

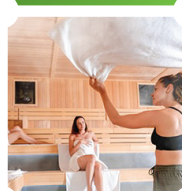


GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™

Initiative Micro-Trends 2025



GLOBALWELLNESSINSTITUTE.ORG



Copyright © 2025 by the Global Wellness Institute

Quotation of, citation from, and reference to this report must be credited to “Global Wellness Institute, *Initiative Micro-Trends 2025*.” For more information, please contact info@globalwellnessinstitute.org or visit www.globalwellnessinstitute.org.

About the Global Wellness Institute Initiatives

The nonprofit Global Wellness Institute (GWI) supports a wide range of collaborative Initiatives that bring together wellness leaders to drive meaningful change across key sectors of the global wellness economy. Each Initiative is led by a Chair—renowned experts and thought leaders in their field—and focuses on a specific topic, producing open-access research, resources, and thought leadership.

Individual Initiatives meet monthly to advance their missions and foster member engagement, while Initiative Chairs convene quarterly to align on goals and strengthen collaboration across Initiatives. Collectively, the GWI Initiatives play a vital role in advancing the multi-trillion-dollar wellness economy and uniting the global health and wellness industries.

The GWI Initiative program is led by GWI Director of Programs and Operations Jessi Brandt. For all inquiries related to Initiatives, including participation and proposals, please get in touch with Jessi directly at jessi.brandt@globalwellnessinstitute.org.

CONTENTS

Foreword by Susie Ellis, Chair & CEO, Global Wellness Institute	i
Aesthetic Health Initiative Micro-Trends	1
Africa Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends	5
Aging Well Initiative Micro-Trends	9
AI Initiative Micro-Trends	15
Breathe Initiative Micro-Trends	19
Consulting Initiative Micro-Trends	23
Cryotherapy Initiative Micro-Trends	27
Dying Well Initiative Micro-Trends	33
Hormonal Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends	37
Hydrothermal Initiative Micro-Trends	39
Inclusive Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends	43
Lifestyle Medicine Initiative Micro-Trends	49
Massage Makes Me Healthy and Happy Initiative Micro-Trends	55
Men's Wellbeing Initiative Micro-Trends	57
Mental Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends	61
Music for Health and Wellbeing Initiative Micro-Trends	65
Nutrition for Healthspan Initiative Micro-Trends	69
Psychedelics & Healing Initiative Micro-Trends	75
Respiratory Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends	81
Sleep Initiative Micro-Trends	85
Sport and Hospitality Initiative Micro-Trends	89
Touchless Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends	91
Wellness Architecture & Design Initiative Micro-Trends	95
Wellness Communities & Real Estate Initiative Micro-Trends	99
Wellness for Cancer Initiative Micro-Trends	105
Wellness for Children Initiative Micro-Trends	111
Wellness Tourism Initiative Micro-Trends	113
Workplace Wellbeing Initiative Micro-Trends	117
Yoga Therapy Initiative Micro-Trends	123

Foreword

At the Global Wellness Institute (GWI), our shared values guide what we do. The six values we hold close include being global, future-focused, evidence-based, collaborative, agile and inclusive.

One of my favorite parts of the GWI is our Initiative program, and I can't think of any part of the Institute where these values shine more clearly. We currently have 30 Initiatives, each of which are chaired by a global expert in that particular field. The Initiative members meet regularly and work together to produce a 'deliverable' for the year — this could be a white paper, a webinar, a podcast, or even a book — designed to move the conversation around their particular field forward on a global basis. We also ask them to share five of the top trends they see emerging in their sector.

A few years ago, we realized that each of these Initiative groups had incredible insight in their particular category, and we decided to make those trends available to our broad global network. While there are many lists of "wellness trends" these days, there were no lists of wellness trends in these specific categories, and we thought there should be. We chose to call this compilation "micro-trends" to distinguish them from the broader, macro-level trends identified each year by the Global Wellness Summit in *The Future of Wellness* annual global trends report.

Trends are signals; often, they serve as leading indicators for where things are heading. Trends can reveal new markets, products or services before they actually emerge. When you follow them intelligently, you stay ahead of the curve — not behind it. I have always found that asking people what trends they are seeing can spark lively conversations about the future that can become a competitive advantage.

While we have asked for trend lists from our Initiatives in the past and shared them on each Initiative's microsite on GWI, this is the first year we have put them all together in one booklet and made that available to everyone.

My thanks to each Initiative chair and vice chair and the GWI team who worked together to present you an easy-to-read booklet where you can look up the micro-trends in your area of interest — or if you're like me and you're interested in everything wellness, you can see a global glimpse of future happenings across a variety of sectors in the industry.

We hope you enjoy this journey of wellness sector trends and find inspiration for your own business. Please let us know what you think.

With appreciation,



Susie Ellis
Chair & CEO
Global Wellness Institute

Aesthetic Health Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Alison O'Neil, President & Founder, Beauty Becomes You Foundation, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Anita Murray, Managing Director, The Salon & Spa Company and Founder Be Kingdom Kind, Ireland

Simply stated, aesthetic health is the art and science of understanding how the signs and symptoms of beauty impact our lives. The term aesthetic is defined as the philosophy of beauty, and so it makes sense that today's definition is more of an umbrella term and continues to expand. As we review the trends in beauty and health, the focus aligns with the general population's goals to live healthier overall, be attractive (as one may define it), and lead a long life. Understanding the nuances of neuro-aesthetics is growing more popular. The science behind the question of what affects our brains and how we perceive art, architecture, and other beauty-filled spaces is being explored by our esteemed committee member, Dr. Anjan Chatterjee, founding director of the Penn Center for Neuro-Aesthetics at the Perelman School of the University of Pennsylvania. At its earliest it has been associated with humans since prehistoric times. Better teeth, clear skin, beautiful hair, and a healthy body have always represented one's ability to maintain strong family lines and ensure longevity, a constant pursuit in the quest of mankind. Embracing the influence of beauty on our brains and how that ties into our overall health will take us to new heights in understanding aesthetic health.

Aesthetic health is for everyone, regardless of culture, and our top five trends for 2025 depict a beautiful and accessible future.



[> Explore the Aesthetic Health Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: The Basic Science of Neuro-Aesthetics Is Evolving to Ask Questions Beyond Beauty

The reward system is deeply involved in aesthetic appreciation. The ventral striatum, including the *nucleus accumbens*, shows increased activity for pleasing and preferred objects. This reward circuitry, which usually releases dopamine, endogenous cannabinoids, and opioids in response to biologically significant pleasures, is activated by beautiful faces, artwork, music, and even pleasing architectural spaces. However, aesthetics often goes beyond pleasure and liking, and incorporates nuanced emotions. In some instances, negative emotions can contribute to powerful aesthetic experiences, such as a sense of anxiety embedded in the experience of awe. Researchers in the US and Europe are uncovering a more complex cocktail of emotions experienced in aesthetic encounters.

The rise in neuro-cosmetics and the mind/skin connection will bring forward compounds that interact with the skin's receptors to affect emotional states and link psychological health and skin care positively. This will support the expanding wellness industry by furthering emotional wellbeing and stress reduction, encouraging more businesses to draw on all five senses and produce services and products that are a pleasure to buy and consume.

Resources

- Menninghaus, W., Wagner, V., Wassiliwizky, E., Schindler, I., Hanich, J., Jacobsen, T., & Koelsch, S. (2019). What are aesthetic emotions? *Psychological review*, 126(2), 171.
- Fingerhut, J., & Prinz, J. J. (2020). Aesthetic emotions reconsidered. *The Monist*, 103(2), 223-239.
- Christensen, A. P., Cardillo, E. R., & Chatterjee, A. (2023). What kind of impacts can artwork have on viewers? Establishing a taxonomy for aesthetic impacts. *British journal of psychology*, 114(2), 335-351.
- Stamkou, E., Keltner, D., Corona, R., Aksoy, E., & Cowen, A. S. (2024). Emotional palette: a computational mapping of aesthetic experiences evoked by visual art. *Scientific Reports*, 14(1), 19932.

TREND 2: The Evolution of Sunscreen

Mineral-based sunscreens are on the rise, with the clean beauty movement contributing to increased awareness. Improved formulations are making mineral sunscreens more cosmetically acceptable. Denis K. Dudley, MD, FRCS(C), a board-certified OB-GYN, is one of the experts who has long highlighted the risks associated with petrochemical sunscreens containing soluble organic UV filters (SOUVF). "They permeate the skin to reach every cell, including the brain and fetus. The FDA showed that two weeks of oxybenzone attained a level 259 X, their mandatory level for toxicity testing. Consider the effect from daily or frequent use over years," Dr. Dudley explains. "Some dermatologists and physicians are now recommending mineral sunscreens more often, especially for women of childbearing age or those in pregnancy, for children and adolescents, and for couples trying to conceive. The Endocrine Society, the American Pediatric Society, and others lend their influence."

This year, we will also see innovations and more products specifically targeting photoaging. Among the new products coming to market this year, one pioneering brand is advancing formulations to enhance vitamin D receptors in the skin alongside new ingredients for DNA repair and epidermal stem cell protection, paving the way for a new generation of sun protection and much more.

Resources

- Dudley DK, Laughlin SA, Osterwalder U. Spectral Homeostasis – The Fundamental Requirement for an Ideal Sunscreen. *Curr Probl Dermatol* 2021; 55:72-92
- <https://www.thesunscreendoc.com/>

TREND 3: A New Focus on Psycho-Dermatology

Understanding How the Brain and Body Interact to Affect Our Physical Health and the Way We Feel About Our Appearance

The question of how our psychological and physiological states interact to affect our skin's condition, our body's general health, and our general wellbeing continues to gain momentum. The next chapter in the pursuit of wellness for aesthetic health will be the mind/body beauty connection, where mental wellbeing and physical health are increasingly intertwined. The acceleration of the mind/body connection will encourage more brands, spa operators, and wellness professionals to enhance the wellness journey with neuro-cosmetics that incorporate stress-relieving techniques, healing practices, and revised routines to accelerate this understanding. People will be willing to pay more for products that have mood-boosting qualities. Looking good makes people feel more confident and maintaining good mental wellbeing is key to overall health.

Our current circumstances continue to highlight these ideas, and beauty presents an opportunity to improve and target this space with innovations such as edible and drinkable beauty, biometric screening in spa and wellness settings, skin immunity, and a broader emphasis on integrative wellbeing. Integrative medicine practitioners will be aware of the role that stress plays in disease, and we will continue to see the intersection of medicine and wellbeing converge for stress management as well as a preventative tool for skin conditions like acne, rosacea, and premature aging.

**Did you know that the brain and skin have the same embryonic origin? Skin and brain form at the same time on day 21 of the embryo, with the outermost part of the embryo—the ectoblast—giving rise to the nervous system and the epidermis. Your skin is therefore a sort of extension of the brain. Its nerve architecture is extremely complex, with no less than 800,000 neurons, 11 meters of nerves and around 200 sensory receptors per cm³. This connection makes it impossible to dissociate the psychic realities that each of us undergoes on a daily basis from the physical ones concerning our skin. (Prof. Laurent Misery, Head of the Department of Dermatology at the University Hospital of Brest, France)*

TREND 4: Consumers Expect Less Invasive, *Proven Effective Medical-Aesthetic Practices, Treatments and Products

Significant developments in consultation and skin diagnostics are expected to continue in 2025, with advanced 4D consultations, AI, and more in-depth skin diagnosis. According to a recent McKinsey report, sound science and data-backed products and services are not just hoped for by consumers—they are expected.

We will see the continued inclusion of the microbiome, and a new wave of regenerative biotherapeutics featuring bioactive proteins, growth factors, and nucleic acids will take center stage for skin and hair rejuvenation. Exosomes can provide similar benefits to stem cell therapy without many of the unwanted side effects. Polynucleotides help improve skin tissue on a cellular level. Hi-tech performing cosmetics brands will focus more on innovative delivery systems rather than on new ingredients for optimum efficacy and outcomes. They will introduce new ways to innovate with legacy ingredients and equipment.

Resources

- McKinsey & Company: The Trends Defining the \$1.8 Trillion Global Wellness Market in 2024. January 16, 2024

The field of aesthetic health, particularly in medical aesthetics, has been experiencing significant trends and advancements. There's a growing preference for less invasive treatments that offer minimal discomfort and require little to no downtime. This trend reflects a shift towards procedures that can be done quickly, often in an outpatient setting, with rapid recovery times. This is driven by factors such as advancements in technology, growing awareness about aesthetic treatments, and an aging population seeking anti-aging solutions. (Prof Patrick Treacy Medical Director Ailesbury Clinics MICGP, MBCAM, H. Dip Dermatology, DRCOG, DCH, LRCSI, DTM MB BCh)

Trend 5: A Holistic, Integrative Approach to Singular Issues

As the concept of wellness evolves into a whole-person approach to health, 2025 will likely witness an increasing trend where specific issues are addressed through multiple modalities. Take skin health, for example. Instead of relying solely on specific skincare treatments for physical concerns, holistic approaches that incorporate aspects such as diet, sleep, and mental health will become a standard part of the wellness examination. Addressing aesthetics will involve an approach that encompasses the mind, body, and spirit, linking the concept of improving appearance to enhancing overall wellbeing. Similarly, physical products that extend benefits to mental states will gain heightened attention. For instance, food and beverages with ingredients beneficial for digestion that also enhance mood, or cosmetics that improve physical appearance but also boost self-confidence and nurture self-care, will continue to spotlight the expansion from traditional to new aesthetics that encompass elevated mental states.

Trend 6: Respected Traditional Ingredients Combined with Modern Innovations

Consumers want innovations, but they also increasingly want the familiar effectiveness of the ingredients and practices they have come to trust over time. In 2025, we will continue to see more products and lifestyle management approaches inspired by traditions rooted in ayurveda, homeopathy, traditional Chinese medicine, and Amazonian practices. Products will blend herbal and plant medicine with modern science, offering solutions that address physical, mental, and spiritual wellbeing. A trend signifying the fusion of ancient wisdom and modern scientific advancements.

Resources

- Eating for Wellness Will Be a Lot Simpler—And More Celebratory—In 2024: <https://www.wellandgood.com/wellness-minded-food-brands/>
- Beauty + Wellness Category Expands Market by 45% Determines NIQ Report, Dec. 13, 2023: <https://www.cosmeticsdesign.com/Article/2023/12/13/Beauty-Wellness-category-expands-market-by-45-determines-NIQ-report>
- Formulation Trends Driving Feel-Good Products in Self-Care Rituals: <https://beautymatter.com/articles/formulation-trends-driving-feel-good-products-in-self-care-rituals>
- Cosmetics Business reveals the top 5 'Ancient Beauty' trends of 2024 in new report: <https://cosmeticsbusiness.com/cosmetics-business-reveals-the-top-5-ancient-beauty>
- Integrative approach to lifestyle management: Implications for public health research & practice in the context of SDG-3: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10692374/>

Finally, a recent award-winning documentary, *[Decoding Beauty](#)*, reviews the science, culture, commerce, and social implications of “the future of beauty.” [Trailer](#).

Africa Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Mariane Akwenye, Managing Director, Nomad Group, Namibia

Initiative Vice-Chair: Michelle Saudan, Founder & Facilitator of Amanzi Wellbeing, Dubai-Zimbabwe

Africa Rising – The Next Frontier in Global Wellness

This report will explore Africa's rise as a global wellness leader, with deep roots in its authentic traditions. Across the continent, movements are emerging that honor ancient traditions while embracing modern innovation, creating a powerful synergy between the past and the present.

From indigenous sacred festivals to innovative wellness spaces and social impact initiatives, a common thread weaves through them all: the African philosophies of Ubuntu—I am because we are, and Sawubona—I see you.

Africa is reclaiming its place as the cradle of wellness, offering its communities and the rest of the world a future where healing is collective, culture is celebrated, and wellbeing is deeply intertwined with community and purpose.



[> Explore the Africa Wellness Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: The Resurgence of Indigenous Birthing Models

This revival of African Indigenous birth work signifies a growing recognition of the value of ancestral practices in promoting holistic maternal health across Africa, and igniting a birth-work revolution that also empowers global communities. There is a unification of passionate, curious birth enthusiasts who, together, forge a global connection and rebuild a world where every birth is celebrated, every mother is supported, and every child is welcomed with love. We see this expanding across the continent, from South Africa to Zanzibar, with community-based training models for doulas and midwives that integrate ancestral birthing traditions into the modern healthcare system. This knowledge is now spreading not only within Africa for Africans, but also internationally, with students from the West coming to Africa to train in these courses, or attend midwife/doula retreat immersions with Indigenous elders. Medicalized maternity systems often limit the spiritual aspects of childbirth, but we believe that honoring this dimension can powerfully support the psychological, emotional, and physical wellness of those birthing. By integrating traditional birth practices and rituals, the aim is to reconnect with ancestral wisdom and cultivate a form of care that acknowledges the spiritual nature of birth.

