

A Look at the Health Coaching Market

Declining Global Health, Effects of the COVID-19 Pandemic & Advances
in Education, Coverage and Employability of Health Coaches



Table of Contents

- 1. Introduction**
- 2. Setting the Stage: U.S. and Global Health**
 - a. A Rapidly Declining State of Health in the United States
 - b. COVID-19 and Our Physical and Mental Health
 - c. COVID-19 and Our Financial Health
- 3. Bridging the Healthcare Gap**
 - a. How Health Coaches Improve Health Outcomes
 - b. Why Health Coaches Are Well-Equipped to Navigate Today's Market
- 4. Health Coach Industry Growth and Recognition**
 - a. Health Coach Statistics and Market Growth
 - b. A Growing Interest in, and Awareness of, Health Coach Training Programs
 - c. Standardizing Health Coach Competencies
 - d. Insurance Coverage
 - e. Taxonomy Codes
 - f. Job Opportunities for Health Coaches
 - g. Advocacy and Preventive Health Policy
- 5. Conclusion**
- 6. Sources**



1. Introduction

When the Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN) was founded nearly 30 years ago, the concept of health coaching was new and unknown. Recognizing the need for a more integrative and holistic approach to health, IIN's founder Joshua Rosenthal laid the foundation for the ever-growing Health Coach market by giving consumers the opportunity to not only work with a Health Coach as part of their greater healthcare team, but become one themselves.

IIN recognized the critical need for an overhaul to the healthcare system – a health revolution. Preventable chronic lifestyle conditions are on the rise despite the increasing understanding of the impacts of diet and lifestyle on health. Healthcare costs continue to rise. Meanwhile, doctors spend less time with patients to understand their full health histories and are ill-equipped to handle the rising prevalence of nutrition- and lifestyle-related conditions. The role of a Health Coach was born out of the necessity to bridge the gap between patients and effective healthcare, providing individualized support and a more holistic understanding of how to nourish our bodies and minds.

As the industry grew, so did the value and credibility of the Health Coach profession. Just as nutritionists and dietitians forged their way to become go-to experts and practitioners in diet and nutrition, Health Coaches are establishing an industry with gold-standard practices and requirements.

2. Setting the Stage: U.S. and Global Health

To understand the breadth of opportunities that Health Coaches have to improve health outcomes, we explore the state of our health prior to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the impacts it's had on physical, mental, and emotional health on a global scale.

A. A Rapidly Declining State of Health in the United States

In 2018, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) reported:¹

- Heart disease and cancer remained the top two causes of death for men and women, with rates of death staying about the same from 2011 to 2017.
- Obesity prevalence in adults increased at a higher rate than the obesity prevalence in children and adolescents over a 15-year period.

- Prevalence of diabetes increased in adults, children, and adolescents, with a significant increase in physician-diagnosed diabetes for those 45 and older.

In 2020, The Commonwealth Fund published a January brief² that determined:

- Heart disease and cancer remained the top two causes of death for men and women, with rates of death staying about the same from 2011 to 2017.
- The United States has the highest chronic disease burden and obesity rate at twice the average of other high-income countries.

The obesity rate in the United States continues to climb, with certain groups impacted more than others, such as Hispanic and non-Hispanic Black adults.³ Obesity alone costs the United States approximately \$147 billion annually, along with rising costs for other chronic conditions, like heart disease and cancer, which remain the top causes of death in the United States.^{4,5}

With rapidly declining health and increased costs to manage chronic conditions, we would hope that insurance costs would not climb and coverage would improve. Unfortunately, this has not been the case. The Commonwealth Fund found that between 2008 and 2018, insurance coverage costs and deductibles climbed at a faster rate than median household income over the same period, with little to no improvement in benefits.⁶

Rising insurance costs do not impact everyone equally, such as those with low to moderate incomes that are forced to make critical decisions between health insurance and other living expenses, such as food and housing. A 2019 report from the U.S. Census Bureau stated 8% of Americans did not have health insurance coverage at any point during the year – a slight increase from 2018.⁷

As the United States headed into 2020, the foundation of health was severely cracked and would only continue to falter under the pressure of a global pandemic.

