

Achieving Medical Accuracy in the Technology Industry



INTRODUCTION

The technology industry is booming, and has quickly become one of the most talked-about sectors in business today. Articles everywhere advise job seekers on the best ways to get their foot in the door at the hottest startups and tech companies. Technology companies of all sizes know that offering great perks and benefits is key to differentiating themselves from other companies, and helps them attract the best and brightest employees.

But great benefits go well beyond traditional health, dental and 401(k). Many employees, especially those in the tech sector, look for unique and innovative benefits. Popular career community sites and forums have started to list company benefits to prospective employees looking to find the best options for themselves and their families. With benefit visibility even before applying to the job, the competition among tech companies is on the rise. One of the ways employers are increasingly differentiating themselves is by removing medical uncertainty for employees and their families.

HOW CAN THE RIGHT MEDICAL CARE HELP?

According to Forbes, U.S. workforce illness costs businesses \$576 billion annually. Of that amount, 39 percent can be attributed to lost productivity from employee absenteeism and presenteeism. Absenteeism is a common term that refers to employees who miss work and stay home due to illness.¹ Presenteeism, however, is a fairly new term coined by psychologist Cary Cooper to describe the instances where sick employees report to work and perform poorly while there. Presenteeism can be just as detrimental to productivity as absenteeism, but it is far more difficult to detect.

What drives employees to come into work when feeling ill? The answer is complex, and depends on the individual. Most technology companies are incredibly fast-paced and rely on the creativity of their employees to thrive. A sick employee may feel pressured to report to work regardless of their health, for fear of falling behind should they stay at home. Cases of presenteeism may also rise during times of economic strain, or when an employee feels her job may not be secure.²

Issues of presenteeism tend to raise serious questions about health care cost containment. Some companies aim to reduce costs by trimming down employee benefits, but often find that the savings are offset by the cost of reduced productivity.

Highlighting what's inside

Why Tech Companies Need the Right Medical Care

Best Doctors Worldwide Expertise

Employee Engagement

Member Testimonials and Stories



Presenteeism may result in lower direct costs for employers, but accounts for more lost time because the illnesses commonly associated with it, such as allergies, back pain, and depression, are prevalent and typically occur during peak working years. These indirect costs are only now becoming more visible to employers.³

Having access to expert second opinions and in-depth clinical analysis without even going to the doctor's office can dramatically change the way tech employees manage their health. Knowing and understanding treatment options and obtaining an accurate diagnosis helps keep employees healthy and productive, helping to lower occurrences of presenteeism and absenteeism. These services aim to provide efficient, accurate care so that employees and their dependents get the right diagnosis and treatment.

Best Doctors works with some of the world's most progressive companies to help combat misdiagnosis, improve health quality and engage employees in their own care. Serving hundreds of thousands of members in the technology industry, we support the workforces and families of those in Fortune 500 companies, midsize businesses and growing startups, hardware manufacturers, software and application developers, mobile and cloud technology firms, networking enterprises, web-based service companies and other technology providers.

Every company is unique, and so it is no surprise that benefits packages are not one-size-fits-all. When it comes to benefit plan design, careful consideration of employee demographics is key. Working with employers to customize programs that best suit their employee population will ensure that unique medical needs are met.

Employees in the technology industry tend to be well educated, active, analytical, and open to innovative approaches. Employees in this industry are often younger, and so the most common Best Doctors requests deal with orthopedic issues (such as sports injuries), maternity/fertility challenges and pediatrics. These issues frequently represent high-cost claims that can grow even higher if not handled properly.

ACCESS TO WORLDWIDE EXPERTISE

Best Doctors has recognized a recent trend of technology companies implementing their programs internationally. Technology companies are more likely to implement medical advisory services on a global scale than any other business. The Best Doctors database comprises more than 53,000 medical specialists whose expertise can be accessed, regardless of the member's location.

Best Doctors Consultations in the Tech Industry Resulted in:

- **37% change in diagnosis**
- **75% change in treatment plans**
- **95% client satisfaction rate**

In one recent example, a boy between the ages of 5 and 9 was diagnosed with Acute Lymphoblastic Leukemia (A.L.L.). He had experienced a sudden onset of fever and bone pain. Local evaluation and testing revealed a diagnosis of A.L.L., but local clinicians struggled with the treatment plan. The child began chemotherapy treatment and cranial radiation therapy. His parents, seeking confirmation of diagnosis and treatment plan, contacted Best Doctors.