Resources

- <https://amref.org/position-statements/amref-health-africas-position-on-the-role-and-services-of-traditional-birth-attendants/>
- <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/sociology/articles/10.3389/fsoc.2021.670551/>
- <https://www.hrw.org/news/2023/11/07/its-time-support-africas-maternal-community-health-workers?>
- <https://read.dukeupress.edu/meridians/article-abstract/23/1/263/386312/Safe-Motherhood-Initiative-Whither-African?>

TREND 2: Fonio, The Ancient Grain of the Future

Fonio, known as the seed of the universe, is more than just one of the many ancient grains on the continent. It is a powerful symbol of resilience, sustainability, and indigenous wisdom. As one of the fastest-growing grains, it flourishes in arid, depleted soils with little water, making it an essential crop in the fight against climate change and food insecurity. Beyond its adaptability, fonio is a nutritional powerhouse, rich in amino acids, iron, and fiber, providing vital nourishment to communities where malnutrition is prevalent. Its deep cultural roots across West Africa reflect centuries of ancestral knowledge, and today, it is being rediscovered as a solution to modern agricultural and economic challenges. From empowering smallholder farmers to expanding global food diversity, fonio is not just a grain, it is a bridge between tradition and the future of sustainable food systems.

Resources

- <https://www.forbesafrica.com/focus/2024/11/04/reclaiming-the-giant-among-grains-the-rise-of-fonio/#>
- <https://www.fao.org/newsroom/story/cultivating-fonio-cultivating-traditions/en>
- <https://www.ideo.org/perspective/fonio-sustainable-futures>
- https://www.gatesnotes.com/Fonio?WT.mc_id=20240417110000_Fonio_BG-LI_&WT.src=BGLI

TREND 3: African Wellness Tourism - Beyond the Safari Experience

As Africa continues to leverage its natural beauty and cultural heritage, the continent is poised to become a leading destination in the global wellness tourism market. Africa's wellness tourism is expanding beyond wildlife safaris, emerging as a powerful and diverse force in the global wellness economy. From African plant medicine retreats in Central and South Africa to spiritual pilgrimages in Egypt, star bathing under Namibia's vast skies, and the rise of medical tourism in Ethiopia, the continent is shaping transformative travel and wellbeing. The global wellness tourism market is valued at \$830 billion and is projected to reach \$1.35 trillion by 2028 according to the Global Wellness Institute.

All regions have recovered from the pandemic, but North Africa was one of the few to show the strongest resilience and growth from 2019 to 2023.

Africa's unparalleled natural beauty, cultural heritage, and growing demand for immersive healing experiences position it as a key driver of this worldwide boom, offering vast economic potential and investment opportunities.

Resources

- <https://mededgemea.com/ethiopia-on-5-billion-african-medical-tourism-map-with-one-of-most-significant-healthcare-developments/https://www.wellnesstourism.com/article/top-wellness-retreats-in-africa-for-spiritual-healing>
- https://www.thestar.com/news/world/africa/benins-mecca-of-spirits-and-gods-draws-tourists-and-followers-with-famed-vooodoo-festival/article_dd6c1ee0-80b5-574a-aec5-01b122438832.html
- <https://www.puretravel.com/blog/2025/01/21/the-transformative-power-of-an-iboga-retreat-a-journey-to-healing-and-self-discovery/>
- <https://galaxiagroup.com/en/2025/02/10/pilgrimage-sites-in-egypt-a-spiritual-journey/>
- <https://globalwellnessinstitute.org/industry-research/2024-global-wellness-economy-monitor/>

TREND 4: Breaking the Shade Barrier - The Rise of Inclusive Beauty and Representation

As this powerful shift is underway, the industry is embracing true inclusivity—from makeup brands expanding shade ranges to skincare lines formulated for diverse skin tones. Representation now extends beyond tokenism, with campaigns featuring people of all shades, mixed-race identities, and underrepresented beauty narratives.

While progress has been made, the cosmetic industry still grapples with the deep-seated issue of colorism.

Initiatives such as TUT in Pretoria, South Africa, aim to design and promote products and services that help detach the stigma of colorism or shadism as we know it. True inclusivity will require a continued commitment to diverse representation, equitable product offerings, and the dismantling of harmful beauty standards that have long marginalized individuals with darker skin tones.

Resources

- <https://www.rochesterfirst.com/business/press-releases/ein-presswire/687437193/nigerian-skin-expert-launches-bellanomi-body-care-line-for-skin-of-color-targeting-dry-skin-and-hyperpigmentation/>
- <https://www.vogue.com/article/self-tanner-black-women>
- <https://sharonhh.com/books-sharon-hurley-hall/shadeism>

TREND 5: The Mental Health Revolution - Community-Driven Healing

Across Africa, a mental health revolution is unfolding, one deeply rooted in community-based interventions that make healing accessible to all. From hairdressers in Togo, Cameroon, and Côte d'Ivoire being trained in psychological first aid, to psychiatric patients in Mali finding solace through traditional theater, these initiatives are redefining mental health support. In Zimbabwe, hundreds of grandmothers offer free, compassionate talk therapy, creating safe spaces for emotional wellbeing. These models have started to influence Western approaches to mental health care. They are not just innovative; they draw from Africa's rich communal traditions, proving that healing is most powerful when it is shared. This movement signals a shift towards culturally grounded, community-led mental health care, bridging the gap where formal services fall short.

Resources

- <https://www.philanthropy.com/article/a-zimbabwean-nonprofit-expands-its-mental-health-model-to-the-world>
- <https://www.positive.news/lifestyle/health/the-ivory-coast-hairdressers-tackling-a-mental-health-crisis/>
- <https://apnews.com/article/mali-mental-health-theater-psychiatric-art-0c3af0e203263023027f08105799a340#>

Aging Well Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: William Wesley Myers, Mather, Assistant Vice President, Wellness Strategy, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Meredith Boyle, Mather, Senior Vice President, Strategic Initiatives, United States

The Aging Well Initiative is dedicated to identifying and sharing the latest trends that enhance the wellbeing of people over 55. Today, the importance of aging well is more pronounced than ever, with a growing population of older adults seeking to live healthier, more fulfilling lives.

These trends highlight diverse ways in which older adults can maintain their independence and enhance their wellbeing.

TREND 1: Creative Aging

The creative aging movement is a transformative wellness trend that redefines later life as a period of growth, creativity, cultural contribution, and personal exploration. While older adults have long been involved in arts programming, there is an increasing recognition of the strong connections between creative engagement and overall wellbeing. Creative activities such as painting, music, dance, creative writing, and theater not only enhance emotional resilience, cognitive vitality, and social connections, but may also positively impact longevity. Research by G.D. Cohen even suggests that our creativity may increase as we age.



[> Explore the Aging Well Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

In recent years, the creative aging movement has seen significant expansion, fostering new collaborations between older adults and various arts organizations, including therapeutic arts programs, artist residencies, and museum initiatives. These programs underscore the vital role of the arts in promoting wellbeing, highlighting the societal value of older adults while supporting their mental, emotional, and physical health. A distinctive aspect of creative aging is its ability to challenge ageist stereotypes, enabling older adults to embrace a creative identity and view later life as an opportunity for cultural contributions and new learning.

Research indicates that engaging in creative activities stimulates neuroplasticity, potentially delaying cognitive decline and enhancing problem-solving skills. Emotional wellbeing is also significantly bolstered through creative pursuits, providing older adults with meaningful outlets for self-expression, relaxation, and stress reduction. Communal art-making combats isolation by fostering social bonds and a sense of belonging through collaboration and mutual inspiration. Physical benefits are evident in activities like dance or theater, which improve balance and coordination, and in painting or crafting, which enhance fine motor skills.

Embracing creative aging involves integrating creative practices into daily routines and recognizing them as essential to overall wellbeing. Older adults should be encouraged to engage in creative arts, such as art-making, nature drawing, ceramics, reflective journaling, or improvisational movement. This active curiosity can spark new insights and an enhanced sense of purpose.

Classes in poetry, music, culinary arts, or visual arts, as well as partnerships between aging services and arts organizations, can enrich this stage of life. Ultimately, creative aging highlights that older adulthood can be a vibrant period of life.

Resources

- Cohen, G. D., Perlstein, S., Chapline, J., Kelly, J., Firth, K. M., & Simmens, S. (2006). The impact of professionally conducted cultural programs on the physical health, mental health, and social functioning of older adults." *The Gerontologist*, 46(6), 726-734. <https://doi.org/10.1093/geront/46.6.726>
- Edasis, Saunders, Hanna, Seigel (2003). The Next Wave in Creative Aging: A Cross-industry Report - <https://www.mather.com/whitepaper-download-thank-you>
- Cohen, G.D. (2000). *The Creative Age: Awakening Human Potential in the Second Half of Life*. New York, New York: Avon Books.
- Conner, T. S., DeYoung, C. G., & Silvia, P. J. (2018). "Everyday creative activity as a path to flourishing," *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 13(2),181-189. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17439760.2016.1257049>
- Thorp HH. "Music and the mind," *Science*. 2024 Mar 21;383(6689):1271. doi: 10.1126/science.adp2969. Epub 2024 Mar 21. PMID: 38513018.
- Wen G. Chen, Emmeline Ewards, Sunil Iyengar, Robert Finkelstein, Deborah F. Rutter, Renée Fleming, Francis S. Collins. "Music and medicine: quickening the tempo of progress," *The Lancet*. 2024 Mar;107:275-280. doi: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(24\)00477-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(24)00477-X). Epub 2024 Mar 18. PMID: 38513679.

TREND 2: Bridging Generations - Harnessing AI for Human Connection

AI seems to be everywhere, increasingly finding its way into programs and products, and offering novel solutions to age-old (and old-age) challenges. Among these innovative applications is Eldera, a company leveraging AI to facilitate intergenerational mentoring relationships. Eldera's mission, encapsulated in its name ("bringing forth the Era of the Elder"), is to harness the wealth of wisdom and experience of older adults. Through Eldera's platform, mentors aged 60 and above are paired with young people aged 5 to 18 for weekly virtual mentoring sessions. Both mentors and mentees complete a comprehensive intake profile form that utilizes an AI algorithm to identify the most suitable mentor-mentee match.

For older adults, serving as mentors provides a sense of purpose and fulfillment, as they can share their knowledge and life experiences with younger generations. Additionally, it

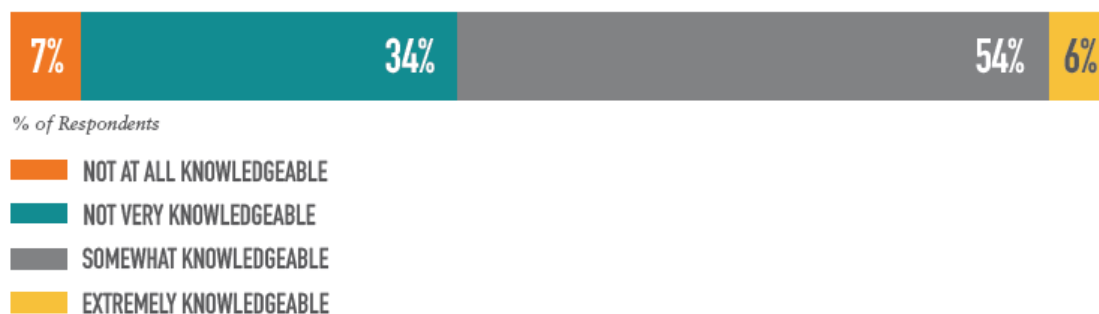
provides them with opportunities for social engagement and meaningful connections, potentially addressing feelings of loneliness and isolation. At the same time, youth participants stand to gain invaluable insights, guidance, and support from their mentors.

Ultimately, by integrating AI into the process of intergenerational mentoring, Eldera is not only facilitating stronger and more effective mentor-mentee relationships, but also paving the way for a brighter and more connected future for all generations.

Older Adults' View on AI

Findings from Mather Institute's study "Navigating the Digital Era" reveal that older adults may have a more favorable outlook on AI the more they learn about it. Only 7% of survey respondents reported using AI companions, but it's possible that more respondents may adopt these devices in the future as they gain popularity.

HOW KNOWLEDGEABLE ARE PEOPLE AGE 55+ TODAY ABOUT AI?



Source: Mather Institute (2023). *Navigating the Digital Era: Older Adults' Views on GPS, Smart Speakers & AI.*

Resources

- <https://www.eldera.ai/>
- Mather Institute, "Navigating the Digital Era: Older Adults' Views on GPS, Smart Speakers & AI," 2023
- Shoichet, C. (2023, October 23)
- How AI helps baby boomers find kids who need a mentor. CNN: <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/23/health/ai-eldera-boomers-mentor-kids-wellness-cec/index.html>

TREND 3: Solo Aging

Solo aging, where older adults live alone without a life partner or children, is becoming increasingly prevalent. According to recent data, approximately 15% of households, or 22.1 million adults aged 55+, live alone in the United States, and this demographic is expected to grow. Solo agers face unique challenges, including isolation and lack of immediate familial support, which can lead to poorer mental health and lower life satisfaction compared to their peers with more robust support systems.

Organizations and companies are responding to this trend by developing services tailored to solo agers. These services include financial planning, volunteer matching, and continuing care-at-home memberships designed to provide a sense of security and community.

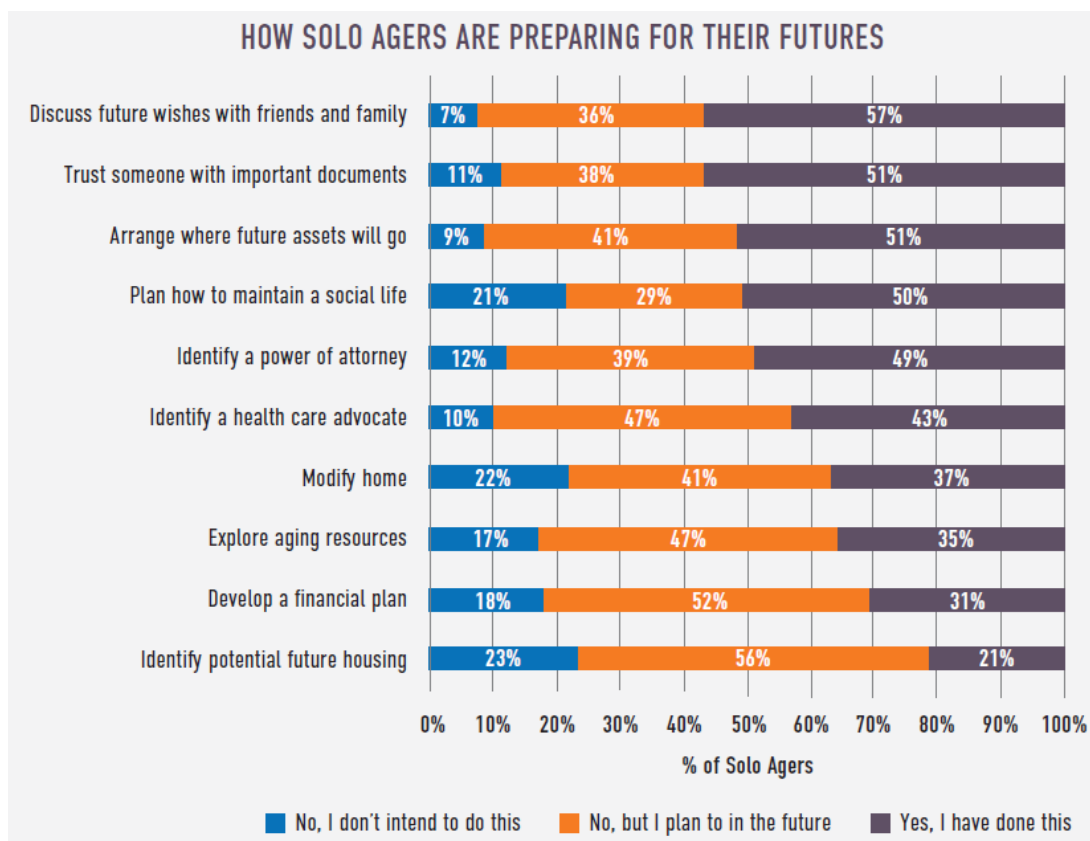
Research highlights several key concerns for solo agers, such as maintaining mobility and independence, mental engagement, and social connections. Despite these concerns, many solo agers have not yet made concrete plans for the future. The following chart illustrates a need for greater preparedness.

To support solo agers, service providers are encouraged to assess and enhance their programs and services, ensuring they meet the needs of this demographic. This includes fostering social connections and offering programs such as culinary and travel opportunities.

The trend of solo aging presents both challenges and opportunities. By proactively planning for their future needs and engaging in supportive environments, solo agers can enhance their wellbeing and maintain independence as they age.

Resources

- <https://information.matherinstitute.com/flying-solo-2023>
- <https://generations.asaging.org/confronting-challenges-solo-aging>



TREND 4: Reducetarian Eating

Whether for health reasons, out of compassion for animals, or to help protect the environment, more people are adapting their diets to be reducetarians. Unlike the stricter vegan and vegetarian movements, reducetarian eating does not aim to eliminate animal products but rather to decrease their consumption.

Moderation in consuming meat, seafood, eggs, and dairy can appeal to those who find all-or-nothing diets too restrictive.

A reducetarian's diet may take a variety of forms:

- Following a vegetarian diet but eating turkey and other meat entrees during holidays with extended family.
- Sticking to a vegan diet most days but indulging in animal products on occasion.
- Eating a plant-based diet during the week but eating like an omnivore on weekends.