B. COVID-19 and Our Physical and Mental Health

Acutely, the COVID-19 pandemic has stolen not only lives, but livelihoods. Even those who could afford to work from home and shift the daily aspects of their lives to accommodate physical distancing and other pandemic protocols were affected – everyone has been touched in some way. Here we look at how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected our physical well-being, such as decreasing life expectancy, causing acute and chronic post-virus syndromes, and affecting often-overlooked mental and emotional health.

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RISK OF CONTRACTING SEVERE COVID-19

The risk of contracting COVID-19 and developing severe disease, in addition to the risk of death, has been shown to increase with age, as well as those who have the following conditions:⁸

- Lung disease
- Heart disease
- Diabetes
- Obesity
- Cancer
- Weakened immune system
- Kidney or liver disease

We've also learned the impact of COVID-19 has not been felt equally, with predominantly Black and Latino communities experiencing higher rates of COVID-19 than their White counterparts. According to the CDC, "inequities in social determinants of health," such as inequitable healthcare access and utilization; occupation; education, income, and wealth gaps; housing; and discrimination, all contribute to the disproportionate effects of the pandemic in these communities.⁹

LIFE EXPECTANCY IN THE UNITED STATES

Researchers found that the United States experienced the largest single decline in life expectancy in 40 years, including a reduction in life expectancy at birth of 1.13 years.¹⁰ Prior to the pandemic, improvements each year were small. This reported decline may persist because of "continued COVID-19 mortality and long-term health, social, and economic impacts of the pandemic."

This reduction in life expectancy is even more significant in Black and Latino communities, with estimated reductions of two and three years, respectively. One study determined that Black Americans, in addition to Pacific Islander, Latino, and Indigenous groups, have a COVID-19 death rate of double or more that of White and Asian Americans.¹¹

LIFE EXPECTANCY AROUND THE GLOBE

In a study published in Scientific Reports, researchers determined that in countries predominantly affected by COVID-19, such as Italy, Spain, Mexico, and the United States, the total years of life lost (YLL) totaled two to nine times that of the median YLL for seasonal influenza, and that 75% of this YLL is due to the number of deaths of adults under 75.¹²

IMPLICATIONS OF LONG-HAUL COVID

Researchers and physicians are furiously trying to help people manage chronic symptoms and complications of acute COVID-19 infection.¹³ Combinations of symptoms, such as fatigue, brain fog, memory loss, and unexplained muscle or joint pain, are often referred to as post-viral fatigue syndrome or chronic fatigue syndrome. These symptoms have been seen not only in people who recover from COVID-19 but also those who have recovered from other viral infections, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Ebola.¹⁴

Studies are finding that some who recover from COVID-19 may experience not only these symptoms but also organ damage, such as inflammation of the heart (myocarditis), altered brain function (encephalopathy), or simply extended COVID-19 symptoms, such as loss of taste and smell.

As the prevalence of long-haul COVID continues to rise, so do the creation of support groups and clinics to research this syndrome. Researchers in the United Kingdom estimate “approximately 10% of people who’ve had COVID-19 experience prolonged symptoms,”¹⁵ and the CDC found that “35% [of respondents] had not returned to their usual state of health when interviewed 2–3 weeks after testing [and among] persons aged 18–34 years with no chronic medical conditions, one in five had not returned to their usual state of health.”¹⁶

The research on this syndrome and consequent treatments is just beginning, and while we won’t have a clear picture of short- and long-term implications of COVID-19 infection for quite some time, it’s already apparent that in addition to harming our physical health, the emotional and traumatic aspects of this pandemic affected mental well-being as well.

MENTAL HEALTH IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

From anxiety to depression and beyond, the toll this pandemic has taken on mental health as well as the mental healthcare system is great.

- In the three-phase Household Pulse Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, more than 42% of people surveyed said they experienced symptoms of anxiety and depression, up 31% from the previous year.¹⁷ Similar data was reported in the United Kingdom, with a 9% increase of adults reporting symptoms of anxiety and depression during a similar period.¹⁸
- The Household Pulse Survey by the U.S. Census Bureau reported younger adults, whether they lived alone, with children, or only with other adults, had higher rates of anxiety and depression and were more susceptible to psychological distress.¹⁹

