An engineering company with more than 15,000 employees across 25 countries, Parsons delivers innovative solutions around the globe that make the world safer, healthier and more connected. Founded in 1944, Parsons is a leader in diverse markets focused on infrastructure, defense, security and construction. Parsons continues to transform its services and workforce for the Digital Age — with an increasing focus on cybersecurity and critical infrastructure resilience.

As Parsons transforms to meet the evolving challenges of its clients, the company’s approach to the health and well-being of its global workforce is changing as well. Recently, the firm launched new initiatives to improve employee health, reduce employee health risk and put downward pressure on health care costs for Parsons and its employees.

Source: 2018 annual health plan performance review.
The challenge: Encourage employees to think about their health

The challenge was twofold: How to engage a large and diverse workforce in a way that would meet Parsons’ employee health and financial goals — while at the same time motivate employees to think about their health before instead of after they need care.

While Parsons leadership never downplayed the need to contain costs, pure cost containment was never their only concern. “We have always known that real health care cost management comes from having a healthier population,” said Sharon Koshiyama, Vice President Global Benefits. “We were ready to create a dynamic culture of health, and we were confident Optum was the right partner to make it happen.”

The strategy: Simplified access to healthy support

For over 20 years, Optum and Parsons have partnered to provide the right mix of programs and services to help Parsons employees better manage their health. As Parsons’ health benefits strategies and goals have evolved over time, so too have the health-related programs and services available to its workforce. When Optum proposed Parsons consider a comprehensive yet simplified population health management approach, the leadership team was ready to take the next step. This new approach would encourage employees to take ownership of their health and improve the member experience for employees living with chronic conditions. Parsons was confident that handing more health-related responsibility to employees — and giving them the support they needed to succeed — would deliver positive results.

THE RIGHT CARE AT THE RIGHT TIME

In partnership with Optum, Parsons experienced promising 2018 results with engaged members:

- 51% decrease in ER visits*
- 31% decrease in hospital admissions*
- 97.5% overall network utilization achieved

*Per 1,000 employees. 
Source: 2018 annual health plan performance review.
The approach: An empowering population health model

The approach was all inclusive: Empower all Parsons employees with programs and support to give them the tools and motivation to live their healthiest, most productive lives and generate positive results for health outcomes, cost, risk management and workplace safety.

Recently Parsons launched a population health model for 7,500 U.S. employees, expanding on the robust clinical model already in place. The expanded model takes a predictive approach, with a focus on prevention and proactive health management for Parson’s top clinical cost drivers: musculoskeletal conditions, oncology, cardiovascular health and diabetes — all precursors to even greater health problems and higher costs down the road.

Parsons employees are encouraged to participate in health-related opportunities that include quitting smoking, learning ways to manage stress, staying fit, keeping diabetes under control or living with cancer.

The new model also provides:

• Data-driven health analytics to identify individuals with the greatest potential for medical expense savings and the greatest likelihood to take life-changing action
• Front-door advocacy that gives employees a single point of access to help at the right time with the right resources
• Holistic support tailored to the individual’s total health needs and readiness to change
• Tailored employee communications to promote employee health and well-being by lifting engagement
• Employee Assistance Program (EAP) services for domestic U.S. employees and expatriate employees working abroad that work in tandem with available behavioral health and wellness programs

In addition to the integrated clinical services available to employees, integrated EAP and behavioral health services provide front-end access to master’s-level employee assistance specialists who are able to resolve many caller issues without a referral to behavioral benefits.
The results: Healthy employees + measurable savings

By providing timely and relevant communications, tailored health management programs and personalized support, Parsons helped employees become more aware of their health needs and more actively engaged in their personal health management.

In its first year, the new population health model generated measurable improvements related to employee health, risks and cost.

Engagement increased 10 percent over the previous year — with the EAP resolving 60 percent of calls without the need for a behavioral health referral.

Total health plan savings for Parsons in year one reached $15.79 PMPM — which translates to $2.1M total overall savings.

Partnership with Optum: Employee health transformed

Together, Parsons and Optum implemented solutions that delivered measurable health improvement outcomes and cost savings aligned with Parsons' culture, needs and goals.

As Parsons continues to transform for the 21st century, the firm also continues to transform the way health care is promoted, purchased and paid for on behalf of its employees — improving health and building a culture in which Parsons' evolving workforce can prosper and thrive.

Source: 2018 annual health plan performance review.