Although meat consumption is increasing in the US and globally, a growing number of young people report that they want to reduce their meat intake for environmental reasons. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations has found that nearly 15% of the Earth's greenhouse gas emissions are attributed to livestock production. And, eating a reducetarian diet can make a significant difference. According to one British study, if everyone in the UK who is a significant meat eater reduced their meat consumption, the environmental impact would be equivalent to taking eight million cars off the road. It's clear that if reducetarianism grows in popularity, it could take a bite out of climate change.

The Future of Food Marketing

Regardless of whether reducetarianism takes off, food producers are keenly aware of people's interest in, and effort regarding, changing to a diet that is more environmentally friendly. As the number of climate-conscious consumers grows, look for changes in how foods are marketed. We may start to see labeling or menus ranking the food's "carbon footprint," or similar metrics that reveal environmental commitment.

Resources

- Aruhma,. (2023, April 28). "The reducetarian movement: Why it's a popular diet trend for 2023"
- CBS News. (2023, March 9). "Climate diet trend: A 'reducetarian' explains how to eat with the health of the planet in mind." <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/climate-diets-reducetarian-environment-meat/>
- Cohen, L. (2023, January 10). "U.S. still off-track for climate goals as greenhouse gas emissions rise for second straight year, new report says. CBS News. <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/u-s-still-off-track-for-climate-goals-as-greenhouse-gas-emissions-rise-for-second-straight-year-new-report-says/>
- Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. <https://www.fao.org/home/en/>
- Ghosh, P. (2023, July 20). "Eating less meat 'like taking 8m cars off road'." BBC. <https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-66238584>
- Reducetarian Foundation. <https://www.reducetarian.org/what>

TREND 5: Equine Enhanced Wellness Programs Offer Older Adults New Leases on Life

Horses and humans have a long history together, so it should come as no surprise that horses are remarkably attuned to human emotions. Horses react to humans' facial expressions, body language, and tone of voice and can even detect when a human facial expression does not match the tone of voice (e.g., a smile paired with a stern word).

Equine enhanced wellness is a recent trend in harnessing the therapeutic benefits of horses for improved health and wellbeing. It is a well-grounded practice in the principles and practices of animal-assisted therapy and learning.

Equine enhanced wellness can lead to improvements in balance, core muscular strength, and functional movement. Patterns of breathing can be affected positively along with blood circulation. Interacting with horses is particularly beneficial for individuals experiencing memory loss. Older adults may benefit from petting and brushing horses, combing their manes and tails, or having horses nuzzle them. Older adults may also benefit from caring for and feeding the horses. Individuals with anxiety may experience relief in the presence of calm horses.

Regular visits to the stable or paddock can lead to emotional bonding with the horses. Moreover, spending time in barns and particularly outside in paddocks with horses offers the benefits of “earthing” and “grounding” practices, as well as a connection with nature. While many older adults have pets and companion animals in their homes, horses possess a size, sensitivity, and mobility that allow well-designed equine enhanced wellness programs to emphasize sensory, somatic, and contemplative practices addressing various aspects of wellness.

Resources

- Dr. Stephen Smith. Professor, Faculty of Education & Director, Professional Programs, Simon Fraser University .
- Baldwin, A. L., Rector, B. K., and Alden, A. C. (2021). “Physiological and Behavioral Benefits for People and Horses during Guided Interactions at an Assisted Living Residence,” *Behavioral Sciences*, 11 (10): 129. doi: 10.3390/bs11100129
- Navarra, K. (May 27, 2019). “Horses helping seniors,” *Horse&Rider*: <https://horseandrider.com/horse-health-care/horses-helping-seniors/>
- *The Equine Chronicle* (Dec 28, 2017). “Innovative senior living community offers equine therapy at on-site stable.” <https://www.equinechronicle.com/innovative-senior-living-center-offers-equine-therapy-at-on-site-stable/>
- *The Washington Post* (July 28, 2022). “A ‘magical’ treatment for seniors with dementia: Horse therapy.” <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/07/28/virginia-seniors-dementia-horse-therapy/>
- VIPcare. (2024, May 3). “Equine Therapy for Older Adults: A Path to Improved Health” <https://getvipcare.com/blog/equine-therapy-for-older-adults/>

AI Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Andy Hall, Wellness Leader, Strategic Partner, Live4Well, NED & Advisor, United Kingdom

Initiative Vice-Chair: Dr. Vishal Patel, President & Chief Medical Officer, Sensei, United States

Emerging AI Trends in Human Wellbeing

In 2025, AI-driven innovations are transforming the way we manage our health, fitness, and even our emotional wellbeing. Tech media reports highlight a proliferation of AI tools for mental health support and personalized healthcare, suggesting that what was once futuristic is becoming mainstream. At the same time, cutting-edge research reveals advances in AI algorithms that can detect diseases earlier, personalize treatments, and augment the work of human caregivers. Consumers are also embracing AI in their daily routines—from smart fitness wearables unveiled at CES 2025 to robot companions at home. These developments promise more significant access to wellness services and highly customized care. This report distills five major themes in AI's impact on human wellbeing in 2025, drawing on insights from technology outlets, academic research, and recent health and fitness events.

Trend 1: AI-Powered Mental Health Support

AI is increasingly augmenting mental health care through chatbots and virtual companions. Schools and workplaces have begun deploying hybrid, human-AI wellbeing chatbots to support those who lack access to counselors. These AI services provide 24/7 text-based support, helping users vent their anxieties or practice difficult conversations in a sympathetic, non-judgmental space. Platforms like Clare&me in Germany and Limbic Care in the UK offer 24/7 AI “therapy companions” for those who might not otherwise receive help. These social-emotional AI tools converse with users, monitor their wellbeing, and direct them to relevant resources. Early research suggests AI-driven chatbots can provide empathetic, stigma-free support for issues like anxiety and depression, though their effectiveness continues to be evaluated.



[> Explore the AI Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

However, experts caution that ethical guardrails are necessary. Issues like privacy, data bias, and the limitations of “chatbot therapy” must be addressed to integrate AI into mental healthcare safely. A joint study by OpenAI and the MIT Media Lab found evidence of a correlation between higher daily usage of AI chatbots and increased feelings of loneliness and dependence, suggesting that AI chatbots may have unintended side effects. In 2025, the trend is toward AI as both a scalable mental health aid and a clinical decision support tool, extending the reach of care while augmenting the work of human therapists.

Resources

- Clarke, M. (2025). *AI chatbots for mental health: A revolution in therapy?* Wired. Retrieved from <https://www.wired.com>
- Limbic Care. (2025). *AI-driven mental health solutions: Bridging the care gap.* Retrieved from <https://www.limbic.ai>
- Rubin M, Arnon H, Huppert JD, Perry A. *Considering the Role of Human Empathy in AI-Driven Therapy.* JMIR Ment Health 2024;11:e56529. doi: 10.2196/56529
- Saeidnia HR, Fotami SGH, Lund B, Ghiasi N. *Ethical Considerations in Artificial Intelligence Interventions for Mental Health and Well-Being: Ensuring Responsible Implementation and Impact.* Social Sciences 2024; 13: 381. <https://doi.org/10.3390/socsci13070381>
- Fang CM, et al. *How AI and Human Behaviors Shape Psychosocial Effects of Chatbot Use: A Longitudinal Controlled Study.* 2025. Available at: <https://www.media.mit.edu/publications/how-ai-and-human-behaviors-shape-psychosocial-effects-of-chatbot-use-a-longitudinal-controlled-study/>

Trend 2: AI in Healthcare and Medicine

In 2025, AI is driving breakthroughs in healthcare research, diagnostics, and treatment. Generative AI, in particular, is transforming drug discovery. A senior scientist at Nvidia and Caltech notes that the research and advisory firm Gartner predicts over 30% of new drugs will be discovered using generative AI by 2025. Indeed, researchers are now using AI models to design novel medicines in months rather than years. In one case, scientists at Stanford University developed a generative model, known as SyntheMol, that created chemical “recipes” for six new antibiotic candidates to combat a deadly superbug, with the results published in Nature.

Beyond the lab, AI is augmenting clinical decision-making. Advanced algorithms can analyze medical images and patient data with remarkable accuracy. A 2025 Lancet Digital Health study found that AI-assisted mammography screening detected 29% more breast cancers—including 24% more early-stage tumors—compared to traditional screening alone. AI is also being applied to neurology and preventive care: one study found speech-analysis AI could forecast Alzheimer’s disease with nearly 80% accuracy six years before diagnosis. Additionally, “ambient” AI scribes in hospitals now transcribe visits and draft clinical notes, aiming to reduce physician burnout. Doctors and health tech leaders stress that these tools must be rigorously validated and used responsibly. Regulators are beginning to issue guidance for AI “co-pilots” in medicine to ensure safety and transparency. Overall, 2025 marks an inflection point where AI transitions from promising experiments to practical healthcare applications, accelerating drug development, enhancing early disease detection, and supporting clinicians in delivering more precise and proactive care.

Resources

- Ricardo, R. (2024). “Generative AI Will Transform Medicine.” *Wired.*
- Swanson, K., Liu, G., Catacutan, D.B. et al. “Generative AI for designing and validating easily synthesizable and structurally novel antibiotics.” *Nat Mach Intell* 6, 338–353 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s42256-024-00809-7>
- Hernström, Veronica et al. (2025) “Screening performance and characteristics of breast cancer detected in the Mammography Screening with Artificial Intelligence trial (MASAI): a randomised, controlled, parallel-group, non-inferiority, single-blinded, screening accuracy study.” *The Lancet Digital Health*, Volume 7, Issue 3, e175 - e183
- Amini S, Hao B, Yang J, Karjadi C, Kolachalama VB, Au R, and Paschalidis IC. (2024) “Prediction of Alzheimer’s disease progression within 6 years using speech: A novel approach leveraging language models.” *Alzheimer’s & Dementia*. DOI: 10.1002/alz.13886
- Suki. “Rush Expands Suki Partnership with Enterprise-Wide Ambient AI Rollout Following Successful Launch.” (2025) Available at: <https://www.suki.ai/news/rush-expands-suki-partnership-with-enterprise-wide-ambient-ai-rollout-following-successful-launch/>

TREND 3: Personalized Fitness and Wellness Tech

AI has become a cornerstone of modern fitness coaching, analyzing performance data to adapt exercise routines in real-time, thereby delivering a highly personalized experience. Smart fitness devices unveiled at CES 2025—from smart mirrors to new wearables—all came replete with AI-driven features. For example, the latest smart rings promise “enhanced AI-enabled smarts” to track activity and heart health. New smart fitness equipment, such as the Amp home gym and Gym Monster 2, utilize AI to monitor form and provide personalized suggestions, mimicking the guidance of a personal trainer. Another concept device, a Withings smart mirror, uses integrated sensors and AI to assess your body composition, heart and lung function, and even nutrition trends each morning. Though still a prototype, it hints at a future where your bathroom mirror could act as an at-home health scanner and coach.

AI is also powering a new generation of personal training apps. Programs like JuggernautAI serve as a digital trainer in your pocket, creating custom workout plans that adjust as you progress. These apps compile your performance data and goals to develop a personalized exercise regimen, adjusting sets and reps with AI-driven precision. Another standout innovation is Whoop Coach, an AI-enabled performance assistant that provides real-time, conversational coaching tailored to your unique biometric data. Unlike traditional wearables that passively collect stats, Whoop Coach translates complex physiological signals—like HRV, sleep, strain, and recovery—into direct, actionable guidance. Ask it questions like, “Should I train today?” or “Why was my sleep bad?” and it responds with tailored recommendations, all powered by OpenAI’s large language models and Whoop’s proprietary dataset. This marks a shift toward adaptive wellness coaching, where the AI doesn’t just nudge or track—it becomes a digital wellness advisor that evolves with your lifestyle. As wearables become more intimate (rings, patches, even earbuds), expect more fitness brands to integrate LLM-powered AI companions, such as Whoop Coach, into their platforms.

Resources

- Learney, Taylor. (2025) “Health Tech Inventions at CES 2025 Could Transform the Future of Personal Wellness.” *CNET*. Available at: <https://www.cnet.com/health/health-tech-inventions-at-ces-2025-could-transform-the-future-of-personal-wellness/>
- Evans, M. (2025). “CES 2025 has shown me the future of AI in fitness, and it’s hilariously unimaginative”. *TechRadar*. Available at: <https://www.techradar.com/health-fitness/ces-2025-has-shown-me-the-future-of-ai-in-fitness-and-its-hilariously-unimaginative>
- ATN Staff (2025). “Fitness Tech Trends: Revolutionizing Workouts With Wearables, AI, VR & Beyond.” *AthleTech News*. Available at: <https://athletechnews.com/fitness-tech-trends-wearables-ai-vr>
- Porter, W., and Williams, B. (2024) “The 12 Best Workout Apps to Help You Get Fit, According to Certified Trainers.” *Men’s Health*. Available at: <https://www.menshealth.com/fitness/g63304919/best-workout-apps/>
- Whoop (2023). “Introducing WHOOP Coach, Powered By OpenAI”. Available at: <https://www.whoop.com/us/en/thelocker/introducing-whoop-coach-powered-by-openai/>

Trend 4: AI in Social Wellbeing

Beyond physical health, AI is addressing human social needs. One striking trend of 2025 is the rise of AI companions—digital or robotic agents that provide conversation, caregiving assistance, and friendship. Particularly impactful for older adults, research finds that many seniors are open to human-like helper robots if it means greater independence and less loneliness. Modern companion robots, such as the ElliQ device, can respond to voice commands, engage in small talk, remind users to take their medications, suggest exercises or brain games, and even initiate calls with loved ones. Crucially, designers are adding empathetic touches: these AI companions are being programmed to simulate human warmth and understanding, making them more appealing as social partners.

Among young people, AI’s role in learning is expected to grow exponentially, particularly in providing personalized learning experiences that cater to individual student needs. Machine learning algorithms will aid in identifying knowledge gaps, suggesting educational resources, and fostering an inclusive approach to diverse learning styles. Socially, AI companion services such as Replika (a popular AI friend app) and

Xiaoice have millions of users and are increasingly seen as legitimate sources of emotional support rather than curiosities. In one survey of 1,000 college students, Replika not only had a positive effect on most users, but it also prevented the suicide attempts of 30 individuals. By providing non-judgmental listening and on-demand chat, AI companions are fulfilling social needs for connection and conversation in a hectic world—and even saving lives.

Resources

- Kok, C. L., Ho, C. K., Teo, T. H., Kato, K., & Koh, Y. Y. (2024). A Novel Implementation of a Social Robot for Sustainable Human Engagement in Homecare Services for Ageing Populations. *Sensors*, 24(14), 4466. <https://doi.org/10.3390/s24144466>
- Heater, B. "The ElliQ eldercare robot gets a hardware upgrade, generative AI for improved conversations." TechCrunch (2024). Available at: <https://techcrunch.com/2024/01/09/elliq-ces/>
- Bernardi, J. "Friends for sale: the rise and risks of AI companions." (2025) Ada Lovelace Institute. Available at: <https://www.adalovelaceinstitute.org/blog/ai-companions/>
- Maples, B., Cerit, M., Vishwanath, A. et al. Loneliness and suicide mitigation for students using GPT3-enabled chatbots. *npj Mental Health Res* 3, 4 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44184-023-00047-6>
- Sari, T., Nayir, F., & Bozkurt, A. (2024). Reimagining education: bridging artificial intelligence, transhumanism, and critical pedagogy. *Journal of Educational Technology and Online Learning*, 7(1), 102-115. <https://doi.org/10.31681/jetol.1308022>

Trend 5: AI for Workplace Wellbeing

Organizations are increasingly leveraging AI to create healthier and more productive work environments. In the workplace, AI is projected to significantly enhance productivity by automating routine tasks, thereby allowing employees to focus on higher-order cognitive skills. As businesses adopt AI-driven productivity tools, studies indicate that employee satisfaction and performance increase. The potential benefits also align with a human-centric approach, where fostering innovation and collaboration is prioritized, ensuring that human welfare remains a critical factor in the implementation of these technologies.

Additionally, some companies have begun deploying AI to monitor and support employee wellbeing. Employers like Cisco and Adidas are experimenting with AI tools that gauge employee sentiment from chats, emails, and surveys—essentially taking a real-time “vibe check” on morale and stress levels across the organization. By flagging drops in engagement or signs of burnout early, these systems can alert managers to reach out or adjust workloads. The goal is to make the often-invisible aspects of employee health (like stress or isolation, especially in remote teams) more visible, so that support can be provided promptly. AI-enabled employee experiences platforms also aggregate feedback to suggest workplace improvements, ranging from policy adjustments to personalized wellness resources tailored to staff. Although only a minority of companies are currently using AI for this “human side” of business, interest is growing as organizations recognize that healthier, happier employees lead to increased productivity and reduced turnover.