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- Prior to the pandemic, studies showed that physician burnout was a critical issue, affecting over 50% of both training and practicing physicians.²⁰ Researchers found that physician trainees who were exposed to COVID-19 patients had higher prevalence of stress and feelings of burnout, and female trainees were more likely to report these feelings than their male counterparts.²¹
- According to an American Psychological Association (APA) telehealth survey of over 1,700 psychologists, nearly 75% reported seeing an increase of patients presenting with anxiety disorders, and 60% said they were seeing more patients presenting depressive disorders.²²
- In the same APA survey, over 40% reported feeling burned out and one-third said they were unable to meet the demand for patient treatment.²²
- Two U.S. Democratic senators introduced the COVID-19 Mental Health Research Act, which would direct funds to the National Institute of Mental Health for research on mental health consequences of the pandemic.²³

C. COVID-19 and Our Financial Health

At IIN, we teach a unique concept called primary food, which refers to the areas of our lives found off our plates that have the ability to nourish us and impact our well-being. Our financial mind-set and the health of our finances is one slice of this primary food pie as it directly affects how a person is able to meet their (and their family's) needs to maintain their livelihood.

The stay-at-home orders issued around the world divided the workforce into a few major segments: those who could work from home, those considered “essential” who had to leave the home, and those who lost their jobs. The implications of being in one segment over another isn't so clear-cut, however, especially for families needing multiple incomes and those that had children no longer going to school in person.

Here we explore the effects of the pandemic on the U.S. and global economies and why financial health must be included in the conversation about overall well-being.

THE U.S. ECONOMY AND COVID

Notable highlights from an economic report published by *Brookings* include:²⁴

- COVID-19-related job losses negated 113 consecutive months of job growth, with employment falling by 20.5 million jobs; women, non-White workers, lower-wage earners, and those with less education were impacted most.
- Those most likely to experience income shock due to the pandemic include low-income families with children and non-White households, with related losses, such as food insecurity, difficulty paying bills, and vulnerability to falling behind on financial obligations, like loan payments.

- Rates of food insecurity increased, including worsening food security for children and higher rates of very low food security.

In addition to the CARES Act signed into law in March 2020, the American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 was passed almost exactly a year later. It included:²⁵

- **An increase of \$328 million for mental health services and training**
 - \$50 million increase in funding for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics
 - \$100 million increase for behavioral health workforce education and training
- **Enhanced subsidies for Affordable Care Act health insurance purchases**
 - An estimated 1.7 million more people newly insured by 2022
 - An additional \$300 in unemployment through September 2021
- **A \$1,400 stimulus payment to tax payers with an adjusted gross income of \$75,000 and under**
 - Granting taxpayers \$1,400 per dependent, including college students and older dependent relatives
- **A child tax credit increase to \$3,600, up from \$2,000**

THE GLOBAL ECONOMY AND COVID

A report by the BBC illustrates the following impacts of the global economy during the pandemic:²⁶

- Most countries are experiencing a recession, with growth defined as increased wealth and new jobs. In economies that rely heavily on services like tourism, a rebound is not immediately expected and will be slow.
- Tourism and hospitality industries took a significant hit in 2020, and analysts have predicted that tourism and travel “won’t return to the normal pre-pandemic levels until around 2025.”
- The rate of change of unemployment was largest in countries like Canada and the United States, with Brazil and Italy ranking higher in total unemployment.

3. Bridging the Healthcare Gap

Our healthcare system, and our health, was on the brink well before 2020. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted not only the incredible effect this disease has on people with chronic conditions, but also

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the disproportionate nature of its destruction in Black, Indigenous, and People of Color communities, a devastation attributable to systemic racism and injustice.

The last year has demonstrated a dire need for an overhaul of the healthcare system and its infrastructure, from improving diet and lifestyle habits to creating more equitable access to nutritious food, affordable healthcare, and adequate mental and emotional support. A global lockdown sparked important, long-overdue conversations about approaching health more holistically, giving Health Coaches an unprecedented opportunity to demonstrate their value and provide resources to their communities.

A. How Health Coaches Improve Health Outcomes

For years, clinical research has demonstrated that Health Coaches can positively affect outcomes in patients with chronic conditions:

- Health coaching can significantly improve diabetes (blood sugar) control in patients when combined with standard primary care.²⁷
- Health coaching can improve control of hyperlipidemia (metabolic disease risk factor) in patients when combined with standard primary care.²⁸
- Health Coaches can support patients in making decisions and implementing changes to improve their health due in part to the coach-patient relationship formed, “[which] allowed for, and was further strengthened by, [four] themes of key coaching activities: education, personal support, practical support, and acting as a bridge between patients and clinicians.”²⁹
- Health coaching is clinically effective in the modification of multiple risk factors in healthy people as well as those with certain chronic conditions.³⁰

In an interview with IIN, two career physicians and researchers shared their thoughts on the health coaching profession and what they referred to as the “health coaching philosophy,” or themes within health coaching that can be applied in all methods of healthcare.

