

burnalong

Population Health Study: Engaging the At-Risk Population





About

A common criticism of traditional wellness programming is that it's primarily utilized by the young and active. This leaves the at-risk population without necessary support because they do not have content they connect with, social support for motivation, and immersive experiences to keep them engaged.

This criticism does not hold true for all health and wellbeing programs, however. In an independent population health cohort study, results show that:

- The majority of people using Burnalong were **50-59** despite the average age of the population being 33
- Those using Burnalong were shown to be more **at-risk** of health issues than those not using the platform
- 65% of those using the platform had **chronic conditions** but those with chronic conditions made up only 40% of the broader population



These results are not an outlier and are typical of what we see in our work with employers, health plans, and government clients. This is why hospital and medical systems choose to work with Burnalong—we impact population health and reach at-risk populations unlike traditional wellbeing solutions. How do we do that?

We'll dive into why the common criticism of traditional solutions not reaching at-risk populations is true, what this particular employer that conducted the cohort study did, and why Burnalong's approach positively impacted population health.



What about traditional wellbeing programs?



Employee health and wellbeing is suffering. This comes at a time when employees are reporting to they want to work for an employer that values their wellbeing.

Many organizations that want to attract and retain top talent are listening and offering more robust wellbeing programs.

So why are traditional wellbeing programs not working for organizations? Well, traditional programs fall short in a few places, namely they:

- **Focus on the symptoms:** Many initiatives are curative, not preventative. They focus on the ill health that already exists rather than trying to prevent it from occurring.
- **Don't appeal to everyone:** Many aspects of wellness are often ignored in favor of physical health. Chronic conditions and disabilities are dealt with as a one-off.
- **Offer minimal choice and flexibility:** Wellness programs are rigid, meaning individuals have little opportunity to adjust to their interests and preferences.
- **Lack DEI focus:** Wellness and DE&I have been high priorities for 2+ years but are rarely aligned. Wellness misses the mark when it comes to inclusion.
- **Provide insufficient social support:** Social connection, friends and family aren't considered in wellness initiatives. Individuals are left to make changes alone.
- **Forget culture:** How the organizational environment impacts a wellness initiative's success is not taken into account.

How do you reach at-risk populations?

Implementing a wellbeing solution for your population isn't enough. Your employees need to engage with the programming; even more important, your at-risk employees need to engage in order for you to see positive health results, reduced healthcare costs, and long-term impact.

Consider these six principles that we have built our solution around to address what traditional programs do not consider:

- **Prevention:** Look for a solution that will help you prevent and treat
- **Holistic:** Provide something for everyone in your population, including those with chronic conditions

- **Personalization:** Customize each health journey based on individual goals, conditions, and interests
- **Inclusivity:** Look for a platform that represents the diversity of your workforce with accessible and relatable content
- **Social:** Include communities of colleagues, friends, and family to improve motivation
- **Cultural:** Build and drive internal culture with challenges, events, and online communities

Now, let's dive into the results of the independent cohort study and how we got to those results.

"Took a break from my desk after a very early start and this helped relaxed the tension in my back and neck. Nice stress reliever!"

- Cohort member



What did the cohort study find?



The employer was introduced by an innovative consultant; they were looking to specifically reach their at-risk population after receiving their annual claims report.

The study examined YoY claims data with the cohort using Burnalong, measuring their results against those who were not in the cohort. The cohort consisted of any employee who created an account with Burnalong, offered through their employer, and engaged on the platform by taking classes, etc.

The top chronic conditions both in and out of the cohort for this employer were:

- Hypertensive diseases
- Metabolic disorders
- Behavioral health

Notably, 65% of those who were using the platform, as part of the cohort, had chronic conditions. Only 40% of the broader population for this employer had chronic conditions thus revealing the at-risk population was engaging with Burnalong's wellbeing solution.



50-59

The majority of people using Burnalong were 50-59, despite the average age of the population being 33.



65%

of those who were using the platform had chronic conditions.



Further, those who were using Burnalong were also more at-risk. While some of this might be due to the age demographic of people who opted in to use Burnalong being slightly higher than the average population at 50-59, it reveals that the content was relevant and connected with the cohort.

The results show that Burnalong was connecting with those who were older, at-risk, and suffering from chronic conditions.

What support was offered outside the core platform?

The employer offered an incentive program for participating in their corporate wellbeing program (Burnalong). These incentives were awarded to employees as they completed classes, challenges, and were actively engaged in their health journey.

In addition, Burnalong provided:

- **Monthly wellness-themed events:** Virtual events were offered every month for employees to join and glean tangible insights from Burnalong instructors. Topics ranged from sticking to new habits, heart health, improving nutrition, stress management, Diabetes awareness, healthy aging, and more.
- **Marketing materials and emails:** Monthly flyers, focused on the wellness theme for the next few weeks, were sent out to employees to maintain momentum. Emails with custom class and program recommendations for employees were sent out every month; gentle reminders to log-in and engage were sent out too.
- **Inclusive challenges:** Building off the excitement around the Winter Olympics, Burnalong ran a challenge for the employees that encouraged participation through team and individual challenges. Employees could complete classes in any category, including non-fitness categories, which led to the at-risk population finding connections with the content and being able to engage with their fellow employees. Burnalong also offered regular monthly challenges, for all global members, to engage and motivate employees.



What was the result of holistic support?