Resources

- Knight, R. "Can AI help companies boost employee well-being?" Business Insider (2024). Available at: <https://www.businessinsider.com/ai-employee-well-being-support-human-side-business-work-engagement-2024-9>
- Al Naqbi, H., Bahroun, Z., & Ahmed, V. (2024). Enhancing Work Productivity through Generative Artificial Intelligence: A Comprehensive Literature Review. *Sustainability*, 16(3), 1166. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su16031166>

Breathe Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Sandy Abrams, Founder, TheCEOm.com, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Peter M. Litchfield, PhD, President, Professional School of Behavioral Health Sciences, United States

Exploring the Future of Breath as Wellness

As the world seeks antidotes to stress, digital overwhelm, and disconnection, the power of mindful breathing is gaining mainstream momentum. The Breathe Initiative is identifying key 2025 Trends that highlight how BREATH is being integrated into daily life to help influence the nervous system and improve sleep, performance, and emotional and mental health, among other essential aspects of wellbeing, including stress resilience, focus and memory, recovery, and overall vitality. These trends reflect a growing awareness of breath as a science-backed, accessible wellness solution for modern life.

TREND 1: Nasal Breathing and Mouth Tape for Sleep

In recent years, mouth tape for sleep has gained significant traction, particularly among younger generations, largely driven by viral TikTok videos. This practice involves taping the mouth shut during sleep to encourage nasal breathing, which has been linked to numerous health benefits. As the trend continues to gain momentum, it's becoming a go-to-sleep hack for those seeking better sleep quality, improved cognitive function, and enhanced overall wellbeing.



[> Explore the Breathe Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Mouth breathing at night can lead to restless sleep, snoring, and even sleep apnea. It triggers stress—keeping your body in fight-or-flight mode—collapses airways, and increases the risk of snoring and sleep apnea. It also reduces oxygen levels, leaving you groggy and fatigued the next day. On the other hand, nasal breathing offers numerous benefits: it delivers 20% more oxygen to the brain, produces nitric oxide to open airways, supports better breathing, and helps reduce snoring for deeper, uninterrupted sleep. Switching to nasal breathing can significantly improve sleep quality and overall wellbeing.

The growing popularity of mouth taping reflects an increasing awareness of the importance of healthy sleep hygiene. As more people turn to this trend for improved sleep, they're discovering that it's not just a sleep solution—it's a path to enhanced mental clarity, emotional wellbeing, and overall vitality.

Resources

- McKeown, Patrick. "Nose Breathing vs. Mouth Breathing: The Science" (Dublin, Ireland) <https://oxygenadvantage.com/science/nose-breathing-vs-mouth-breathing/>

TREND 2: Breath as an Antidote to Stress from Digital Overwhelm

In a world increasingly defined by digital connectivity, breathwork is emerging as a simple yet powerful antidote to the effects of constant screen time. With digital overwhelm on the rise, fueled by constant notifications, social media, and the pressure to stay plugged in, we're turning to analog wellness practices to unplug and regain a sense of balance. Breathwork, as part of this broader trend, offers a fast and accessible way to reconnect with oneself and counter the stress of our hyper-connected world.

Digital overwhelm often leads to heightened stress, anxiety, and burnout, with technology triggering the body's sympathetic nervous system, which governs the fight-or-flight response. This creates a cycle of hyperarousal, leading to mental fatigue, emotional instability, and difficulty focusing. Breathwork disrupts this cycle by activating the parasympathetic nervous system, which promotes relaxation, emotional regulation, and mental clarity. Breathing techniques, such as deep diaphragmatic breathing and box breathing, provide an easy and immediate tool to regain composure and calm amidst the chaos of constant connectivity.

Just a few minutes of relaxing, slow breathing can help reduce stress and improve overall wellbeing.

Resources

- Bentley, Tanya GK. "Breathing Practices for Stress and Anxiety Reduction: Conceptual Framework of Implementation Guidelines Based on a Systematic Review of the Published Literature." Nov. 21, 2023 <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10741869/>

TREND 3: The Rise of Digital Breathwork Platforms

As wellness continues to blend with technology, breathwork has become an accessible practice for millions, thanks to the rise of digital platforms. With wellness apps gaining popularity, breathwork is no longer limited to in-person sessions; instead, it is now available at your fingertips. These digital services provide users with a range of tools to integrate mindful breathing into their daily routines.

Guided sessions are a core offering, featuring apps that provide structured audio or video instructions to guide users through various techniques, ranging from basic breath awareness to more advanced practices designed to reduce stress, improve focus, and enhance relaxation.

AI-driven feedback is a game-changer in the digital breathwork space. Some platforms now integrate artificial intelligence that monitors users' breathing patterns in real time, offering personalized adjustments to help optimize the practice. This technology enables a more personalized experience, tracking progress

over time and ensuring users refine their techniques effectively. Community challenges are also gaining traction, with many digital platforms hosting group challenges or events. These foster a sense of social support, accountability, and consistency, helping users stay committed to their wellness journey.

These platforms are bridging geographical barriers and making breathwork available to anyone with a smartphone. By democratizing wellness practices, digital breathwork platforms are ushering in a new era of accessible, personalized health and wellbeing.

TREND 4: Breathwork for Emotional Intelligence, Mental Health, and Nervous System Regulation

Breathwork is rapidly gaining recognition as a powerful tool for enhancing emotional intelligence (EQ), supporting mental health, and directly regulating the nervous system. As individuals seek ways to manage stress and emotional challenges, breath practices are emerging as a holistic solution for improving self-awareness, emotional resilience, and mental wellbeing.

At the core of breathwork's effectiveness is its ability to influence the nervous system. By engaging in controlled breathing, individuals can shift from a state of hyperarousal—characterized by anxiety, tension, and restlessness—into a state of calm and equilibrium, effectively restoring balance within moments. This ability to regulate the nervous system goes beyond relaxation; it helps reestablish a sense of safety within the body, promoting resilience in the face of daily stressors.

Breathwork has been shown to be especially beneficial for managing mental health conditions like anxiety and depression. Techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing and 4-7-8 breathing are effective for reducing anxiety and calming the nervous system. In cases of depression, breathwork can stimulate the vagus nerve, supporting the balance of mood-regulating neurotransmitters, while also fostering emotional release and integration. For individuals with ADHD, breathwork practices such as box breathing can enhance focus, improve self-regulation, and increase mindfulness, thereby helping to manage impulsivity and stay present in tasks. In addition to its growing list of benefits, breathwork is now the focus of a brand-new study (March 2025) exploring how slow breathing may help alleviate menopause symptoms, marking a significant step forward in the science of breath as a therapeutic tool for this demographic as well.

Resources

- Brown, Richard P. "Breathing practices for treatment of psychiatric and stress-related medical conditions" 2013 <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23538082/>
- Dolgilevica, Karina. "Heart Rate Variability Biofeedback Training Can Improve Menopausal Symptoms and Psychological Well-Being in Women with a Diagnosis of Primary Breast Cancer: A Longitudinal Randomized Controlled Trial" March 4, 2025 <https://www.mdpi.com/1718-7729/32/3/150>

TREND 5: Breathwork for Performance Optimization

Breathwork is rapidly gaining recognition in both athletic and professional performance fields due to its ability to enhance physical endurance and improve mental clarity under pressure. As more athletes, executives, and high performers integrate breathwork into their routines, its benefits are becoming increasingly evident across various disciplines.

One of the key benefits of breathwork is its ability to enhance VO2 max, a measure of the body's capacity to absorb and utilize oxygen. Techniques such as diaphragmatic breathing and specific patterns of controlled inhalation and exhalation can enhance aerobic capacity, resulting in improved stamina and endurance for athletes. These methods help optimize oxygen delivery to muscles, boosting energy and performance.

Breathwork also plays a crucial role in recovery optimization. After intense physical exertion, breath-focused practices help to clear metabolic waste products from the body, reduce muscle tension, and accelerate recovery times. By incorporating breathwork into post-workout routines, athletes can reduce the risk of injury and sustain peak performance over time.

For high-performing individuals, maintaining focus and composure in high-pressure situations is crucial. Techniques such as Buteyko breathing, which enhances CO₂ tolerance, and pranayama, a yogic breathwork practice, are widely used to help individuals remain calm and clear-headed during high-stress moments. These practices foster a sense of control, facilitating emotional regulation and mental clarity.

Ultimately, the cognitive benefits of breathwork encompass improved decision making, heightened focus, and optimized brain function. By regulating oxygen flow to the brain, breathwork can sharpen cognitive performance, making it an indispensable tool for those seeking to excel both physically and mentally.

As the connection between breathwork and performance optimization continues to gain recognition, it's clear that controlled breathing is a powerful, science-backed method for enhancing both physical capabilities and mental resilience.

Resources

- Migliaccio, Gian Mario. "Sports Performance and Breathing Rate: What Is the Connection? A Narrative Review on Breathing Strategies" May 10, 2023 <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC10224217/#:~:text=Numerous%20studies%20have%20demonstrated%20that,rate%2C%20and%20elevate%20blood%20pressure>.

TREND 6: Breathing Science - The Emergence of a New Discipline

Interest in the subject of breathing has grown immensely, worldwide. This interest encompasses a diverse range of professions, such as healthcare and personal practices, including self-exploration. Nevertheless, to date, there has been no formal field defined by its players that represents this enormous interest and its practical applications. Science, specifically the disciplines of physiology and psychology, has been rapidly entering this loosely defined field of study and its applications, which might now be best described as "applied breathing science." A psychophysiological perspective of breathing is beginning to emerge. The importance of understanding the basics of respiratory physiology, which is often overlooked and misunderstood by both laypeople and practitioners, is gaining traction among practitioners worldwide, particularly in the context of the role of carbon dioxide in health and performance. Understanding breathing mechanics as a behavior, that is, as physiology driven by psychological principles, such as motivation, takes us to surprising, exciting, and even shocking places of exploration, including the profound role of our breathing habits in everyday life. There is now an emerging consciousness that is bringing together this diverse group of practitioners, personal and professional, into an exciting, more productive, and communicative space. This newly defined science helps all of us, practitioners and laypeople alike, distinguish between science and pseudoscience while preserving the integrity of good intentions, encouraging a creative process, and embracing intuitive experience. There are surely exciting surprises that lie ahead, ones that promise to go well beyond both the theory and practice of historical and traditional thinking about breathing and its role in our lives.

Resources

- Yildiz, Selda. "Immediate impact of yogic breathing on pulsatile cerebrospinal fluid dynamics" June 28, 2022 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-022-15034-8>
- Yadav, Goldie. "Deep Breathing Practice Facilitates Retention of Newly Learned Motor Skills." Nov. 14, 2016 <https://www.nature.com/articles/srep37069>
- McKeown, Patrick. "Aerobic Capacity; How to Increase, Exercises, Benefits." <https://oxygenadvantage.com/science/aerobic-capacity-how-to-increase/>

Consulting Best Practices Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Lisa Starr, Consultant for Wynne Business, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Wilfried Dreckmann, Founding Director of Spa Project, Germany

The wellness industry continues to evolve rapidly, driving significant trends that shape business strategies and consumer expectations. The following trends identified by the Consulting Initiative highlight key considerations for wellness industry stakeholders aiming to remain competitive and innovative.

Trend 1: Pressure to be First Requires Expertise

The wellness industry is getting so much attention, especially with a renewed focus on hydrothermal and bathhouse components and a growing desire to explore longevity and recovery experiences. However, many of these concepts have not been tested over time, and thus, the ROI is not easily forecasted. Sometimes, there is a reason no one else has opened the type of business that is envisioned in a particular location!



> Explore the Consulting Best Practices Initiative on the GWI Website

With an industry rapidly growing, as wellness becomes more transversal, there is pressure to be the first to “slap” wellness onto each concept or company. While modern technologies and approaches show great promise, as consultants, we sometimes see the need to balance moderation and risk management against the entrepreneurial spirit. This becomes especially apparent in the spa design phase. The number of treatment rooms, treadmills, pool seating, lounge seating, and sizes of all thermal areas are predicated upon careful calculations about the market. It’s not as simple as X treatment rooms per X guest rooms!

Trend 2: The Rise of Recovery-Focused Wellness

The topic of wellness in spas is becoming increasingly diverse and multidimensional. In addition to physical relaxation and mental wellness, spiritual and social aspects also make their way onto customers’ wish lists. The concept of recovery is set to become a major focus in the spa industry over the next few years. Traditionally associated with elite athletes, recovery is now recognized as essential for everyone, whether the goal is easing muscle fatigue, managing work-related stress, or simply resetting the body and mind. Spas that currently specialize in relaxation and pampering can seamlessly integrate recovery-based treatments, offering guests more purposeful and results-driven experiences while positively impacting labor costs. However, many spa operators feel overwhelmed by this shift, as they have never considered these dimensions before and often lack the right concept and personnel to meet these new demands. Successfully making this shift in the business model requires forethought and planning on managing design, operational, and human resource impacts.

Trend 3: One Size Doesn’t Fit All

Spas and wellness establishments are fun to visit, and many prospective owners have visited a facility, fallen in love with it, and chosen to open one “just like X.” However, even with the proliferation of spas and the current high demand, opening something “just like X” dilutes the market for everyone and makes the experience more commoditized. If you invest the necessary dollars in a new business, create something that is simply different, or unique enough to stand out from the rest, and doesn’t risk losing market share to faceless competition.

The future of spas lies in redefining their identity. The structure of hotels and day spas has remained largely unchanged while consumer expectations have evolved dramatically. The next wave of spa innovation will embrace uniqueness—tailoring environments, services, and experiences to the specific needs of their local market. In order to create more personalized and meaningful wellness experiences, no two spas should look or feel the same.

However, we are seeing consultants hired as “fixers” to help with components provided by the previous “spa consultant.” Often, these are not even real spa consultants, or professional spa operations experts, but simply “expert spa guests” that talk ownership into letting them consult about what their establishment needs! As we continue to enter uncharted territory with rapidly evolving technology, there is a greater need to draw the right expertise to avoid costly mistakes further down the road.

Trend 4: Wellness Accessibility on Multiple Levels

We are talking about the literal meaning of accessibility and inclusivity. From a physical standpoint, advances in equipment and technology translate in an increasing number of clients with limited mobility desiring to access our wellness facilities, and a growing demand to make these services more accessible to them. Additionally, an appropriate marketing plan is key to ensuring that potential clients understand they are able/encouraged to visit your spa.

This is particularly important in hotel and resort spas, where local residents are often more than welcome however not always aware of it. On the other hand, sometimes locals may desire to access the spa, but are not “allowed.” This means the business depends entirely on the travel market cycles and other external forces. If a property does not welcome non-guests, or non-members, it may hamper the ability of the business to sustain growth for the long term.

Accessibility also applies to pricing. If we want to continue growing our industry, we have to ensure that offerings are available not just to wealthy individuals but also to those with lower incomes or “spa newbies,” who are not yet sure whether a spa visit or treatment is the right fit for them. Dynamic pricing, a key aspect of revenue management, is a hot topic.

One of the biggest challenges facing the spa industry is ensuring long-term sustainability. The old belief that simply opening a spa guarantees success is no longer viable. Today, spas must develop business models that attract clients and support long-term growth. This means a strategic approach to pricing, service offerings, and customer engagement to create a thriving, future-proof business.

Trend 5: AI Doesn't Solve Everything

Even though AI makes it simple to create protocols, business plans, and job descriptions oriented to the spa and wellness industry, these still tend to be very surface-oriented, neglecting to address some of the major challenges that may arise in our labor pool, or are specific to our industry.

There is nothing like the expertise of a live human when you need to get something right the first time. And, of course, AI tells you what has been done, not what is possible, and does not produce the oft-required creative solutions to the challenges of opening and operating a people-intensive business.

AI is a supportive tool, not a replacement for intuition and understanding. It may be able to prescribe, consult, book, and recommend, but it is no substitute for a skilled therapist's wisdom, experience, and personal connection. The more the world becomes robotic, and the more limited human contact is, the more in demand the human touch will become, and human expertise will remain at the heart of the client experience.

Cryotherapy Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Rainer Bolsinger, CSO & CMO, Art of Cryo, Germany

Initiative Vice-Chair: Antra Getzoff, Wellness Business Coach & Consultant, Founder of GetResultsCo, formerly known as CryoProsUnited, United States

Cryotherapy continues to evolve across all market segments, gaining popularity and embracing more sophisticated concepts. As the market matures—evident in the personalization of treatments, advanced treatment combinations and protocols, a continued shift toward electricity-driven systems, and more targeted offerings—many new suppliers are entering the scene. This enriches the market but also partially creates new challenges due to potentially overpromising offers. Please enjoy the coolest trends for 2025.

TREND 1: Personalized Cryotherapy Treatments Gain Importance

Focusing on individual health risks optimizes results, leading to effective prevention, longevity, and performance enhancement through targeted treatments.

Individualization of whole-body cryotherapy treatment should be based on personal factors such as gender, BMI, age and skin type. These should determine the appropriate treatment environment, goals, and thermal adaptation over time.