They explain, “Any intervention with a patient that uses the health coaching philosophy would be helpful. It’s the philosophy that counts, the ask-tell-ask interactions with patients, the touchback to make sure they understand their care plan, and healthy behavior change using the action plan technique that we teach in our trainings and used in our Health Coach studies.”

Further, they addressed potential concerns around hiring Health Coaches in the clinical space: “We showed [in our studies], for example, rather than interfering with the doctor-patient

relationship, health coaching actually enhanced patients' trust in their doctors. We also found that clinicians rated visits with health-coached patients as less demanding and were more likely to feel they had adequate time with their patient. Clinicians also reported that Health Coaches supported patient self-management and bridged communication gaps between clinicians and patients."³¹

B. Why Health Coaches Are Well-Equipped to Navigate Today's Market

As we move past the post-acute phase of the COVID-19 pandemic, we find ourselves navigating the rapidly shifting healthcare field, which is mainly the move to, and rise of, virtual care.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth services were not the norm nor seen as equivalent to in-person healthcare services, and insurance providers were not willing to match compensation for virtual care. A report by the CDC early in the pandemic noted that expanding telehealth services would allow for easier and safer access to care.³²

In the past year, telehealth and telemedicine services were widely adopted by many types of providers.³³ Many doctors now require a telehealth visit before an in-person visit, and many mental health professionals have completely taken their practices virtual whether engaging via video or telephone.

A recent study concluded, "Telemedicine should be adopted as a proactive measure to improve medical care and should not only be seen as a temporary fix in times of emergency; rather, it is a convenient, safe, scalable, effective, and green method of providing medical care."³⁴

Increased acceptance of the telehealth and telemedicine model – for both healthcare providers and patients – has opened many doors for Health Coaches to apply their services virtually, such as through physician's offices portals or various apps offering virtual health coaching. With the majority of Health Coaches completing their training online and learning how to showcase their expertise and connect with their communities virtually, telehealth is the perfect medium for Health Coaches to maximize their value and reach more people than ever before.

Dual-certified Health Coach Julie A. Cerrato, PhD, explains, "Virtual-care clinics with staffed Health Coaches are now an essential part of the solution for connectivity between patient and provider. Encouraging this integrative approach will offer telehealth an unlimited reach to individuals seeking minute to minute wellness support and to quickly serve as the beacon guiding us toward the next innovation in healthcare."³⁵

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4. Health Coach Industry Growth and Recognition

Moving forward, Health Coaches have a tremendous responsibility to bring their expertise to those who need it most. The healthcare industry continues to recognize the importance of Health Coaches in spaces traditionally only filled by physicians, which gives the health coaching profession and the Health Coach industry a boost in credibility.

From working in private practice to advising public health initiatives, Health Coaches spark crucial changes that improve health and happiness. There is important work happening in the field that will allow Health Coaches to continue forging their path in healthcare and set themselves up as well-respected practitioners, including work IIN is doing at the local and federal levels to increase awareness of the health coaching profession.

A. Health Coach Statistics and Market Growth

In 2016, the National Board for Health and Wellness Coaching (NBHWC), formerly the National Consortium for Credentialing Health and Wellness Coaches, estimated there were “15,000–20,000 wellness coaches in the United States.”³⁶ This number has grown significantly in the last five years, as IIN has matriculated over 100,000 students and graduates total and other health coaching programs have come to the market.

Additionally, the U.S. Department of Labor projected that employment of health educators and community workers, which includes health and wellness coaches, would grow by 13% from 2019 to 2029, driven by the desire to reclaim health and lower healthcare costs.³⁷ This projection is in line with other released market data, such as the most recent Marketdata report on the growth of health coaching to become a \$7 billion service market, increasing from \$6 billion in their 2018 report.^{38,39}

B. A Growing Interest in, and Awareness of, Health Coach Training Programs

Health Coaches are making their way into the marketplace at an increased rate for a variety of reasons. IIN found the following in proprietary research about the types of people who are seeking out wellness education programs:

- Consumers are more engaged and proactive in health decisions that will impact them for both the short- and long-term.

