# Why top ad agencies prioritise healthcare and mental health in employee benefits



Employers across various sectors face a pressing challenge: despite investing significantly in employee benefits — often exceeding 30% of an individual's salary — a considerable number of workers remain dissatisfied with their options. This is particularly evident in the advertising industry, where Campaign's 2025 Best Places to Work (BPTW) survey highlighted that while 85% of employees at winning companies found their benefits satisfactory, only 69% of those employed by non-winners felt the same.

As businesses grapple with escalating National Insurance contributions and take a cautious approach to salary increments, revamping benefits packages has become a strategic avenue to reward staff and mitigate outgoings. Two areas showing strong performance in employee satisfaction are holiday allowance and sick pay, which consistently rank highly in Workforce Research Group’s assessments. However, healthcare benefits have emerged as a stark dividing line between successful firms and their less fortunate counterparts, with 85% satisfaction among BPTW winners compared to a mere 65% for non-winners.

Matthew Law, a senior corporate consultant at Connor Broadley Benefits Consulting, highlights that access to reliable healthcare has shifted from being an executive privilege to a widespread employee expectation. “The demand for expedited healthcare access has surged, especially given the difficulty many face in obtaining timely NHS treatment,” he observed. However, the rising costs associated with higher insurance utilisation present a daunting hurdle for employers, with premiums increasing annually at a staggering rate of 17%.

Jen Jones, founder of 2025 BPTW winner Craft Media, noted that while providing robust health packages is imperative, the rising costs are forcing companies to reconsider the breadth of services they can offer. The need for better healthcare benefits resonates strongly in light of post-COVID realities, marked by longer NHS waiting times and inflationary pressures on living costs. Media agency Medialab, for instance, experienced a sharp drop in ranking after staff expressed anxiety about their benefits, prompting the introduction of a more competitive healthcare package that included private medical insurance and various wellness-related perks.

Addressing mental health is another critical area where companies have shifted their focus. Statistics show a surge in mental health-related claims and leave requests, with 74% of HR professionals reporting increased demands for mental health support over the past year. Many firms now offer mental health coaching, mediation seminars, and resources for counsel. Programs like those at Pitch Marketing Group, which provide access to mental health apps and 24/7 employee assistance schemes, illustrate the growing recognition of mental well-being as central to overall employee satisfaction.

Alongside this, there is a notable move towards more nuanced family-focused benefits, such as paid maternity and paternity leave, menopause supports, and even pregnancy-loss leave—a clear indication that employers are increasingly aware of the importance of supporting staff through personal and familial challenges. The embedding of such policies often translates directly into improved workplace morale and productivity, with many companies reporting a marked positive impact from investing in family benefits.

However, the BPTW findings reveal that even within top-performing companies, there is still considerable room for improvement, especially regarding retirement schemes. Only 67% of employees expressed satisfaction with retirement benefits, highlighting a disconnect that younger workforces may populate further. Many younger employees, who often prioritise immediate gains, may regard retirement planning as a lower priority, complicating efforts to introduce robust long-term financial benefits.

Furthermore, disability provision remains an underwhelming area, with only 64% satisfaction rates among employees at winning organisations. Many firms struggle with the terminology and implications of disability schemes, inadvertently sidelining employees needing support. Edward Glover, co-founder of Recipe, emphasised a commitment to accommodating individual needs rather than adhering strictly to formal schemes. This informal approach and inadequate visibility of existing benefits appear to contribute to lower satisfaction ratings in this area.

As the landscape continues to evolve, with rising costs and increasing employee expectations, companies must navigate the intricacies of expanding and diversifying their employee benefit offerings. The BPTW survey clearly illustrates that firms that respond to the needs and challenges of their employees, particularly in critical areas such as healthcare and mental well-being, will not only improve retention but also enhance the overall workplace culture in the competitive advertising sector.

### Reference Map

* Paragraph 1: [[1]](https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/its-no-longer-just-senior-exec-perk-why-best-places-work-companies-revamping-staff-benefits/1917605)
* Paragraph 2: [[1]](https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/its-no-longer-just-senior-exec-perk-why-best-places-work-companies-revamping-staff-benefits/1917605)
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* Paragraph 5: [[2]](https://www.ft.com/content/a27e3b48-16f4-4580-aa63-39b80fb3877b), [[4]](https://www.ajg.com/news-and-insights/top-healthcare-insights-results-from-the-2023-benefits-strategy-and-benchmarking-survey/)
* Paragraph 6: [[3]](https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/benefits-compensation/biggest-benefits-compensation-trends-2023)
* Paragraph 7: [[4]](https://www.ajg.com/news-and-insights/top-healthcare-insights-results-from-the-2023-benefits-strategy-and-benchmarking-survey/), [[5]](https://flair.hr/en/blog/employee-benefits-statistics/)
* Paragraph 8: [[6]](https://www.peoplejoy.com/article/the-future-of-healthcare-benefits-what-emerging-workforce-trends-mean-for-hr-leaders)
* Paragraph 9: [[7]](https://blog.accessperks.com/2023-employee-benefits-perks-statistics)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://www.campaignlive.co.uk/article/its-no-longer-just-senior-exec-perk-why-best-places-work-companies-revamping-staff-benefits/1917605> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/a27e3b48-16f4-4580-aa63-39b80fb3877b> - This article discusses how companies are adjusting their wellness programs in response to increased mental health claims and performance complaints among employees. It highlights the restructuring of wellness initiatives to include mental health coaching, meditation seminars, and social gatherings. The piece also notes that 74% of HR executives have reported an increase in staff requests for mental health-related leaves over the past year, emphasizing the growing importance of mental health support in the workplace.
3. <https://www.shrm.org/topics-tools/news/benefits-compensation/biggest-benefits-compensation-trends-2023> - This article outlines significant trends in employee benefits and compensation for 2023, including an emphasis on family benefits such as paid maternity and paternity leave, paid parental leave, and paid adoption leave. It also highlights the introduction of menopause benefits and pregnancy-loss leave, reflecting a broader focus on supporting employees through various life transitions and challenges.
4. <https://www.ajg.com/news-and-insights/top-healthcare-insights-results-from-the-2023-benefits-strategy-and-benchmarking-survey/> - This survey reveals key insights into healthcare benefits, noting that 53% of healthcare organizations plan to increase workforce headcount by 2024. It also highlights that 87% of employees believe their leaders are concerned about the impact of stress and burnout on the organization, indicating a growing focus on mental health and well-being in the workplace.
5. <https://flair.hr/en/blog/employee-benefits-statistics/> - This article presents statistics on employee benefits, including the fact that 36% of employees have considered or left their jobs due to inadequate family benefits. It also notes that 83% of employers believe their benefits package positively impacts worker productivity, while only 60% of employees report satisfaction with their benefits, highlighting a gap between employer perceptions and employee satisfaction.
6. <https://www.peoplejoy.com/article/the-future-of-healthcare-benefits-what-emerging-workforce-trends-mean-for-hr-leaders> - This article discusses emerging trends in healthcare benefits, emphasizing the importance of tuition-free educational partnerships and student loan assistance as critical tools for recruitment and retention. It also highlights the significance of enhanced family leave policies, including paid parental leave and caregiver support, to improve employee satisfaction and retention.
7. <https://blog.accessperks.com/2023-employee-benefits-perks-statistics> - This article provides statistics on employee benefits and engagement, noting that 40% of employers believe workers leave their jobs to find employment with better benefits. It also highlights that 36% of employees have considered or left their jobs due to inadequate family benefits, underscoring the importance of comprehensive benefits packages in employee retention.