[> Explore the Cryotherapy Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Different providers offer various personalization options, including temperature adjustments versus consistent temperature, and windchill adjustments versus controlled regular air circulation during the treatment. Let's take a closer look:

- Adjusting the treatment temperature is particularly effective with gas-driven systems. This is done by regulating the volume of nitrogen used per treatment. The greater the evaporation rate of nitrogen, the colder it becomes. However, temperature adjustments in electrically driven cryochambers are harder to achieve from session to session within a reasonable timeframe.
- Perceived temperature refers to the effect of wind chill adjustment on how temperature is experienced, without altering the actual temperature. Perceived temperatures may make people feel colder but do not affect treatment effectiveness, and wind chill does not influence radiation. Certain areas experience greater—sometimes excessive—cooling, while others remain unaffected by the chill.
- Stable temperatures with uniform distribution are achievable only in high-performance cryotherapy chambers. Systems are already prepared for clients at the treatment temperature—you enter an ultra-cold environment with cold air, walls, ceiling, and floor. Temperatures remain stable during the treatment, significantly affecting the treatment's effectiveness and encouraging thermal radiation from the body's surface.
- Controlled, stable air circulation supports convection by evenly removing heat from the body surface. The controlled airflow surrounds the entire body and enhances treatment effectiveness while maintaining client comfort.

Adjusting temperatures and wind chill is not recommended. These factors may lead to earlier session cancellation due to discomfort without achieving the necessary temperature levels for effective treatment and should not be viewed as parameters for individualization.

Personalization should focus on session length, frequency, and integration with other therapies rather than modifying core cryotherapy parameters like temperature and equal temperature distribution.

TREND 2: Cryotherapy Combines with Other Wellness, Regeneration, and Longevity Modalities

Holistic Health Packages

Cryotherapy is increasingly being incorporated into broader wellness programs, combining it with other therapies such as HBOT, IHHT, light therapy, IV, NAD+, ozone therapy, halo therapy, NAI's, aromatherapy, and meditation to boost physical and mental activation. Dry contrast therapy, which combines low-sweat heat treatments followed by whole body cryotherapy, is booming.

Physical Therapy

Combining cryotherapy with physical therapy can accelerate rehabilitation from injuries by reducing pain and inflammation, which allows for more effective exercise sessions. It is very popular in sports and fitness

Mindfulness Practices

Incorporating cryotherapy into a daily routine can enhance mental clarity and alleviate stress. In some chambers, for example, light-guided breathwork exercises are integrated.

Longevity

As a trending term, it promotes whole-body cryotherapy as a lifestyle treatment and natural doping. It draws significant attention by uniting what was previously referred to as health prevention and performance enhancement.

Providers should carefully select the technologies to combine with cryotherapy. Real Whole Body Cryotherapy (WBC) must be paired with dry heat experiences, as the skin must be dry before entering a cryo chamber. For further information, refer to the [Providers Guide to Whole Body Cryotherapy](#).

TREND 3: Cryotherapy as a Recognized Treatment in the Wellness, Spa, Fitness, and Beauty Industries

Cryotherapy plays an important role in wellness, making waves in spas, fitness centers, and beauty clinics. As the industry evolves, WBC is being seamlessly integrated into broader wellness experiences, offering benefits beyond muscle recovery.

Cryotherapy in Spas: Luxury Meets Science

High-end spas offer cryotherapy as a luxury enhancement, blending relaxation with rejuvenation.

- Cold and hot therapy combinations: Many luxury spas now provide contrast therapy, pairing cryotherapy with infrared saunas, steam rooms, or hot baths to enhance circulation and detoxification. Real WBC should be combined exclusively with dry heat experiences.
- Cryo for anti-aging: Cryotherapy treatments may help people feel and look healthier and younger.
- Whole-body cryotherapy memberships: spa chains provide cryotherapy in their wellness memberships, promoting frequent visits.

Cryotherapy in Fitness: The Recovery Revolution

Cryotherapy has emerged as an essential recovery tool in elite gyms and boutique fitness studios, appealing to both athletes and casual fitness enthusiasts. It is a valuable tool that provides post-workout muscle recovery, pre-workout performance boost, natural doping, motivation and sleep optimization.

Cryotherapy in Beauty

The beauty industry is embracing cryotherapy as a non-invasive alternative to conventional anti-aging and body-sculpting procedures, particularly effective for body slimming and toning, acne and skin health, and inside-out beauty.

Cryotherapy in Rehabilitation and Medical Wellness

Cryotherapy has been integrated into rehabilitation and medical wellness programs for years, assisting with pain management and recovery from injuries.

- Physical therapy clinics: Patients suffering from chronic pain, arthritis, or post-surgery inflammation utilize cryotherapy.
- Biohacking and longevity centers: Leading wellness centers now integrate cryotherapy, hyperbaric oxygen therapy (HBOT), IV drips, and peptide therapy to enhance longevity and cellular health.
- Corporate wellness programs: An increasing number of companies are investing in employee recovery initiatives that incorporate cryotherapy and lifestyle coaching, enhancing workplace productivity and alleviating stress.

Cryotherapy: A Lifestyle Essential

What was once a niche therapy for elite athletes has now become a tool for longevity. As cryotherapy spreads to spas, gyms, beauty clinics, and rehabilitation centers, it has become an essential aspect of holistic health and self-care strategies.

Future Vision

In the coming decades, we can expect cryotherapy to become as common as saunas or massage therapy, available in every premier wellness facility worldwide.

Trend 4: The Technology Shift Continues

The transition from nitrogen-based cryotherapy systems to electric cryotherapy chambers remains a dominant trend in 2025. This shift is driven by safety concerns, environmental factors, operational costs, and ease of use, but it also introduces challenges regarding equipment quality and treatment effectiveness.

From Nitrogen to Electric

There are several reasons for the rising popularity of electric cryotherapy. Among them:

- Safer operation: Electric cryotherapy removes direct exposure to liquid nitrogen, minimizing the risks of burns and asphyxiation.
- Simplified business operations: It eliminates the need for nitrogen storage or frequent refills, making it more convenient for operators.
- Whole-body exposure: Unlike nitrogen-based systems that mainly exclude the head and shoulders, electric chambers expose the entire body.
- In most cases, the operational costs of electric systems are lower.

The New Challenge: Affordable Solutions Compromise Performance

As demand for electric cryotherapy grows, overly promising budget-friendly alternatives are emerging. However, these lower-cost options often fail to meet expectations due to inaccurate temperature claims, often concealed by phrases like “perceived temperature,” or general low quality and maintenance problems. When selecting a cryotherapy device, check whether the claims are realistic.

We already see that the future will return to its roots with multi-room cryochambers, providing ample space to move, stretch, and share the cryo experience with others. Most importantly, these chambers will maintain stable temperatures below -100°C/-148°F.

Trend 5: Market Maturation - Applying the 5P Approach to Cryotherapy

The 5P model shapes the future of the industry, ensuring that cryotherapy becomes a fundamental aspect of preventive health and performance optimization rather than merely an occasional luxury.

1. Predictive

Gone are the days of guessing whether cryotherapy works. After more than four decades of history, substantial experience has been accumulated. Thanks to advancements in technology and data, individual cryotherapy outcomes can be predicted more effectively.

- Stable temperatures and verified cooling: Ensuring consistency in treatments leads to measurable and repeatable results.
- Personal characteristics and AI analysis: Cryotherapy centers are beginning to integrate diagnostics, wearables, and questionnaires for evaluation, along with AI-driven analytics, resulting in data-driven treatment plans.

2. Preventive

The future belongs to wellness enthusiasts who focus on prevention—those who proactively invest in long-term vitality, energy, and resilience rather than waiting for problems to arise.

Cryotherapy is evolving beyond a simple cold treatment: it is becoming an integrated, intelligent, results-driven wellness experience and a long-term health investment. By 2025, more individuals will use cryotherapy to maintain wellness, enhance resilience, and prevent injuries or illnesses. Here are some examples:

- Immunity boosting and inflammation control: Regular cryotherapy sessions are associated with reduced systemic inflammation, helping prevent chronic diseases, joint problems, and autoimmune conditions.
- Stress and longevity optimization: Cold exposure triggers hormetic stress, leading to a positive adaptive response that enhances the body's capability to manage mental and physical challenges.
- Workplace wellness and employee health: Forward-thinking companies are incorporating cryotherapy memberships into their corporate wellness programs to prevent burnout and enhance productivity.

3. Participative

Cryotherapy is an experience in which clients actively participate in their treatment plans rather than passively following generic protocols.

- Cryo coaches and personalized guidance: Trained specialists assist users in optimizing their cryo journey by advising on session timing, frequency, and lifestyle integration.
- Community & membership models: More cryo centers are introducing loyalty programs, social challenges, and group recovery experiences to cultivate an engaging wellness culture.
- Feedback-driven treatments: Clients will influence their experiences, contributing to the evolution of treatment based on real-world needs.
- Social wellness through shared cryo sessions: It offers a unique way to experience the “cool kick” together while sharing our experiences.

A cryotherapy center is not just a place for quick cold exposure—it can serve as a wellness hub where a community of individuals dedicated to thriving at their peak potential comes together.

4. Personalized

Universal treatments are outdated. By 2025, cryotherapy will be entirely personalized to align with an individual's body, mental state, goals, and wellness journey.

- Custom session durations and frequencies: Based on individual data and goals, some users may require shorter, more frequent sessions, while others may benefit from longer, spaced-out treatments.
- Integration with other wellness practices: Cryotherapy will be combined with biohacking techniques, functional medicine, and holistic recovery strategies to create a truly tailored experience.
- Differentiation between women's and men's health: Specialized protocols will address hormonal balance, sexual joy and performance, muscle recovery, and metabolic optimization unique to each gender.

5. Positive

The most effective wellness treatments are those that people enjoy, not merely those they feel obligated to pursue. In 2025, cryotherapy providers focus on delivering an inviting, exciting, and rewarding experience for each client.

- Comfortable and attractive cryo spaces: Modern cryotherapy providers offer luxurious environments that combine high-tech cryotherapy chambers with relaxing lighting, music, and ambiance.
- Gamification and challenges: Fitness and longevity communities will introduce "Cold Therapy Challenges," motivating clients to monitor their progress and compete in cryo-based achievements.
- Multi-sensory cryo experiences: Future cryo chambers will integrate guided meditation, breathwork coaching, and pre-session infrared recovery, transforming cryo into a ritual of transformation rather than merely a cold shock.

Cryotherapy isn't just about enduring the cold; it's about embracing a powerful, revitalizing experience that leaves you feeling stronger and healthier while uplifting your joy!

2025 will be the year when cryotherapy becomes a lifestyle.

Dying Well Initiative Trends

Initiative Chair: Amy McDonald, Owner Principal, Under a Tree Health and Wellness Consulting, United States
Initiative Vice-Chair: Christine Caldwell, Founder/Executive Director, End of Life Psychedelic Care, United States

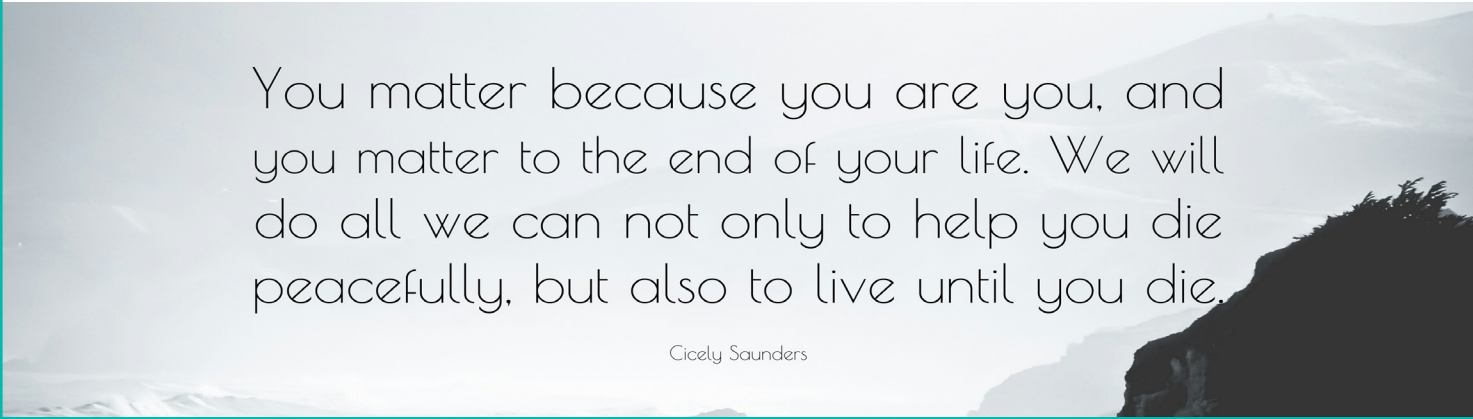
A global shift is reshaping end-of-life care, with five emerging trends leading the way. Medical Aid in Dying (MAID) is expanding rapidly, with pending legislation across the US and increasing public support in the UK and Latin America. End of life doulas are on the rise worldwide, providing non-medical support rooted in tradition and community. Psychedelic-assisted therapies are gaining traction for their potential to ease emotional and existential distress near death. Grief group rituals and retreats are re-emerging, blending cultural wisdom with modern mental health awareness to create communal healing spaces. Finally, in-community deathcare programs are flourishing—offering local, grassroots solutions to support the dying and their loved ones. Together, these trends reflect a growing desire to reclaim death as a meaningful, supported, and shared human experience.

TREND 1: Medical Aid in Dying (MAID)

The operational definition of MAID is when an individual deemed competent, assisted and authorized by a physician, takes a lethal dose of medication to end their life. Other terms used interchangeably include Voluntary-Assisted Dying (VAD), death with dignity, and physician-assisted suicide.

Several countries around the world have legalized some form of MAID, with not all requiring a prognosis of imminent death. In the United States, Oregon was the first state to legalize MAID in 1994, and since then, nine more states plus Washington, DC, have followed suit. However, in 2024, there are 19 states with pending legislation, a clear signal that people are demanding to reclaim control over their lives and deaths. To underscore this, Compassion and Choices, one of the leading advocates for MAID in the US, projects that by 2028, 50% of Americans will reside in states with MAID laws, up from approximately 21% as reported by the American Geriatric Society.

Although many European countries have legalized various forms of MAID, as of early 2024, Britain had not, but the times appear to be changing. An article published in March 2024 reports a surge in UK citizens joining Dignitas, the Swiss assisted dying association. Furthermore, recent polls indicate that 70% of UK citizens support MAID, and Scotland has pending legislation this year to legalize it.



You matter because you are you, and
you matter to the end of your life. We will
do all we can not only to help you die
peacefully, but also to live until you die.

Cicely Saunders

[> Explore the Dying Well Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Latin America, too, has only recently begun to look at MAID reform. In 2022, Colombia was the first country to decriminalize MAID with Ecuador becoming the second in February 2024.

Resources

- US States with pending legislation: <https://www.axios.com/2024/02/09/medically-assisted-death-states>.
- Compassion and Choice: <https://www.compassionandchoices.org/about-us/cc-strategic-plan>
- Aggregating 23 years of data on medical aid in dying in the United States, The American Geriatric Society, October 2022: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9588508/>
- Dignitas membership accelerates in the UK: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2024/mar/28/dignitas-uk-membership-assisted-dying-scottish-parliament-bill#:~:text=Helping%20someone%20take%20their%20own,and%20the%20isle%20of%20Man>.
- Ecuador, the 2nd country to decriminalize euthanasia, February 9, 2024: <https://www.bmj.com/content/384/bmj.q357#:~:text=Ecuador's%20constitutional%20court%20has%20become,euthanasia%20on%20Wednesday%207%20February>

TREND 2: The Continued Rise of End-of-Life Doulas

An end-of-life doula, sometimes called a death doula, death midwife, or deathcare worker, provides non-medical companionship and comfort to those facing a terminal illness or death. They offer resources and support to assist the dying person, as well as their family members and loved ones.

The term doula was first applied to deathcare in the late 1990s, but it was the COVID pandemic that spurred the demand for end-of-life (EoL) doulas. Moreover, the EoL doula rate continues to rise and expand globally in the post-pandemic era. National Geographic highlighted this phenomenon in a February 23, 2024, article titled “The Demand for End-of-Life Doulas is Soaring,” stating, “In 2019, the National End of Life Doula Alliance (NEDA) had 260 members in the U.S.; membership grew to 1,545 doulas as of January 2024.” Worldwide, as of February 2025, the International End of Life Doula Association (INELDA) has trained 8,000 end-of-life doulas since its founding ten years ago.

In a sign that death doulas are gaining popularity in the UK, the National Health Service (NHS) commissioned a pilot program in 2022. The report, published in July 2023, presented evidence that the services provided by a doula enhance not only an individual’s wellbeing, but also that of their family, while alleviating the burden on the NHS.

The largest increase in the number of EoL doulas has occurred in Latin America, where death midwifery has thrived in flourishing traditional communities. These doulas embody a new and valued role that honors this traditional practice. Two pioneers in the field are Wilka Roig, a transpersonal psychologist and death doula from San Miguel de Allende, Mexico, and Sophia Plonski, an end-of-life doula and grief coach based in Quito, Ecuador. Together, they founded the Red Latinoamericana de Acompañamiento in 2023, spearheading the death consciousness movement in Latin America. In April 2025, they will host their third annual conference.

Resources

- The Explosive Growth of End of Life Doulas in Latin America: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pL9r97QWe0Q>
- The Demand for End of Life Doulas is Soaring: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/premium/article/death-doula-dignity-end-life-rituals>
- End of Life Doula UK Evaluation, March 2023: https://oro.open.ac.uk/91880/1/EoLDUK%20Leeds%20KTV%20report_oro.pdf
- Red Latinoamericana de Acompañamiento, <https://redlamuerte.org/>
- International End of Life Doula Association, <https://inelda.org/a-decade-of-doula-impact-transforming-end-of-life-care/>.

