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Brief Highlights Successful Strategies to Help Employees Concerned About Economy

ARLINGTON, Va. (Feb. 12, 2009) – According to a new research issue brief, *Research Works*, published by the Partnership for Workplace Mental Health, the financial crisis is taking a toll on people’s mental health, not just their pocketbooks.

A program of the American Psychiatric Foundation, the Partnership for Workplace Mental Health, advances successful employer approaches to mental health. Its new issue brief series, *Research Works*, intends to translate research into action for employers. The first of the series focuses on “Employee Personal Financial Distress and How Employers Can Help.”

According to the brief, financial problems have clear negative consequences on worker health and job performance. Workers with financial distress typically report poorer overall health and financial strain also negatively impacts on-the-job behavior. One research review conducted by the Finance Employee Education Foundation found that the majority of employees who were seriously distressed by their personal financial situation reported spending time on the job dealing with or worrying about their money problems.

“Today’s troubling economy makes a focus on mental health all the more important,” said Alan A. Axelson, M.D., Co-Chair of the Partnership’s Advisory Council and Medical Director of InterCare Psychiatric Services in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. “Job retention concerns often translate to people not taking care of their health, especially their mental health, which is often viewed as optional rather than central to overall health.”

There are several steps that employers can take to help alleviate employee personal financial distress. Strategies range from providing employees with personal financial education to ensuring access to mental health counseling to help individuals cope with the mental stress and family and work performance problems associated with financial difficulties. *Research Works* also provides positive case examples from companies such as IBM, Pepsi Bottling Group, The Home Depot, and USAA.

“As the economy worsens and employers streamline their workforces, it is critical to maximize employee productivity,” said William L. Bruning, J.D., M.B.A., Co-Chair of the Partnership’s Advisory Council and President and CEO of the Mid-America Coalition on Health Care in

Kansas City, Missouri. “We hope employers find *Research Works* helpful in assisting employees to manage personal financial concerns and increase effectiveness and productivity on the job.”

The premier issue of *Research Works* can be found at <http://www.workplacementalhealth.org/researchworks.aspx>.

About the Partnership for Workplace Mental Health

The [Partnership for Workplace Mental Health](#), a program of the [American Psychiatric Foundation](#), advances effective employer approaches to mental health by combining the knowledge and experience of the [American Psychiatric Association](#) and its employer partners. It promotes the business case for quality mental health care, including early recognition, access to care and effective treatment. Learn more at www.workplacementalhealth.org

The American Psychiatric Foundation is the philanthropic and educational arm of the American Psychiatric Association. The mission of the foundation is to advance understanding that mental illnesses are real and can be effectively treated. For more information, please visit the foundation’s Web site at www.psychfoundation.org.

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