- Consumers are more receptive to less traditional and mainstream means of achieving health, including seeking out alternative medicine providers, herbal supplements, and food and self-care products that are natural or organic.
- Consumers recognize the importance of understanding certain health topics and have a desire to educate themselves to make informed decisions for themselves and their families.

When it comes to selecting an educational program, IIN determined that consumers are searching for:

- Credible, reliable, and science-backed information provided by people with verified credentials
- Opportunities to transform their own health and experience self-enrichment, with over half of IIN graduates reporting these reasons as their main goals for enrolling at IIN
- Employment as a Health Coach, with a third of IIN graduates reporting this as their main goal for enrolling at IIN

Further, the Health Coach marketplace has grown rapidly, with more options than ever before to pursue a Health Coach certification. Credibility of health coaching programs are now in the spotlight because in order for clients to put trust into a Health Coach, they must trust a Health Coach's education.

IIN understands this critical need for credibility, having been the first health coaching institution in the marketplace, and thus has led the way in distinguishing their program:

- Licensed by the New York State Department of Education as a vocational school, meaning IIN's Health Coach Training Program curriculum is regularly reviewed to ensure students receive the most accurate, up-to-date information
- Earned full recognition by the NBHWC as an approved program provider, providing graduates of IIN's Coaching Intensive Practicum 2.0 with a chance to earn board certification as well as continuing education credits through IIN's additional program offerings
- Prioritized ongoing advocacy for the health coaching profession through governmental policy work, spreading awareness of the value and hard work of Health Coaches both in private practice and public health
- Aligned with strategic educational partners, such as colleges and universities across the United States, in addition to affiliations with organizations around the globe that provide ample opportunities for Health Coaches to pursue professional and personal development

C. Standardizing Health Coach Competencies

Healthcare professionals, such as therapists, dietitians, and physicians, all have standardized education pathways, including required degrees, licensure, and continuing education. The Health

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Coach industry is quickly evolving to catch up, creating similar pathways to ensure not only practitioner credibility but also gold standards of care.

There are two organizations dedicated to this work, both of which recognize IIN for providing excellence in health coaching education:

NATIONAL BOARD FOR HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACHING (NBHWC)

This nonprofit organization was founded in 2012 with a mission to “lead the advancement of health and wellness coaching by establishing professional standards and collaborative partnerships,” and has become the governing body by which health coaching competencies are set and upheld.⁴⁰

Their approval of a health coaching program demonstrates to the marketplace that they have deemed said curriculum as rigorous and up to their standards of what Health Coaches should learn, from instructional guidance to the evaluation of practical skill development.

Programs approved by the NBHWC, such as the Institute for Integrative Nutrition’s Coaching Intensive Practicum 2.0, available to IIN and non-IIN graduates, offer coaches an education that sets them up for success in the marketplace. Ultimately, the goal is to require credentialing as a prerequisite to practice in the field, which has many benefits to both the industry as well as individual Health Coaches and their clients.

INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF HEALTH COACHES (IAHC)

This international association based in Washington, D.C., is on a mission to “position Health Coaches as an integral part of an emerging preventative healthcare model,” and through this work, they “aim to significantly decrease lifestyle-related chronic diseases that fuel the global health crisis and in turn change people’s lives.”⁴¹

Partnered with Pearson VUE, the leading computer-based testing company in the world, the IAHC offers a certification exam to become a Certified International Health Coach at the highest testing standards. Approved-program graduates, such as graduates of IIN’s Health Coach Training Program, are automatically eligible to take the IAHC certification exam, though an application is available for those who have taken comparable programs that had at least 200 hours of learning and 45 hours of client sessions.

Any Health Coach that pursues certification in addition to their health coaching program will showcase their dedication to the health coaching profession and their expertise on Health Coach competencies to provide clients with the utmost care within their scope of practice.

D. Insurance Coverage

In addition to certification requirements, coverage of health coaching services by insurance is another step in legitimizing the value of the Health Coach profession. As insurance coverage varies widely from state to state, as well as around the world, standardization of coverage for health coaching services will certainly be a hurdle – but one that is worth the leap.