TREND 3: Psychedelic Care at End of Life

Planned or current psychedelic-assisted therapy research in patients with life-threatening or terminal illnesses has exploded over the last 12 months. The first round of research published in 2016 by Johns Hopkins and New York University demonstrated similar results: significantly reducing anxiety and depression in 60-80% of participants while improving quality of life. In 2023, Sunstone Therapies, a research facility located

in Rockville, MD, surveyed participants who had received a single dose of psilocybin with associated psychotherapy. After 18 months, 64% of participants still reported a significant reduction in depression, with 57% in remission. According to clinicaltrials.gov, there are at least 12 studies being planned to investigate psilocybin's effects on easing depression, anxiety, and other disorders often associated with those facing a life-threatening illness. This does not include additional studies that are not yet listed. Furthermore, an additional half dozen or more studies are planned or underway to investigate LSD, MDMA, and ketamine in this same population.

The real-world application of ketamine in palliative or hospice care settings has gained significant interest and traction as the only legally available psychedelic in North America and the UK. Its efficacy in alleviating chronic pain, which is closely tied to depression, is a major factor contributing to its increased use among palliative care patients. Additionally, Michael Fratkin, MD, a palliative care physician, co-founded a Google group called Palliative Care Psychedelic Therapy in 2023, which now boasts over 900 subscribers as of March 2025, showing no signs of slowing down.

Resources

- Sunstone Therapies Psilocybin Study in Cancer Patients, May 26, 2023: https://old-prod.asco.org/sites/new-www.asco.org/files/content-files/Sunstone_Therapies_virtual_press.pdf
- Ketamine Reduces Depression and Suicidality in Cancer Patients, July 21, 2023: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10567968/>
- Sunstone Therapies, MDMA Couples' Study in Cancer Patients, October 3, 2023: <https://www.biospace.com/article/releases/sunstone-therapies-announces-expansion-of-innovative-dyad-study-/>
- MindBio LSD microdosing study in patients with cancer, January 30, 2024: <https://www.biospace.com/article/releases/mindbio-therapeutics-nears-completion-of-landmark-phase-2a-lsd-microdosing-mb22001-clinical-trial-in-depressed-patients/>
- Palliative Care Psychedelic Therapy Google Group: <https://groups.google.com/g/PalCarePsychedelicTherapy>

TREND 4: The Rise of Grief Group Rituals and Retreats

Grief is a universal feeling that affects people after the loss of a loved one, a relationship, a pet, a job, or due to trauma, among other experiences. It is a deeply personal experience that often feels isolating, as the person grieving may not feel comfortable discussing it, nor do those around them. Grief rituals and community support have been prevalent in civilizations for thousands of years and continue to exist in certain cultures. However, for the most part, they have been replaced by the expediency that societal norms demand.

The report on the overall growth of the grief counseling market reinforces why this trend is emerging. It is projected to increase from \$2.73 billion in 2022 to \$4.52 billion by 2029 globally. The report states that the main factor is the “increasing acceptability of mental health issues in general and grief-related mental health issues in particular.”

Group grief rituals are now being offered within communities, many of which leverage indigenous practices from North and Latin America, Celtic traditions, and African lineages. Cascadia Health is one example. Based on the well-known and respected teachings of Sobonfu Somé, an African grief healer, they bring together people for two days over a weekend of grieving and healing in community.

The Dinner Party, a grief community for 21 to 45-year-olds, exemplifies how grief can be managed collectively. Launched in 2014, its membership surged by several thousand and this trend continues. Other grief programs target the BIPOC community, providing support tailored to a specific group with unique needs.

Grief retreats and even cruises have gained popularity over the past couple of years. A quick search on Retreat Guru reveals more than 3,000 retreats scheduled for 2024, and *Condé Nast* has listed grief retreats as one of the top seven wellness travel trends for that year. In the UK, *The Evening Standard* connects the

rise of death doulas and bereavement circles to the concept of “grief tourism,” noting that several new retreats have opened in 2024.

Resources

- Grief Counseling Market, January 4, 2024: <https://finance.yahoo.com/news/grief-counseling-market-size-grow-151500502.html>
- Cascadia Health: <https://cascadiaquest.org/grieving-ceremonies>
- The Dinner Party: <https://www.thedinnerparty.org/>
- Retreat Guru, Grief Retreats: <https://retreat.guru/be/grief-retreats>
- Conde Nast, 2024 Wellness Travel Trends: <https://www.cntraveler.com/story/wellness-travel-trends-2024>
- The Evening Standard, Grief Tourism, January 29, 2024: <https://www.standard.co.uk/lifestyle/travel/grief-tourism-healing-retreats-b1135012.html>

TREND 5: The Rise of Community-Based Deathcare

Community-based deathcare initiatives are gaining momentum as more people seek alternatives to institutionalized care—models that emphasize dignity, compassion, and connection for both the dying and their loved ones.

This trend is apparent in various grassroots efforts, many spearheaded by small nonprofits and local leaders who have witnessed firsthand the shortcomings of traditional systems. From creating nurturing homes in serene environments to organizing community death education and providing in-home support services, these programs are fundamentally grounded in the unique needs of their communities. A consistent theme emerges: people wish to die at home, surrounded by care that respects their values and reinforces social connections.

International programs such as Canada’s PEACH (Palliative Education and Care for the Homeless) and the US-based PACE (Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly) demonstrate how community-centered care can address inequities, lower costs, and enhance quality of life. Meanwhile, in regions like New Zealand and Latin America, practitioners are integrating traditional wisdom, volunteer training, and cultural rituals to normalize conversations about death and broaden access to support.

Insights from recent gatherings, such as the “Deathcare in Community” panel sponsored by the Dying Well Initiative of the Global Wellness Institute, reinforce these patterns. Across the US, Mexico, and New Zealand, practitioners are responding to a growing demand for hands-on care, grief support, and safe spaces for conversations about death. Education plays a vital role in reducing fear, empowering volunteers, and inspiring neighbors to support one another. Collaboration is also essential, whether through partnerships with hospices, local artisans crafting coffins, or broader regional networks.

The COVID-19 pandemic accelerated this trend, with more people dying at home and reconsidering how—and where—they wish to spend their final days. The shift indicates a global awakening: death is not merely a medical event, but a communal experience that requires presence, care, and shared responsibility.

In the future, we can anticipate greater integration of community-led models with formal healthcare systems, enhanced training opportunities for non-medical caregivers, and the growth of networks that share tools, rituals, and wisdom across cultures.

Resources

- Center for Conscious Living and Dying, Asheville, NC: <https://www.cclcdcommunity/>
- Farewell Trust, Marlborough Sounds, New Zealand: <https://www.farewelltrust.org.nz/>
- Elizabeth Kubler-Ross Foundation, Central Mexico: <https://ekrmexico.org/en/>
- US Program for All Inclusive Care for the Elderly: <https://www.medicaid.gov/medicaid/long-term-services-supports/program-all-inclusive-care-elderly>
- Canada’s Palliative Education and Care for the Homeless: PEACH
- Dying Well Initiative’s Deathcare in Community: Four Models from Around the World, https://youtu.be/7b_weJN9t-O

Hormonal Wellness Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Jennifer Young, Founder, Jennifer Young & Beauty Despite Cancer, United Kingdom

Initiative Vice-Chair: Mark Kohoot, CEO, Areoscena LLC, United States

The Hormonal Wellness Initiative focuses on women's health. The 2025 trends reflect two parallel themes.

First, we see a growing awareness of the exclusion and disregard for women's hormonal health. It has long been recognized that females are underrepresented in medical trials, usually being left out of roughly two-thirds of the studies. There is little medical research into female hormonal health—the work done to establish menstrual synchronicity being one of the few examples. 2025 promises to pose significant challenges to the long-established androcentrism.

Alongside the efforts to promote greater female inclusion and investigation comes an emphasis on self-help and peer support. FemTech and artificial intelligence advancements reinforce these general trends



[> Explore the Hormonal Wellness Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Trend 1: Calling Out Medical Misogyny

Healthcare research, teachings, and practices have long ignored female health. Women are subjected to painful investigations about reproductive (hormonal) health—with treatment protocols based on male symptoms—and are taught to expect an inevitable decline. Awareness of medical misogyny is growing.

Leading the world in denouncing medical misogyny is the UK government's Women and Equalities Committee report on women's reproductive health conditions, published in December 2024.

Resources

- Merone et al., "[Sex Inequalities in Medical Research: A Systematic Scoping Review of the Literature](#)," Women Health Rep (New Rochelle). 2022 Mar 16;3(1):344.
- Siddiqi et al., "[Study of menstrual cycle synchrony in female medical students sharing a common accommodation](#)," J Family Med Prim Care 2023 Nov 21;12(11):2922-2926.
- Women and Equalities Committee, "Women's reproductive health conditions." <https://committees.parliament.uk/publications/45909/documents/228040/default/>

Trend 2: Peer Support and Health Hubs

Peer support for hormonal wellness has flourished after being overlooked by official healthcare. Health hubs and self-help support groups are gaining popularity.

Trend 3: Social Prescribing

The organization Social Prescribing USA defines this trend as "a model of care delivery that enables health professionals to formally prescribe non-clinical community activities," encouraging the growth of health hubs and peer support. The move towards social prescribing also reinforces the relationship between mainstream healthcare and wellness practitioners.

Resources

- <https://www.socialprescribingusa.com>

Trend 4: Hormonal AI

Hormonal wellness is complex and unpredictable, and it requires dynamic, individualized care. The algorithms employed by artificial intelligence will be able to identify women who are susceptible to the negative effects of hormonal imbalance, , improving care, lived experience, and outcome.

Trend 5: FemTech Focuses on Non-Invasive Techniques

Hormonal wellness, menstrual disorders, infertility, menopause, weight management, and other women's health issues have become central to FemTech research. Many of the treatments for hormone-related concerns are invasive and painful. In 2025, FemTech will continue the search for non-invasive alternatives to female testing, treatments, and monitoring.

Resources

- <https://www.femtechworld.co.uk/insight/what-does-non-invasive-mean-in-womens-health-eli24/>

Hydrothermal Initiative Micro-Trends

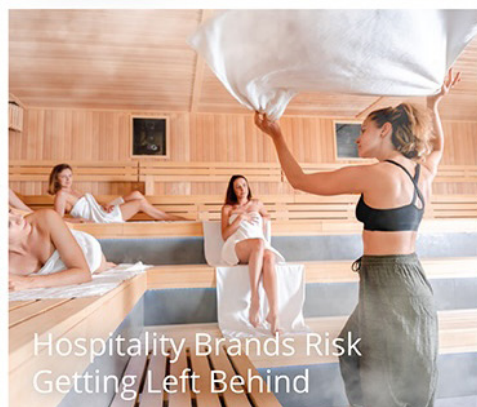
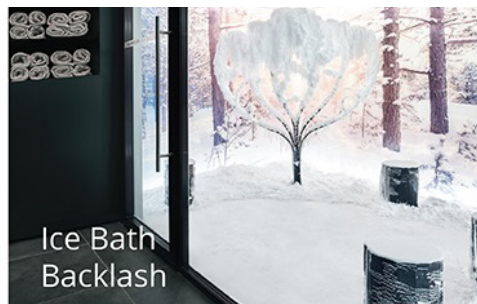
Initiative Chair: Don Genders, Founder & CEO, Design for Leisure, United Kingdom

Initiative Vice-Chair: Cassandra Cavanah, Founder, Cavanah Communications, United States

As global wellness priorities shift, the spa and hydrothermal industry is reimagining everything—from how we use water to how we define relaxation. The five trends shaping 2025 show a sector that's becoming more sustainable, inclusive, socially connected, and emotionally transformative. Water conservation is driving regulatory reform and design innovation, while the ice bath craze is giving way to gentler, more accessible cooling rituals. Communal sauna culture is booming, transforming public spaces into wellness hubs. Meanwhile, hotels risk losing ground to urban bathhouses unless they evolve. And a powerful new frontier—immersive wellness—is redefining the spa experience through awe-inspiring, multisensory design. These trends reveal a common thread: the future of hydrothermal is not just functional or beautiful—it's deeply human, rooted in connection, emotion, and environmental responsibility.

TREND 1: Water Sustainability – Rethinking Spa Water Use

Water scarcity is a growing global crisis, driven by climate change, population growth, and pollution. The spa and wellness industry, deeply rooted in the concept of *salus per aquam* (“health through water”), is increasingly being challenged to take a leadership role in preserving and renewing this essential resource. As droughts and water shortages become more frequent, the industry must evolve—not just through operational efficiency but by advocating for smarter, more sustainable regulations. This urgency is reflected in the Global Wellness Summit’s 2025 Trend: “Watershed Wellness”, signaling a growing industry-wide focus on responsible water use.



[> Explore the Hydrothermal Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

The hydrothermal sector is starting to explore ways to modernize outdated regulations that can unintentionally create excessive water use. A key example is how US regulations classify drench and experience showers as traditional showers, despite their significantly different use cases. Drench showers—which consume up to 40 liters of water per guest—are primarily used for cooling down and rinsing off sweat, generating minimal contamination. If these were reclassified to allow for water treatment and reuse (like pools), the industry could make major strides in conservation. Some hydrothermal industry leaders are already working with shower manufacturers to develop sustainable solutions.

In the meantime, spas and wellness centers can explore alternative cooling methods that minimize water waste, such as snow showers and snow rooms, offering a refreshing cooldown without excessive water use, or cold plunges, encouraging quick, immersive cooling with significantly lower water consumption.

A clear trend is emerging: hydrothermal experts are collaborating with regulators and owner/operators to modernize water use standards. As this movement gains traction, we expect to see new benchmarks set for water-conscious wellness, ensuring that spas and hydrothermal facilities can continue to thrive without depleting this vital resource.

Resources

- Global Wellness Summit “Watershed Wellness” Trend <https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/press/press-releases/global-wellness-summit-releases-10-wellness-trends-for-2025/>

TREND 2: Ice Bath Backlash – A Shift Toward Gentler Cooling

Ice baths and the Wim Hof Method have dominated the wellness conversation, with extreme cold exposure marketed as a powerful tool for recovery and resilience. However, new research suggests that extreme cold exposure isn’t suitable for everyone, and many wellness seekers are now looking for less extreme, more balanced cooling options. As a result, spas and hydrothermal facilities are shifting away from the shock factor of ice baths and returning to gentler, more traditional cooling practices.

Cooling down has always been an integral part of the thermal bathing cycle, but historically, full ice immersion was the exception, not the rule. Now, industry leaders have an opportunity to reshape the conversation, moving beyond endurance-driven trends toward accessible, science-backed cooling experiences that better serve a wider audience.

Some of the softer alternatives that can be considered: misting experiences, providing a gradual cooldown without overwhelming the system; snow rooms and snow showers, offering a refreshing but less intense alternative to ice plunges; cool air-based relaxation spaces, encouraging recovery without extreme temperature shocks; foot baths or Kneipp walks, a traditional method for cooling the body without full immersion stress.

As wellness consumers seek more sustainable, inclusive, and personalized experiences, spas are rethinking how they integrate cold exposure. Rather than glorifying extreme endurance, the next wave of hydrothermal innovation is about finding balance—where cooling enhances, rather than shocks, the body.

Resources

- The Guardian “Cure or killer? The rewards – and very real risks – of the cold water plunge” <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/oct/01/cure-or-killer-the-rewards-and-very-real-risks-of-the-cold-water-plunge>
- American Heart Association “You’re not a polar bear: The plunge into cold water comes with risks” <https://www.heart.org/en/news/2022/12/09/youre-not-a-polar-bear-the-plunge-into-cold-water-comes-with-risks>
- watMSN “Ice baths are popular for exercise recovery and general wellness. But what does the science say?” <https://www.msn.com/en-us/za/news/other/ice-baths-are-popular-for-exercise-recovery-and-general-wellness-but-what-does-the-science-say/ar-AA1Ba2Ff>

TREND 3: Saunas, Saunas Everywhere, All at Once

From floating saunas on lakes and rivers to massive installations in urban hubs like London and New York, communal sauna culture is experiencing a global renaissance. What was once a niche wellness practice is now becoming a mainstay of modern social life, offering an alternative gathering space to pubs and bars.

Several cultural and wellness shifts are fueling the current sauna boom:

- **Science-backed benefits** – Research continues to highlight the profound physical and mental health benefits of sauna bathing, from cardiovascular improvements to stress reduction.
- **Craving connection** – In a post-pandemic world, people are prioritizing social wellness—saunas provide a structured, health-focused way to gather.
- **Cultural shifts** – As alcohol-free social spaces gain popularity, saunas are stepping in as the new “third place,” a communal gathering spot beyond home and work.
- **Architectural innovation** – Creative new sauna concepts, from mobile pods to large-scale bathhouses, are making sauna culture more accessible and exciting than ever.

As demand grows, expect to see more pop-up and mobile saunas in unexpected locations, like parks, beaches, rooftops; larger communal bathhouses that redefine what urban wellness can be; and fusion experiences blending sauna bathing with meditation, sound therapy, Aufguss rituals, etc. for deeper sensory immersion.

