



September 21, 2016

## **Compared to Older Generations, Millennials Are More Likely to Prefer Speed and Convenience over Personal, Comprehensive Interactions with Healthcare Professionals**

Younger generation far more likely to use digital health solutions and employee wellness programs than Gen Xers or Boomers

PORTLAND, Ore., Sept. 21, 2016 /PRNewswire/ -- Millennials are more likely than Gen Xers and Baby Boomers to prefer speed and convenience from their healthcare professionals over a personal connection, which may result from their perceived lack of free time, pressures associated with work-life balance or comfort with digital technologies, according to a new report, *Insights Into the Millennial Market*, from WebMD Health Services.

The independent survey of more than 1,000 U.S. consumers, which was conducted by Blue Research on behalf of WebMD Health Services, compared the health and wellness attitudes and behaviors of Millennials (18-35 yrs.), Gen Xers (36-51 yrs.) and Baby Boomers (52-70 yrs.). At 53.5 million workers, Millennials now represent the largest number of people in the workforce, surpassing Gen Xers in 2015 (52.7 million). Both Millennials and Gen Xers make up 34% of the workforce, with Boomers at 29%. The survey findings underscore the role of digital fluency, the rise of healthcare consumerism, and the impact of work-life demands on the generations currently in the U.S. workforce.

Millennials are far more concerned about issues of work-life balance than older generations, with more than 40% saying they "work more than they should" and 36% indicating they "never have time to do the things they want to do." Only 29% of Gen Xers and 20% of Baby Boomers feel the same about time spent working, with 29% of Gen Xers and 13% of Boomers saying they don't have enough free time.

These differing attitudes on work-life balance appear to influence Millennials' preference for speed in their interactions with healthcare professionals. Unlike Gen Xers or Baby Boomers, nearly half (49%) of Millennials prefer that interactions with healthcare professionals be "fast, convenient or instantaneous" compared with 40% of Gen Xers and 28% of Baby Boomers. Older generations, instead, value a more personal exchange, with 60% of Gen Xers and 72% of Boomers favoring the relationship with their provider over speed of interaction.

### **Millennials Report Greater Use of Wellness Technologies, More Healthy Behaviors**

According to the survey, Millennials were also more likely to exercise and maintain a healthier weight than their older counterparts. The majority of Millennials (72%) indicated they exercise at least once or twice a week (on par with Gen Xers but considerably more than Boomers, at 57%) and are more likely to consider themselves of average weight (57%) compared with 54% of Gen Xers and 40% of Baby Boomers. In addition, nearly half (45%) consider themselves "very healthy," compared with 31% of Gen Xers and 25% of Boomers. These factors, combined with a preference for technology over "personal touch," may explain why Millennials are more receptive to using websites, apps and devices when engaging with healthcare professionals and employee wellness solutions.

When asked about use and interest in digital health technologies, the differences between generations are dramatic. Nearly half of Millennials (45%) said they currently use these technologies; 34% indicated that they plan to. By comparison, less than one-third of Gen Xers and only 14% of Boomers currently use digital health technologies and only 26% and 10% plan to, respectively. Nearly 1 in 5 Gen Xers and 44% of Boomers say they are not at all interested in wellness technologies, compared with less than 1 in 10 Millennials expressing no interest.

In addition, most Millennials (71%) are aware they have access to an employee wellness program versus 56% of Gen Xers and 49% of Boomers.

"Clearly, Millennials are more open to digital health technologies and wellness solutions, and they are driving the healthcare provider community on the need for greater convenience and accessibility," said Michael Sokol, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, WebMD Health Services. "At the same time, the findings suggest significant engagement gaps with Gen Xers and Boomers, who may be at a point in their lives when they can most benefit from wellness solutions. Since wellness is too important to leave any segment of the workforce behind, it's crucial that employers and health plans recognize these differences and personalize solutions and communications to be generationally relevant."

## Methodology

A blind survey questionnaire conducted online with a representative sample of 1,000 U.S. consumers:

- | 250 Young Millennials (18-26 yrs.)
- | 250 Old Millennials (27-35 yrs.)
- | 250 Gen Xers (36-51 yrs.)
- | 250 Baby Boomers (52-70 yrs.)

### About WebMD Health Services

WebMD Health Services provides customizable health and wellness solutions for employers and health plans. For more than a decade, our cloud-based platform has helped our customers give their employees and plan participants the support they need to make healthier lifestyle choices. In addition, our health coaching and condition management programs help employees and plan participants achieve health and wellness goals. We also implement team-based and individual wellness challenges that help foster a culture of wellness in the workplace. WebMD Health Services is a subsidiary of WebMD Health Corp.

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