Current Procedural Terminology (CPT) codes are used to streamline healthcare services terminology, such as those used when submitting insurance claims. On January 1, 2020, new Category III CPT codes through the American Medical Association went into effect as a successful effort by the NBHWC and the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs.

Category III refers to temporary codes that are used for data collection and assessment to ultimately determine if they should become permanent Category I codes. Using Category III codes is a clear way to demonstrate the increasing use of health coaching services. Health Coaches working in healthcare settings who have access to medical billing-and-tracking software through their employers are the primary users of these Category III CPT health and wellness coaching codes.⁴² With sufficient data collected and studied from the use of these codes, the transition into a permanent code will indicate a reimbursable service.

In the meantime, Health Coaches can work with clients to determine if their services are already covered under their current health insurance, or if clients can use their flexible spending accounts (FSA) or health savings accounts (HSA) toward health coaching sessions. Clients may also be enrolled in wellness programs through their employer that provide benefits, such as incentives for enrolling in sessions with a Health Coach.

E. Taxonomy Codes

In conjunction with insurance coverage, the creation of a health and wellness coach taxonomy code is an important step for the industry. A taxonomy code is used when applying for a National Provider Identifier (NPI), an identification number required for healthcare providers to be HIPAA-compliant.

The taxonomy code for Health Coaches successfully applied for and granted to the NBHWC went into effect April 1, 2021. Neither the taxonomy code nor NPI are required to practice as a Health Coach, but they are required for those Health Coaches seeking work with any “healthcare provider, healthcare clearinghouse, or healthcare organization that conducts transactions or uses health records that fall under HIPAA regulations.”⁴³

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With this barrier lifted, it signals the progression of the industry toward more regulation and compliance, which is necessary if Health Coaches are to bridge the healthcare gap to help reverse the global health crisis.

F. Job Opportunities for Health Coaches

In addition to opening private health coaching practices, job opportunities for Health Coaches can be found in many health and wellness sectors. Employers are increasingly looking at the credibility of an applicant's coaching credentials, which is why IIN has worked to ensure its graduates are set up for success not just to start their own practices but to be seen as the top in their field and the top choice of employers in the marketplace.

Below are examples of places where Health Coaches could potentially find employment in this expanding field, from medical and wellness centers to health technology companies, and beyond.

MEDICAL CENTERS

Parsley Health – This membership-based functional medicine practice founded by Robin Berzin, MD, takes an integrative approach to healthcare and includes Health Coaches as part of the care team for every patient.

Eleven Eleven Wellness Center – Founded by functional medicine pioneer Frank Lipman, MD, this practice combines Western medicine with alternate modalities, focusing on a holistic approach to well-being. Dr. Lipman hired Health Coaches well before it became mainstream and has Health Coaches meet with every patient to ensure recommendations are implemented successfully. *IIN Health Coaches preferred.*

Cleveland Clinic – As one of the most renowned facilities in the United States, the Cleveland Clinic understands the importance of integrative care, which means helping patients make healthier lifestyle choices to prevent chronic conditions. Through their health and wellness programming, Health Coaches educate patients on a variety of topics, from exercise to diet and more.

Mayo Clinic – As part of the number one hospital in the United States, these multiple-care facilities across the country aim to help people live healthier lives, including offering wellness coaching.

HEALTH AND WELLNESS CENTERS

Modrn Sanctuary – Located in New York City, Modrn Sanctuary doesn't just offer spa treatments.

Coaching services are available to help those looking to make positive shifts in their careers or personal lives, which Modrn Sanctuary sees as an important aspect of someone's whole well-being. *IIN Health Coaches preferred.*

The Well – At this wellness club in New York City with Frank Lipman, MD, as chief medical officer, people can choose health coaching from a menu of services alongside functional medicine, Ayurveda, acupuncture, and more. *IIN Health Coaches preferred.*

Next Health – With multiple locations across the United States, Next Health is part membership-based medical practice, part on-demand wellness center that offers wellness therapies, such as cryotherapy and IV drips. Health coaching is integrated as part of Next Health's membership model, with monthly sessions included in every membership package.

HEALTH TECHNOLOGY

Wellory – Founded by an IIN graduate, this “anti-diet” app prioritizes the coaching relationship, giving users guidance on how to optimize their daily eating habits.

Yes Health – Focusing on diabetes prevention and weight loss, this app-based health program provides patients with one-on-one coaching support.