The centuries-old tradition of regular sauna bathing isn't just back—it's shaping the future of social wellness.

Resources

- *Vogue* “In America's Cities, Saunas Are Becoming the Hottest Social Spot” <https://www.vogue.com/article/sauna-trend>
- *Telegraph* “I used to think saunas were seedy – now I go instead of the pub” <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/health-fitness/wellbeing/mental-health/sauna-trend-britain/>
- *The Herald* “Forget wild swimming – the latest trend is wild sauna.” <https://www.heraldscotland.com/news/24818477.21-places-experience-wild-sauna-trend-scotland/>

TREND 4: Hospitality Brands Risk Getting Left Behind

For years, leading hospitality brands set themselves apart with spa and wellness offerings. But today, the rise of urban bathhouses as thriving community wellness hubs is changing guest expectations—and hotels that don't keep pace risk being left behind. Previously hotel and resort spas were considered the pinnacle of hydrothermal experiences, but now many hospitality wellness programs feel stale, outdated, and uninspired. Instead of “wowing” guests, they risk disappointing them with experiences that don't reflect today's evolving wellness landscape.

Several forces are driving this seismic shift:

- **Urban hydrothermal facilities are booming** – From New York to London, large-scale bathhouses are redefining communal wellness, offering premium hydrothermal experiences that go beyond the typical hotel spa.
- **Contrast therapy is now mainstream** – Wellness is moving away from occasional, remote spa retreats and toward regular, accessible hot-and-cold contrast therapy, creating daily rituals for guests rather than one-off treatments.
- **Spas are evolving from “pampering palaces” to “social wellness hubs”** – Even within hotels, spas are shifting away from exclusivity and indulgence toward community-driven wellness experiences that feel more engaging, immersive, and integrated.

Some brands are leaning into this trend. Accor, for example, recently issued a white paper titled “Making Waves: Rethinking Spa and Wellness Design for a Modern Era,” signaling a major pivot toward prioritizing hydrothermal bathing, not only for guests but also for the community.

Resources

- *Spa Business* “Accor reimagines future of wellness, spa and fitness design in all-new white paper” <https://www.spabusiness.com/wellness-news/Exclusive-Accor-reimagines-future-of-wellness-spa-and-fitness-design-in-allnew-white-paper/355085>
- *Condé Nast Traveler* “How contrast therapy became 2025’s biggest wellness trend” <https://www.cntraveller.com/article/how-contrast-therapy-became-2025s-biggest-wellness-trend>
- *Vogue* “The Wellness Club is Gen Z’s Country Club” <https://www.vogue.com/article/the-wellness-club-is-gen-zs-country-club>

TREND 5: Immersive Wellness: Creating Gateways to Awe and Deep Connection

In hydrothermal design, a new frontier is emerging: immersive wellness. More than relaxation, it leverages multisensory environments to induce deep physiological restoration and emotional connection. By engaging the senses of sight, sound, scent, and temperature, these spaces shift the nervous system into the parasympathetic state—rest, digest, recover—while also triggering awe, a state shown to enhance wellbeing and deepen one’s connection to the world.

Traditional saunas, steam rooms, and hydrotherapy circuits have long been valued for their ability to reduce stress, boost circulation, and improve recovery. Combine this with the power of immersive, multisensory experiences, and these spaces are evolving into true sanctuaries of transformation.

When the parasympathetic system is activated through the simple act of hydrothermal bathing, we are more receptive to feeling a sense of awe and wonder through the use of art installations, soundscapes, lighting and nature-inspired elements.

Several design visionaries are leading the way. Atmosphere, a multidisciplinary creative studio, is crafting sensory-rich wellness environments that integrate projection, continuous LED, scent, and spatial design to create unforgettable moments of calm and clarity. Their work within the spa and wellness sector fuses technology with nature, delivering immersive experiences that ground, soothe, and inspire.

Pioneering this movement is Corvas Brinkerhoff, founder of Submersive. Drawing from his background as a co-founder of Meow Wolf, Brinkerhoff brings the same boundary-pushing creativity to the wellness space, crafting experiences that don’t just relax—they transport. His work blends cutting-edge technology with artistry to create environments that feel otherworldly yet deeply restorative.

On a larger scale, Therme Group is collaborating with teamLab to infuse hydrothermal spaces with interactive digital art, turning wellness into a living, breathing experience.

The Global Wellness Summit’s 2025 trend, “Saunas Reimagined,” highlights the rise of multisensory sauna experiences. In London, sauna festivals combine music, dance workshops, bands, and DJs with sauna rituals, cold plunges, and hot tubs. In Norway, deep listening sessions at Farris Bad bring people together to listen to a favorite classic album while in the sauna. This “saunatainment” trend is expanding the sauna movement and drawing in a younger demographic.

Immersive wellness isn’t just a trend—it’s redefining what it means to unwind.

Resources

- SXSW “Immersive Wellness for Expanding Aliveness” <https://schedule.sxsw.com/2025/events/PP1146987>
- Blooloop “Immersive wellness: experience as medicine” <https://blooloop.com/immersive/opinion/immersive-wellness/>
- Blooloop “Therme’s new immersive experience fuses nature and tech” <https://blooloop.com/water-parks/news/therme-euskirchen-immersive-wellness-experience/>

Inclusive Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Jackie Roby, Relationship Mindset Coach, Inspired Journey Consulting, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Cherrie Catresse, Wellness Practitioner with Catreese & Co Wellness

The wellness industry is undergoing a significant transformation in 2025, shifting toward more inclusive and holistic approaches that address systemic inequities while honoring diverse perspectives. As organizations and practitioners recognize the importance of equitable access and culturally relevant care, five key trends are emerging to shape the future of wellness. From ethical AI integration and workplace wellbeing to trauma-informed healing, mental health accessibility, and financial wellness, these developments redefine how individuals and communities experience and sustain overall wellbeing.

TREND 1: Bridging the AI Gap for an Inclusive Wellness Industry

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to revolutionize healthcare, the intersection of technology and diversity, equity, and inclusion has become a critical focus. AI-driven healthcare solutions hold immense promise, but without careful oversight, they risk perpetuating biases that disproportionately affect historically disadvantaged communities. As highlighted by Nazer in “Bias in Artificial Intelligence Algorithms and Recommendations for Mitigation,” AI systems often reflect the prejudices embedded in their training data, leading to racial and gender disparities in diagnostics and treatment. To address this, healthcare organizations are implementing equitable data collection, ethical AI guidelines, and continuous auditing to ensure fair and accurate decision making.



[> Explore the Inclusive Wellness Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Judy Gichoya, in “AI Pitfalls and What Not to Do,” warns of the dangers of relying solely on AI without human oversight. AI models lacking diversity in their training data can reinforce existing healthcare inequities, disproportionately misdiagnosing conditions or overlooking symptoms in underrepresented populations. To mitigate these risks, global wellness leaders are advocating for human-AI collaboration, ensuring that healthcare professionals work alongside AI tools rather than replacing human judgment entirely. This approach is being successfully implemented in initiatives like Kaiser Permanente’s mental health and wellness digital ecosystem, which integrates AI-driven support with culturally competent care to deliver personalized, equitable treatment.

In 2025, the wellness industry is at a pivotal moment where diversity, equity, inclusion and AI must align to create equitable health outcomes. By addressing algorithmic bias, promoting ethical AI practices, and integrating inclusive digital health solutions, the industry can harness AI’s potential while safeguarding against systemic discrimination. The future of wellness depends on ensuring that technological advancements benefit all individuals, regardless of race, gender, or socioeconomic status, reinforcing the need for inclusive, human-centered design in AI-driven healthcare.

Resources

- [How Kaiser Permanente Created a Mental Health and Wellness Digital Ecosystem - NEJM Catalyst](#)
- [A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF BIAS IN AI ALGORITHMS - Nusantara Hasana Journal](#)
- [Sources of bias in artificial intelligence that perpetuate healthcare disparities—A global review - PMC](#)
- [Bias in artificial intelligence algorithms and recommendations for mitigation - PLOS Digital Health](#)
- [AI pitfalls and what not to do: mitigating bias in AI - PMC](#)
- [Mitigating bias in AI at the point of care - PubMed](#)

TREND 2: How Wellness Industry Can Counter Emotional Tax in the Workplace

Emotional tax is the burden of feeling different at work due to gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or disabilities. Employees feel constantly on guard against bias and its negative impact on wellbeing and career growth. A Catalyst report showed emotional tax was pervasive in Australia, Brazil, Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States.

To create a thriving workplace, companies must foster an environment where everyone feels valued, heard, and supported. When companies prioritize inclusion, they not only enhance employee wellbeing and engagement but also drive innovation, retention, and long-term success. Organizations can achieve this by implementing bias training, creating safe spaces for dialogue, offering mentorship and sponsorship opportunities, ensuring equitable access to leadership roles, and well-rounded wellness programming.

To implement the most impactful wellness programs, they need to have a DEI lens to take the varied lived experiences, needs and barriers of employees into account. This creates relevant, meaningful and respectful programming that decreases emotional tax.

Inclusive workplaces promote a sense of belonging that can reduce anxiety among employees. Employees who feel they can be their authentic selves at work, without fear of discrimination or bias, experience lower levels of stress and can often maintain the confidence and strength in other aspects of their life.

Resources

- [Emotional Tax and Work Teams - Catalyst](#)
- [The Role of Mental Health in DEI - Uprise Health](#)
- [Diversity Equity and Inclusion in Wellness Programs - Work Smart Live Smart](#)
- [How Does Diversity Equity and Inclusion Support Employee Wellness in the Workplace - Diversio](#)

TREND 3: Communities of Color Encode Ancestral Wisdom Through Epigenetics and Embodied Healing

Through epigenetics, we now view mental health and wellness from a different perspective, including how environmental factors, lifetime traumas, and choices shape genetics. Epigenetic principles are being integrated into somatic practices like body-based trauma release, mindfulness, and movement therapy for working with intergenerational stress and cultivating emotional resilience by mental health and wellness professionals. For instance, wellness coaches and somatic therapists use these insights to work with clients in processing a stored trauma that affects their mental and physical health. Further programs then combine ancestral healing with epigenetic awareness, providing tools to address past trauma in a way that promotes holistic wellbeing.

These approaches are complemented by a narrative-based medicine (NBM) that recognizes the role of personal and cultural storytelling as part of the healing process. Practitioners can help clients uncover the deeper emotional patterns around generational trauma by urging people to explore what their ancestral narratives are. These narratives help integrate epigenetic science into somatic practices and healing as a whole.

As such, inclusive research design is becoming a necessity in these efforts, to assure that studies and wellness programs are culturally and socially inclusive. Trauma-informed wellness approaches can be created that respect lived experience and ancestral knowledge if scientists and wellness professionals include historically disadvantaged groups (HDGs) communities in research and program development. It guarantees somatic experiencing, trauma-informed yoga, and lifestyle interventions are culturally relevant and equitable, ensuring they are accessible to populations beyond which they were initially developed. To further support inclusive wellness, it's beneficial to have practitioners from HDGs and ensure accessible locations, as well as flexibility in price points.

As epigenetics becomes more understood, it is inspiring new ways to combine state of the art science with cultural and ancestral tradition. This convergence of research, storytelling, and body-based practices represents a holistic path to healing, in line with the increasing need for whole-body therapies that link the physical body, emotional landscape, and ancestral stories.

Resources

- [Ancestral Medicine's courses - Ancestral Medicine](#)
- [Integrating Ancestry Healing Practice in the Clinical Model to Build Self - Diversity MBA Media](#)
- [Indigenous Wellness Framework Reference Guide - Thunderbird Partnership Foundation](#)

TREND 4: Breaking Barriers, Building Mental Wellness for Empowerment

Mental wellness is the bedrock of overall wellbeing across cultures, ethnicities, races, sexual orientations, gender identities, disabilities, socio-economic status, ages, and religions. It influences habits, resilience, decision making, and success across life domains. Research through the DEI Initiative shows that 83% of participants prioritize mental wellness over physical and financial wellness, reflecting a growing recognition of its foundational importance.

Mental wellness enables individuals to make informed decisions, maintain habits, and thrive physically and financially. A positive mental state fosters strength, intrinsic value, and the ability to adapt effectively. While the LGBTQIA+ community is twice as likely to seek support for mental wellness, the stigma still impacts men in this populace and people of color. Psychological symptoms of depression and anxiety are

higher for historically disadvantaged groups (HDGs), though studies reflect less consistent care. This can be because of lack of access to support and/or cultural stigmas.

The steps forward to increase mental wellness include identity-based wellness businesses to counter the stigma preventing HDGs from seeking help, sliding scale options for payment, and scholarships.

Resources

- [Research on Inclusive Wellness - GWI Diversity Equity Inclusion Initiative](#)
- [What Happens to Your Body When You're Too Stressed - Eating Well](#)
- [LGBTQ Communities and Mental Health - Mental Health America](#)
- [Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Mental Health Care: Evidence and Policy Implications - PMC](#)

TREND 5: Regenerative Wellness - Uplifting Indigenous Voices, Ancestral Knowledge & Sustainable Tourism

Growing consumer demand to support Black Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) communities spurred regenerative tourism, cultural heritage, and environmental justice as core pillars in the wellness industry. Forest bathing with Indigenous leaders, farm-to-table retreats celebrating ancestral food systems, and workshops based on Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge (ITEK) are taking off. These offerings cultivate a deep relationship with the earth and its people, paying reverence to the fundamental interdependence of cultural heritage and ecological stewardship.

Pre-colonial traditions of deep respect for the land, biodiversity, and sustainability are at the heart of ITEK's reciprocal relationship with the natural world. These are traditions of a balanced life, where communities flourished through living in balance with the seasons, rotational farming and seed preservation, and seasonal harvest. Many of these programs have been led by Indigenous experts who use this wisdom and show how pre-colonial practices can inform modern environmental stewardship and wellness approaches. These initiatives range from herbal medicine workshops to immersive nature retreats and show that ancestral knowledge still has a place in helping solve today's problems.

Indigenous and local communities are slowly but increasingly recognized as important stakeholders in breaking land for new projects, and corporations and developers are beginning to take note. Engaging Indigenous voices at the planning stage of business initiatives can ensure that the initiatives respect cultural heritage, ecological balance, and community wellbeing. Holding these consultations with the people and the land not only respects both, but also results in more sustainable and equitable outcomes, supporting the principles and perspectives of wellness and environmental justice.

This trend aims to uplift BIPOC voices, promote just land stewardship, and facilitate cultural exchange to heal historic inequities and reshape wellness tourism. It guarantees that modern wellness practices are based on multiple perspectives, respect for the interconnectedness of people and place, and regeneration, inclusivity, and precolonial ecological wisdom.

Resources

- [Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge - Lomakatsi Restoration Project](#)
- [Thriving Through Adversity: Ancestral Wisdom and Environmental Justice - Mary Ann Liebert, Inc. Publishers](#)
- [Indigenous Food, Ingredients & Activism - Four Directions Cuisine](#)
- [Outdoor experiences honoring cultural heritage: Stories from the South - Color My Outdoors](#)
- [Indigenous Wisdom Gatherings: Aniwa Gathering 2025 - Aniwa](#)

TREND 6: Financial Wellbeing - The Rise of Holistic Wealth

Financial wellness is not just about numbers, but about fostering peace of mind, alignment with values, and creating opportunities for personal and collective growth. Historically disadvantaged groups (HDGs) have shown a shift in priorities around money, emphasizing balance, security, and emotional harmony. Rather than solely on accumulating wealth, individuals seek financial stability that ensures their basic needs are met, supports a comfortable lifestyle, and allows for joy and fulfillment without stress.

Key aspects include maintaining emergency funds, living within one's means, and cultivating financial literacy to make informed decisions. This approach fosters the freedom to pursue meaningful experiences, leisure, and self-care while enabling generosity and giving back to communities.

Emotional health is central to this trend. There is a rise in financial therapists as individuals strive to unpack scarcity mindsets, release financial stress, and develop a positive, empowering relationship with money. Viewing finances as a tool rather than a defining force, they prioritize clarity, intentional spending, and alignment with personal values.

Ultimately, this movement represents a redefinition of wealth.

Resources

- [Research On Inclusive Wellness - GWI Diversity Equity Inclusion Initiative](#)
- [Our 11 Favorite Financial Therapy and Relationship Books From 2024 - Healthy Love and Money](#)
- [Do You Need a Financial Therapist? - Time](#)
- [Feeling Stressed About Money and Retirement? You Aren't Alone—Here's What to Do - Investopedia](#)
- [Understanding the Mental-Financial Health Connection - Financial Health Network](#)

Lifestyle Medicine Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Dr. Melissa Sundermann, Double Board-Certified Physician, Lifestyle Medicine Well-Being Coach, Co-Founder of REVIVE, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Randi Gold, VP Blue Legacy Ventures, Legacy Well-Being & Longevity, United States

The integration of wellness and lifestyle medicine marks a critical evolution in healthcare, acknowledging the profound impact of daily habits on overall wellbeing and highlighting the importance of the 2025 lifestyle medicine trends. Historically, lifestyle medicine has focused on the prevention and treatment of physical conditions, such as cardiovascular diseases and diabetes. However, recent paradigm shifts now recognize mental and emotional wellbeing as equally vital to total health, making them integral parts of the lifestyle medicine spectrum.

