

Headspace & Accolade



AT A GLANCE

Industry

Healthcare

Employee count

1,220

Headquarters

**Plymouth Meeting,
Pennsylvania**

Key challenges

Providing employees with mental healthcare across the spectrum of need from coaching to psychiatry

Supporting frontline workers facing compassion fatigue, along with their families, during a pandemic

THE CHALLENGE

Accolade employees know what good health care benefits look like. As one of the fastest growing healthcare companies in the United States, Accolade helps its members untangle the complexities of health and benefits resources. Accolade's health assistants and nurses are on the frontlines every day working with members, many of whom are in the midst of a personal or family health crisis. When the COVID-19 pandemic started in early 2020, Accolade leadership knew it needed to act fast to support the mental health of its team. "We have a diverse care team, many of whom are struggling with the impact of the pandemic in their own homes, while serving others and facing compassion fatigue," says Shantanu Nundy, chief medical officer at Accolade. "We needed to help our people on the frontlines and their families, in addition to the rest of our employees." Knowing the stress that the Accolade team was experiencing, Nundy and his colleagues wanted to offer a mental healthcare service with which they could access a live person on demand, 24/7, from their homes. As a primary care doctor, Nundy understands that physical and mental health are inextricably linked. "You shouldn't need to justify providing mental healthcare," he says. "Mental health is the goal."

WHY HEADSPACE

"For Accolade, it's all about the relationships," says Britt Provost, executive vice president of People and Culture at Accolade. That includes the relationships with its customers, members, employees and business partners. At the same time that Accolade was looking for a mental healthcare service for its own employees, it was also looking to partner with a mental health provider that it could offer to its members. Of more than 80 companies that Accolade assessed for the partnership, Headspace stood out. Accolade decided to try Headspace Care by first offering the benefit to its own employees for the following key reasons:

BY THE NUMBERS

75%

show improvement in depression with coaching

46 seconds

average time to coach response

4.8/5

average star rating

32%

total sign-ups

60%

of total sign-ups active

First, Headspace's integrative and preventative approach to mental healthcare was essential. "A lot of companies aggregate services, but they don't integrate them like Headspace does," says Nundy.

"Having the full suite of services—coaching, therapy, and psychiatry—right in your phone was a huge draw for us," adds Provost. "We love that you can start with coaching, and go up to therapy if you need it. Headspace is a support system that's both functional and flexible."

The second reason was Headspace's data-driven approach to guide the care the coaches and clinicians provide. "We use data to measure diabetes. It should be the same for depression," says Nundy. Headspace combines care from coaches, therapists and psychiatrists with the world's largest mental health dataset to provide high-quality, scalable care.

Finally, Accolade leadership was looking for a company that shared Accolade's purpose-driven, relationship-oriented, and empathetic values. They wanted curated content that they could easily share and they wanted to be confident that the values and tone matched Accolade's own. They were also looking for a company that they could work well with, that could make the integration seamless and organic, and that could flex with their growing demands.

THE RESULTS

High Sign-Ups at Launch

The demand for immediate mental healthcare among Accolade's population was clear from the start. During the first week after Accolade launched Headspace Care, 15% of employees had signed up—an unprecedented rate for a new benefit rollout. And it wasn't only Accolade employees: their dependents were signing up, too. "Headspace met the needs of different generations with different needs within families, and was accessible to everyone," says Provost. Provost and Nundy agree that part of the initial sign-up success was due to the destigmatization of mental healthcare for which Headspace advocates, and how mental health is discussed right from the start in Headspace's launch materials. Bringing awareness as well as ease of access to mental healthcare empowered employees and their dependents to initiate care. Since the early success of the launch, the interest has only increased. After eight weeks, sign-ups were at 24.5%. Accolade is invested in promoting Headspace Care internally, using Headspace's robust communications playbook to guide its own messaging about well-being to its employees.

“The support from the company during COVID as well as the amazing programs implemented, like Headspace Care and waiving telemedicine costs, set the bar for how a company treats its workforce!”

Accolade member

Improvements in Depression and Anxiety¹

Early results already show very promising trends of improvement. Of those who screened positive for depression at intake and completed a follow-up survey, 75% have seen improvement after receiving coaching services, with 58% moving from a positive to a negative screen. Similarly, 65% of Accolade members who screened positive for anxiety at intake and completed a follow-up survey saw a decrease in their anxiety levels, with 35% moving from a positive to a negative screen. Early data also show a similar trend for those who receive therapy from a Headspace Care clinician: 100% of those members who screened positive for depression at intake and completed a survey have seen a decrease in their depression. For anxiety, 75% of those who worked with a clinician after screening positive, and completed a follow-up survey, have seen improvement.

Prioritizing Employees' Mental Health

Introducing Headspace has also empowered managers to better support their teams, serving as a resource when needed. For Nundy, “Making an investment in Headspace reaffirms for our employees the value that we place on mental health.” In fact, in a recent survey, 90% of Accolade employees agree that Accolade is supporting employees during the COVID-19 pandemic, in part by offering Headspace Care. With employees on the front lines, and general stress from the pandemic, Headspace has played a crucial role for the Accolade team. Added Provost, “We need [Headspace] now more than ever.”

READY WHEN YOU ARE

Give everyone a shot at their best through Headspace, the world's most advanced mental health system. With care that's data driven and powered by AI, every Headspace Care member has access to high-quality mental health support coordinated across our experienced staff of coaches, therapists, and psychiatrists.

¹ Improvements in depression are defined as either screening negative via PHQ-2 or a reduction in PHQ-9 score. Improvements in anxiety are defined as either screening negative via GAD-2 or a reduction in GAD-7 score.