Noom – Their psychology-based approach combines technology with human connection, utilizing Health Coaches to support clients in reaching their personalized health and wellness goals.

Virta Health – Another app focused on helping people manage diabetes through diet, lifestyle, and medication, Virta Health Coaches provide daily, individualized support to help users stay accountable to their goals.

Hinge Health – Aiming to optimize digital healthcare, Hinge Health offers digital programs to those who want to manage pain related to exercise as well as learn more about gaining strength and exercising without injury. Their “toolkit” offers unlimited health coaching for individualized support.

Brightline – This family-focused digital experience provides behavior healthcare with licensed therapists and Health Coaches to facilitate healthier behavior in children.

WW (formerly Weight Watchers) – With an enhanced app that allows users to not just track food but also other areas of their well-being, such as sleep, activity, and mind-set, WW members also receive dedicated guidance from Health Coaches.

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EMPLOYEE WELLNESS PROGRAMS

In an analysis of 219 articles, 150 of which were data-based, researchers found that the practice of health and wellness coaching was “a promising intervention for chronic diseases in diverse healthcare, employee wellness, and community settings.”⁴⁴

Employee or workplace wellness is a growing sector of the health and wellness field, with almost half of all U.S. worksites offering some type of wellness program.⁴⁵

Aduro – Taking a holistic approach to health, Aduro brings wellness to the workplace to provide meaningful support that employees will actually utilize and benefit from, including digital support from NBHWC-accredited coaches.

FOOD, BEVERAGE, AND SUPPLEMENT MARKET

Sakara Life – Founded by two IIN graduates, the health coaching philosophy is clear in their mission to bring people life-changing nutrition that’s backed by science but also rooted in addressing individual needs.

Found – This prescription weight-loss product wants consumers to have a customized and personalized experience, from figuring out which of their products will work best for their own weight loss to individual health coaching based on curating goals.

ADVOCACY AND NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Peace Health – This not-for-profit system of clinics and medical centers aims to utilize community-based partnerships that address social determinants of health. They integrate Health Coaches into their behavioral health programs to support patients with any ongoing health issues. *IIN Health Coaches preferred.*

Veterans Affairs (VA) – Through their Whole Health system, the VA incorporates Health Coaches into their “patient-centered approach to care that considers the full range of physical, emotional, mental, social, spiritual, and environmental influences on veteran patients.”

HEALTH AND WELLNESS COACHING SCHOOLS AND PROGRAMS

Institute for Integrative Nutrition (IIN) – Graduates of IIN’s Health Coach Training Program are compelled to work for IIN because of their transformative experience. Prospective students speak

with admissions representatives who are all graduates of the program and can guide them through enrollment into IIN, which is also a licensed vocational school. Health Coaches can also be found throughout IIN staff.

Health Coach Institute (HCI) – Founded by two IIN graduates, HCI offers multiple pathways for learning. It focuses on teaching Health Coaches to guide clients through diet and lifestyle changes. Similar to IIN, they hire Health Coaches to facilitate programming and bring in new students.

G. Advocacy and Preventive Health Policy

While there are now many health coaching programs and schools available in the marketplace, IIN is the only one investing efforts in promoting health coaching to policymakers and advocating for the profession and industry.

IIN meets with members of Congress to advance the interests of the entire Health Coach community working to improve health and happiness and reduce the burden of lifestyle-related disease. IIN works with a bipartisan group of allied members of Congress and has introduced a number of measures that would advance the Health Coach profession and bring coaching services to more people and places, such as:

- Senate Resolution 67 that recognized the contributions of Health Coaches and their important profession⁴⁶
- Legislation to expand the use of pre-tax FSA and HSA funds directly for health coaching
- Legislation that would expand the use of Health Coaches within the VA
- Ongoing work with the U.S. Department of Labor to create occupational classifications for Health Coaches
- Briefing the Federal Trade Commission to ensure awareness of the burgeoning Health Coach industry and encourage and protect the health coaching community's growth

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5. Conclusion

By keeping a pulse on the latest trends in health coaching and wellness, continuing to advocate for the Health Coach profession, and setting graduates up for success in the marketplace, IIN continues to be at the forefront of the wellness industry.

IIN remains committed to training Health Coaches who can help improve health outcomes and contribute to a stronger healthcare system and a healthier world.

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