As a result, the employees engaged in their health journey. In particular, we found when comparing the cohort to the US averages:



108%

more engagement with emotional support category classes



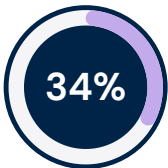
45%

more classes taken in specialty (non-fitness) categories

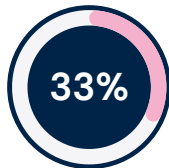
Within the emotional support classes taken, there was a heavy emphasis on:

- Mindfulness
- Stress management
- Mental health
- Meditation

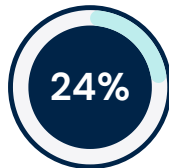
Within the specialty categories, of the classes taken:



were in nutrition



were in education/
development



were in Fit Over 50

Adaptive workouts, sleep, financial wellbeing, arthritis, and Diabetes were not far behind. Given the claims data and the leading chronic conditions of hypertension, metabolic disorders, and behavioral health concerns, the classes taken directly addressed each condition.

The cohort not only self-selected content that would address their conditions, but they also had the option to find content that met them where they were.

71% of the employees self-identified as beginners in their health journey. The cohort, in total, completed thousands upon thousands of minutes of classes. Why? Because they found a diverse range of classes that met their needs and were immersed in their journey with supporting events, challenges, and culture-building activities.

"I struggled with my left arm positions given I have decreased range of motion with my shoulder, even with months of physical therapy. But it felt pretty good in my back which I also have issues with after years of lifting in healthcare."

- Cohort member



Why does the Bernalong approach work?

In order to engage at-risk populations, employers need to look beyond traditional programs that focus on “Hollywood” workouts.

Offering a broad diversity of classes and categories, taught by relatable instructors rather than aspirational models, allows your entire employee base to discover what works best for them.

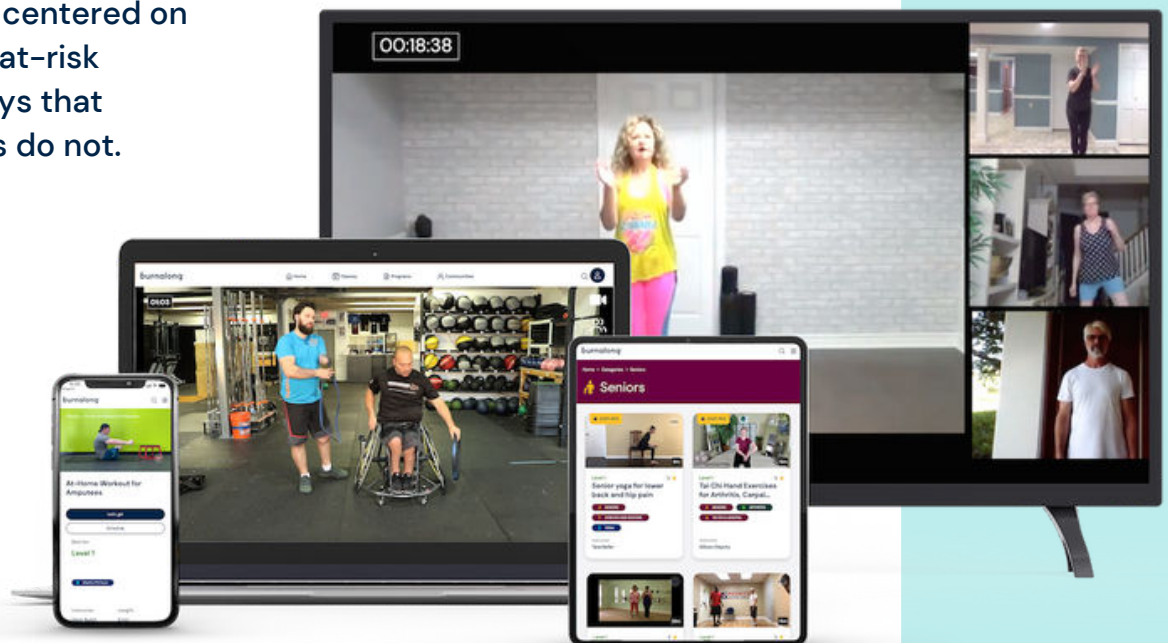
Factoring in social support is also crucial for long-term success. A JAMA Internal Medicine study found that having a partner when adopting health habits was vital and dramatically improved adoption of healthy habits.

Supportive communities, group classes, immersive team challenges, regular events with colleagues and instructors, and building a culture centered on wellness reaches at-risk populations in ways that traditional models do not.

We see 5x the engagement rates of traditional wellbeing solutions because we support the whole person. We tailor each person’s experience with AI-powered recommendations and we adjust based on their goals, conditions, and habits.

Hospital and medical systems like the Shepherd Center, Johns Hopkins, CMS, the American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association, and Cedars-Sinai are working with Bernalong because we have a proven track record of impacting population health.

They work with us to provide expert content for their patients, they work with us to provide wellbeing support for employees, and they work with us on clinical trials to innovate care management.



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Are you ready to improve your population's health?

We provide results. With Burnalong, you have an end-to-end wellness solution so you can engage at-risk populations and those who are already fit and active.

We'll align with your goals, seamlessly roll out a solution tailored to your people, and continuously monitor results. We measure success beyond just engagement and focus on people and business outcomes so that your entire workforce, and their families, can progress in their health journey.

Are you ready to focus on your population health? We're ready to talk.



If you would like to engage at-risk populations and those who are already fit and active, [reach out for a demo today.](#)

