitive business environment, workforces in the country are increasingly noting a direct correlation between employee wellbeing and organisational success.**

Forward-thinking businesses are recognising that employee benefits, including holistic insurance benefits that prioritise physical, mental, and emotional health, must evolve from being viewed as nice-to-have offerings to a strategic necessity that better supports the changing needs of their workforce.

Such investments, in turn, are yielding substantial benefits – most commonly leading to higher productivity, increased engagement, and stronger retention rates.

This shift in focus sets the stage for organisations to evaluate the broader impact of their wellbeing initiatives, such as through measuring the Return on Wellbeing Investments (ROWI).

The latest survey from Bupa Global confirms this trend, revealing the key preferences of employees and the measurable benefits that wellbeing programmes deliver. From flexible working arrangements to enhanced insurance policies and mental health resources, the survey findings emphasise the growing importance of wellbeing initiatives in building healthier, more resilient workforces that drive long-term success.

## Wellbeing programmes drive success with many UAE companies planning to increase investments



The majority of UAE organisations are recognising the value of investing in employee wellbeing.

**88%**

intend to further enhance their wellbeing budgets in the coming year, driven by positive returns on investment (ROI).



Nearly all senior leaders (94%) report a positive impact on productivity, emphasising the vital role that wellbeing plays in driving business performance.

## Measuring the impact of wellbeing investment

Wellbeing programmes deliver more than just personal benefits - they boost **organisational outcomes**.

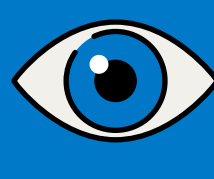


Wellbeing programmes



**53%**

observe higher productivity



**49%**

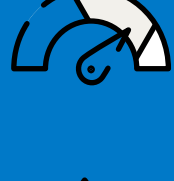
see improved engagement



**36%**

report lower absenteeism

## Boosting employee satisfaction through wellbeing initiatives



Wellbeing initiatives are driving significant improvements in employee satisfaction. Over one-third (34%) of companies offer flexible working arrangements, which employees appreciate.



Notably, 66% of employees expressed satisfaction with their company's wellbeing programmes, citing flexibility and health resources as key benefits.



## What employees want from wellbeing programmes

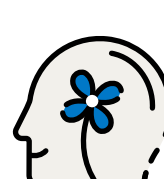
As awareness around wellbeing grows, employees are voicing their needs.



**89%** want **expanded insurance benefits**



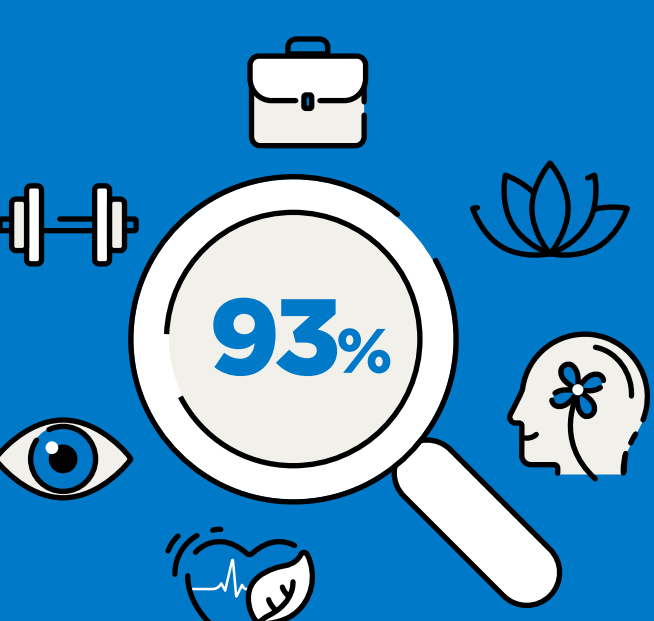
**88%** seek more **health screenings**



**85%** are looking for access to **mental health resources**



Flexibility is also a priority, with **85%** valuing **flexible work policies**



## Wellbeing is essential for retention and attraction

Employees are not just benefiting from wellbeing programmes - they are actively seeking them out. A striking 93% of employees say they would prioritise wellbeing initiatives when considering job opportunities, making these programmes crucial for attracting and retaining top talent.

## The future of wellbeing investment

Despite challenges such as low employee participation (45%) and budget constraints (43%), nearly nine in ten employers (88%) plan to increase wellbeing investments in the next year. One in five (20%) companies are even planning to boost budgets by more than 15%.



**9 in 10**

plan to increase wellbeing investments in the next year



**1 in 5**

plan to boost budgets by more than 15%

## Essential steps for maximising wellbeing benefits



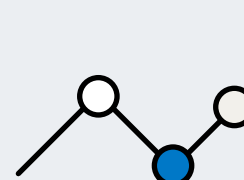
**Prioritise holistic wellbeing solutions:**

Incorporate physical, mental, and emotional health initiatives to address the diverse needs of employees



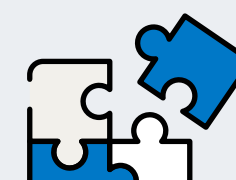
**Boost employee participation:**

Actively encourage participation in wellbeing programmes to overcome engagement challenges and maximise the ROI



**Measure the Return on Wellbeing Investment (ROWI):**

Implement tools and metrics to track the impact of wellbeing programmes on productivity, engagement, and retention



**Align wellbeing strategies with business goals:**

Ensure that wellbeing strategies are integrated into broader business objectives to drive sustained growth and resilience

## Wellbeing at the heart of organisational performance

As the role of employee wellbeing becomes more central to business strategies, the concept of Return on Wellbeing Investment (ROWI) will remain integral to measuring organisational success.

While challenges like budget limitations and low participation exist, businesses that continue to invest in the health and happiness of their workforce will not only enhance job satisfaction but also sustain growth and resilience in an increasingly dynamic market.

### About the Survey:

The survey on Return on Wellbeing Investment in the UAE workplace was conducted by Bupa Global through an online survey by YouGov. It took place from 21<sup>st</sup> to 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2024, and reached a total of 408 full-time employees, encompassing a wide range of age groups, industries, and backgrounds.