The boy's Best Doctors expert was Dr. Peter G. Steinherz, Chief of Leukemia and Lymphoma Service at Memorial Sloan Kettering. The child's medical records were collected and the diagnosis was confirmed, however the treatment plan significantly changed. The Expert explained that cranial radiation was not a standard practice to treat A.L.L., and that that folic acid should not be given to people with A.L.L. It counters the action of the methotrexate and is an essential growth factor for the leukemia cell. The expert advised that the medication Asparaginase is not known to provide any benefit in the control of leukemia, and outlined the standard testing protocol that should be implemented.

The child's parents were relieved to have a confirmed diagnosis with a defined treatment plan built around evidence-based medicine and the accepted standard of practice for patients with A.L.L.

The boy's attending physician was elated with the Expert report and immediately began with the recommended treatment plan as outlined by Dr. Steinherz. The plan sponsor and the parents credit Best Doctors services with saving the life of the child.

Geographic location can often contribute to fragmented medical care. This case is just one example of how access to medical expertise can be a reality for everyone, regardless of where they live.

KEEPING EMPLOYEES ENGAGED

Cultivating and maintaining company culture is extremely important. Best Doctors works closely with each client to build a strategic and customized communications program that reflects their distinct needs and culture.

We spread the word through multiple communications channels, including social media, video, health fairs, e-newsletters, posters, handouts and an online member portal.

A key aspect of any member engagement strategy should be clinical integration. Many organizations already have medical and wellness resources in place, such as health insurance, on-site clinics, health coaching, disease management, etc.



A successful clinical integration program aligns new and existing health services and cross trains teams to identify opportunities for other intervention, and create referrals to help increase utilization. Once implemented, large populations can expect significant increases in inter-vendor referrals and medical case reviews.

WHAT TECHNOLOGY EMPLOYEES SAY ABOUT BEST DOCTORS

Our client satisfaction rate is among the highest of any health and medical services used today. Here is a sampling of what some of our members in the technology sector say about their experience:

“Best Doctors provided peace of mind that we were taking the right course of action. In cancer, as well as in life, you don’t get do-overs. You have to be sure you are doing everything you can.”

“We were better prepared for our appointment with the surgeons and could make a decision on our daughter’s treatment with knowledge of what we should be asking for.”

“I was impressed that Best Doctors obtained another pathology report because the first report contradicted the path report my physician had obtained. I was also impressed with the thoroughness and clarity of the Best Doctors report.”

“I was supposed to have surgery and when I researched it myself, it seemed like the wrong type. Best Doctors confirmed this and recommended the right surgery based on a more definitive diagnosis.”

“Amazing. After almost ten years, I finally have a comprehensive diagnosis and no longer feel crazy.”

MEMBER STORIES IN THE TECH SECTOR

In one recent case, a member in his late 40s contacted Best Doctors regarding chronic pain in his back and left foot. His X-rays revealed significant spine degeneration and his doctor recommended spinal fusion, preceded by an epidural injection.

The Best Doctors expert confirmed the diagnosis, but recommended a change in treatment plan based on the patient’s reaction to the epidural injection. If the injection provided the member with significant relief, the expert recommended physical therapy and behavior modification.

Clinical Integration Statistics:

- **73% increase in utilization with clinical integration**
- **56% increase in outbound vendor referrals**



If not, the expert recommended a micro-discectomy, a less aggressive procedure that prevents the additional stress that a fusion may produce.

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In another case, a healthy woman in her early 20s was involved in a motor vehicle accident that led to facial and spinal fractures. After reconstructive facial procedures, her doctor recommended spinal surgery. She called Best Doctors for help.

The Best Doctors expert agreed with the spinal injury diagnosis, but was not convinced that surgery was necessary. He recommended a more conservative treatment plan to relieve her symptoms and restore her function, as well as save her \$54,000 on an invasive procedure.

- 1 Japsen, B. (2012). U.S. Workforce Illness Costs \$576B Annually from Sick Days to Workers Compensation. Forbes. Retrieved from <http://www.forbes.com/sites/brucejapsen/2012/09/12/u-s-workforce-illness-costs-576b-annually-from-sickdays-to-workers-compensation/>
- 2 Pickett, B. The Cost of Presenteeism. About Careers. Retrieved from <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/workplaceissues/a/Presenteeism.htm>
- 3 Hemp, P. (2004). Presenteeism: At Work-But Out of It. Harvard Business Review. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2004/10/presenteeism-at-work-but-out-of-it>

About Best Doctors

Best Doctors, Inc. is the trusted global medical resource for ensuring that individuals have the right diagnosis and treatment, helping to dramatically improve the quality of care and reduce costs. Founded in 1989 by two Harvard Medical School professors, Best Doctors serves more than 700 employers, health plans, and other clients, touching 35+ million members in countries all across the world. Best Doctors has received accolades from the media and the medical community as the leading organization for connecting patients with the best medical care.