Lifestyle medicine is uniquely positioned to address this by incorporating strategies that not only treat physical conditions but also enhance mental health. By combining lifestyle medicine, behavioral health, nutrition, modern medicine, advanced diagnostics, and AI technology, we can improve wellbeing and longevity. This holistic approach bridges the gap between physical and mental health, promoting not just the treatment of illness but a state of flourishing, revolutionizing healthcare and holistic wellness.



[> Explore the Lifestyle Medicine Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: Harnessing Lifestyle Medicine to Combat Physician Burnout

Physician burnout is a pressing issue, impacting both healthcare providers' wellbeing and patient care quality, especially as a physician shortage looms. Programs focused on nutrition, physical activity, stress management, and sleep hygiene aim to improve provider health and resilience, enhancing individual wellbeing and fostering more sustainable, attractive healthcare workplaces.

These lifestyle medicine initiatives are also transforming healthcare by promoting a collaborative care model. Technology enhances communication and care coordination between patients and providers, boosting provider satisfaction and patient outcomes while supporting high-quality care.

However, rising costs due to inflation, labor shortages, increased mental health demands, and the emergence of new therapies are pressuring employers. Balancing short-term cost management with long-term investments in workforce wellbeing is crucial. Two-thirds of employers now view health and wellbeing as integral to their strategy, recognizing that supporting the health of their providers is key to ensuring quality patient care and effectively meeting future healthcare challenges.

Resources

- "Lifestyle Medicine Practitioners Implementing a Greater Proportion of Lifestyle Medicine Experience Less Burnout." First published online June 27, 2023 <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/08901171231182875>
- "Integrating behavioral health improves patient outcomes and makes medical practice more satisfying. Here's one way to do it." May-June 2021. aafp.org/pubs/2021
- "Combining Lifestyle Medicine and Positive Psychology to Improve Mental Health and Emotional Wellbeing." Published 2018 <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6146362/>
- "Physician burnout: contributors, consequences and solutions." Published March 5th 2018 <https://doi.org/10.1111/joim.12752> burnout: contributors, consequences and solutions

TREND 2: Designing Comprehensive Wellbeing Programs for Healthcare Providers

Amidst the growing concern over physician burnout, this trend highlights its implications for healthcare delivery. Health systems are increasingly recognizing the importance of comprehensive wellbeing programs tailored specifically for physicians and advanced practice providers (APPs). These programs are designed to address the multifaceted nature of burnout by providing support across various dimensions of wellbeing, including emotional, physical, and professional aspects.

The cornerstone of these programs is a holistic approach that goes beyond traditional stress management techniques. They incorporate elements such as peer support groups, mindfulness training, leadership development, and flexible work schedules to create a more supportive work environment fostering organizational wellbeing. By acknowledging and addressing the unique challenges faced by healthcare providers, these programs aim to foster a culture of wellness that empowers physicians and APPs to thrive both personally and professionally.

Resources

- "Lifestyle Medicine Core Competencies Comprehensive Course 2024-25 <https://lifestylemedicine.org/project/lifestyle-medicine-core-competencies>
- "The Foundations of Lifestyle Medicine." Mayo Clinic, February 2024 [https://www.mcpiqjournal.org/article/S2542-4548\(23\)00075-9/fulltext](https://www.mcpiqjournal.org/article/S2542-4548(23)00075-9/fulltext)
- *Forbes*, "Lifestyle Medicine: An Approach for Supporting Employee Wellbeing." August 4, 2022 <https://www.summusglobal.com/blog/forbes-lifestyle-medicine-an-approach-for-supporting-employee-wellbeing/2022>

TREND 3: Integrating Technology and Digital Health

This trend focuses on integrating technology and digital health into wellness and lifestyle medicine, thereby expanding healthcare capabilities through the use of apps, wearables, and online programs. This trend enhances patient autonomy by enabling individuals to manage their health using digital solutions proactively. It also fosters a collaborative care model, connecting patients with healthcare providers and specialists, which streamlines communication and care coordination.

The Jensen Lab, at the University of Copenhagen, leverages advanced fields, including genomics, metabolomics, and microbiome research, to develop customized interventions. By integrating biomarkers and personal data, lifestyle strategies are tailored to everyone's unique needs. Their wellness programs address physical, mental, and emotional wellbeing, tailoring their approach to the unique genetic, lifestyle, and environmental factors of each individual.

This unified health management strategy leverages digital platforms to enhance patient education and advocacy regarding food and lifestyle choices, ensuring effective and personalized care throughout the wellness journey.

Resources

- "Digital Health Technology for Real-World Clinical Outcome Measurement Using Patient-Generated Data: Systematic Scoping Review 2011." Published on November 11, 2023, Volume 23 [jmir.org](https://www.jmir.org)
- "Position of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: the role of nutrition in health promotion and chronic disease prevention." Published July 2013 pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

TREND 4: Collaborative Care and Multidisciplinary Approach

The trend of connecting wellness and lifestyle medicine emphasizes collaborative care and a multidisciplinary approach. It focuses on enhancing the synergy among diverse healthcare professionals to provide a well-rounded approach to health and wellness. This trend anticipates a significant increase in collaboration and integration across various disciplines, aiming to ensure a comprehensive and holistic approach to patient health strategies.

Resources

- "The Time is Now for Lifestyle Medicine: Lesson from Lifestyle Medicine Leaders." Published September 2022 ncbi.nlm.nih.gov
- "Cross-Disciplinary Care: A Systematic Review on Teamwork Processes in Health Care." Published September 2019 journals.sagepub.com

TREND 5: Workplace Wellness

The trends in connecting wellness and lifestyle medicine encompass two significant areas: workplace wellness and new research in lifestyle medicine. Together, these trends underscore a comprehensive approach to wellness and lifestyle medicine, highlighting the importance of personalized, evidence-based interventions in both workplace settings and broader health research. Elizabeth Schy has been a worksite wellness professional for over 18 years. Her leadership in these areas signifies a pivotal shift towards integrating lifestyle medicine into everyday practices and policies to foster healthier lives. In workplace wellness, the focus is on health promotion within the workplace to prevent chronic diseases. This involves the development of personalized and evidence-based wellness programs tailored to the specific needs and challenges of workplace environments. The aim is to create healthier work settings that not only improve employee health but also enhance overall productivity and wellbeing.

Resources

- "How Well Do Workplace Wellness Programs Work." Published April 2019 health.wusf.usf.edu
- "Workplace Health & Wellness Report." Published May 2023 shrm.org

TREND 6: New Research in Lifestyle Medicine

This trend delves into various groundbreaking areas. Key research highlights include exploring the impact of the gut microbiome on chronic diseases and how lifestyle changes can influence this relationship. There is a strong emphasis on how lifestyle adjustments, such as diet and physical activity, can improve sleep quality and address chronic health conditions. Mind-body interventions are being studied for their potential to be integrated into lifestyle medicine, offering holistic approaches to health and wellness. Additionally, this trend focuses on examining how lifestyle medicine can tackle social determinants of health, thereby promoting health equity. A significant aspect of this research is the advancement of precision lifestyle medicine, which aims to customize interventions to individual genetic and biological characteristics, offering more effective and personalized care.

Resources

- “Lifestyle Medicine News and Updates.” Published September 2023 <https://lifestylemedicine.org/>
- “American College of Lifestyle Medicine, with the support of the Ardmore Institute of Health, aims to revise the Full Plate Diet group curriculum and materials for better relevance to an African-American audience.” Published November 2021. ardmoreinstituteofhealth.org/ate

Trend 7: The Military and Lifestyle Medicine

The military has recognized the importance of lifestyle medicine and has implemented programs to promote healthy behaviors among service members. For example, the US Army has implemented the Performance Triad, which focuses on improving sleep, activity, and nutrition to enhance soldier readiness and performance. The US Navy has a similar program called Navy Operational Fitness and Fueling System (NOFFS), which provides sailors with resources and guidance on nutrition, physical activity, and injury prevention.

The military has also recognized the importance of addressing mental health as part of lifestyle medicine. The Department of Defense has implemented the Comprehensive Soldier and Family Fitness Program, which includes components to promote resilience and emotional wellbeing.

There is growing interest in the use of lifestyle medicine in the military to not only improve the health and wellbeing of service members, but also to reduce healthcare costs and improve readiness. A study published in *Military Medicine* found that lifestyle interventions, including weight management and physical activity programs, can lead to significant reductions in healthcare costs and improvements in readiness.

Overall, lifestyle medicine has the potential to play a significant role in enhancing the health and readiness of service members, as well as reducing healthcare costs within the military.

Resources

- “Lifestyle Medicine in the Military Healthcare System.” Lt. Col. Chelsea Payne, MD, MPH | Maj. Regan Stiegmann, DO, MPH. Published May 25, 2022 portal.lifestylemedicine.org
- “GIVING BACK: Task Force Dagger Special Operations Foundation.” Published June 2024 Givingbacktaskforce.com

TREND 8: Housing and Health Equity

The statistics are alarming but point to a hopeful path forward. Addressing lifestyle behaviors— such as nutrition, physical activity, sleep, stress management, social connection, and avoiding risky substances— can reverse, treat, and prevent chronic diseases.

Education is the first step in tackling the chronic disease burden. However, clinicians often receive little training on how lifestyle factors influence disease reversal or how to support lasting behavior change. The American College of Lifestyle Medicine (ACLM) National Training Initiative, part of the White House National Strategy to reduce diet-related diseases by 2030, addresses this educational gap. It builds a nationwide network of healthcare professionals capable of driving behavior change and fostering healthier communities.

Reaching under-resourced communities remains a priority, ensuring that marginalized populations, often bearing the heaviest chronic disease burden, receive accessible, whole-person, cost-effective care. This commitment guarantees that those most at risk have access to evidence- based care addressing the root causes of illness.

Resources

- “Equipping clinicians to address lifestyle-related chronic disease health disparities.” Published January 2024-Current <https://LifestyleMedicinetraininginitiative>
- “WHO Housing and health guidelines.” Published November 2018-Current www.WhoHousingPublication
- “Targets of Sustainable Development Goal 3.” Published 2018-Current who.int

Trend 9: Lifestyle Medicine in Education

The trend of incorporating lifestyle medicine into education, spearheaded by Leanne Mauriello, PhD, focuses on enriching curricula and training educators in this field. It integrates lifestyle medicine principles across existing courses and fosters partnerships with community organizations to enhance the learning experience. Emphasizing research and program evaluation, this approach ensures that educational practices are rooted in evidence-based findings, aiming to equip students with a comprehensive understanding of how lifestyle factors influence health and wellness.

Resources

- “The Lifestyle Medicine National Training Initiative.” Published May 25, 2024 clinicians.org
- “The Heal Initiative.” Published October 19, 2023 lifestylemedicine.org
- “The Lifestyle Medicine National Training Initiative Integrating Behavioral Health into Primary Care.” Published May 2021 aafp.org

Trend 10: Lifestyle Medicine in Healthcare Systems

The trend of integrating lifestyle medicine into healthcare, led by Dr. Deb Duro, MD, emphasizes improving health equity and patient outcomes through informed lifestyle choices. This approach empowers individuals by promoting lifestyle medicine in educational settings, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to make healthier decisions. Key strategies include comprehensive nutrition education, promoting regular physical activity, and embedding wellness initiatives within healthcare systems to support health equity for all.

FLIPANY (Florida Introduces Physical Activity and Nutrition to Youth), an organization led by Lynne Kunins, addresses childhood obesity and hunger with practical, engaging programs. By teaching healthy food preparation, ensuring food security, and promoting physical education, FLIPANY helps children and families adopt nutritious eating habits and an active lifestyle, tackling obesity and hunger holistically.

Educational advancement in lifestyle medicine is another key aspect of this trend. It involves developing specialized curricula for schools and universities, training educators to incorporate lifestyle medicine principles, and partnering with community organizations to extend healthy living beyond the classroom. Through systemic change, education, and collaboration, this movement aims to create lasting improvements in individuals' long-term health and wellness.

Resources

- "Leading with Nutrition: Leveraging Federal Programs for Better Health Recommendations from the BPC SNAP Task Force." Published March 12, 2018 bipartisanpolicy.org
- "Foundations of Lifestyle Medicine and its Evolution." Published January 2024 ncbi.nlm.nih.gov

Trend 11: Advances in Longevity through Lifestyle Medicine

Dr. Alison Levitt, MD, and Dr. Sunil Kumar, MD, highlight advancements in medical imaging technologies, biomarker identification, and noninvasive diagnostics that are enabling early detection and intervention for age-related diseases. These trends, ranging from high-tech interventions that slow cellular aging to low-tech lifestyle and environmental approaches, are shaping our future health span and lifespan.

One key trend is the development of personalized longevity plans, which utilize genetic testing, epigenetic analysis, and biomarkers to create tailored health strategies. Clinics are also exploring senolytic drugs that target aging cells, delaying age-related diseases. Nutrigenomics, which utilizes genetic insights to design personalized diets, is gaining prominence, while research on telomere regeneration shows promise in slowing cellular aging.

Technological advancements play a crucial role in enhancing longevity. Digital health tools, AI-driven healthcare, wearable devices, and health apps enable continuous monitoring and real-time data for proactive health management. Genomics and gene editing present new opportunities for treating age-related diseases, although ethical concerns persist.

Social, lifestyle and environmental factors are also recognized for their impact on longevity. Strong social connections, clean environments, stress management, and physical activity are key to promoting long, healthy lives. Together, these trends are shaping a comprehensive approach to extending human lifespan.

Resources

- "Foundations of Lifestyle Medicine and its Evolution." Published July 23, 2024 [sciencedirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)
- "Unlocking the biochemical secrets of longevity: balancing healthspan and lifespan." Published July 3, 2024 febs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com

Massage Makes Me Healthy & Happy Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Heather Zdan, Executive Marketing Professional, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: CG Funk, Consultant, United States

The Massage Makes Me Healthy & Happy Initiative aims to celebrate the healing powers of massage therapy and promote its benefits through research, education, advocacy, and awareness. In doing this, the initiative consolidates existing clinical research and supports distribution of research for deeper integration of massage into healthcare and wellness practices. As part of this year's theme for enhancing the massage experience, the initiative celebrated Massage Makes Me Healthy & Happy Day on March 20th sharing new ways for therapists to elevate their practice. This was the foundation for the 2025 trends keeping in support of that theme.

TREND 1: Massage Fosters Overall Wellness

People receive massage therapy for many reasons. But according to a new study—the largest and most comprehensive ever conducted on the subject—the prevalence of visits to massage therapists is higher than one might have imagined, and the reasons may be surprising.

In this study, using data from more than 27,000 people surveyed as part of the 2022 round of the annual National Health Interview Survey (NHIS), researchers at Baylor University found that 11.1% of U.S. adults – one in nine adult Americans or nearly 30 million people – visited a massage therapist in 2021 for any reason. This study found that 8.5% used massage therapy for overall health and 6.0% did so to help with pain.



[> Explore the Massage Makes Me Happy Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

“What our study shows is that it’s probably no longer helpful to label massage as an ‘alternative’ therapy, with all the marginality the term conveys,” said Jeff Levin, PHD, professor of epidemiology and population health. “Licensed massage therapists ought to be respected as mainstream practitioners, whose profession provides a therapeutic approach not just to address pain and functional challenges, but to foster wellness and overall wellbeing, both physical and emotional. Everyone can benefit from working with a skilled massage therapist. They’re the hidden gems in the healthcare system.”

Resources

- [Researchers Publish Largest Study Ever on Massage Therapy Use. Media and Public Relations, Baylor University](#)

TREND 2: Enhancing the Massage Experience

In the past few years, businesses offering massage and other healing hands-on services have been innovating menus to adapt to the digital age. Some of these adaptations include state-of-the-art equipment that combines science and technology to create elevated wellness experiences.

Fast Company has recognized several massage products and services for their innovative design and ability to promote wellness. Their Innovation by Design Awards recognize products, services, and environments that promote a healthy lifestyle, while their World Changing Ideas Awards honor products and services that improve personal or global wellbeing.

These include:

- Aescape, an AI-powered robot that uses a 3D scan of the body to customize a massage. Aescape won *Fast Company's* 2024 Innovation by Design Award in wellness.
- Theragun, a device that applies rapid pressure to muscles to help with blood flow, muscle tension, and recovery.
- Symboli, a handheld percussive therapy device that helps with knots. Symboli was named one of *Fast Company's* Most Innovative Companies of 2024.

Resources

- The best wellness design of 2024. <https://www.fastcompany.com/91129831/wellness-innovation-by-design-2024>

TREND 3: Bureau of Labor Statistics

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, employment of massage therapists in the US is projected to grow 18% from 2023 to 2033, much faster than the average for all occupations.

About 22,800 openings for massage therapists are projected each year, on average, over the decade. Many of those openings are expected to result from the need to replace workers who transfer to different occupations or retire.

Continued growth in the demand for massage services will lead to new jobs for massage therapists. Not only does massage help relieve stress and increase relaxation, but it is also becoming more accepted as a natural and safe treatment method for managing pain. Demand for massage therapists is expected to increase as more people look to massage to maintain overall health and wellbeing.

Resources

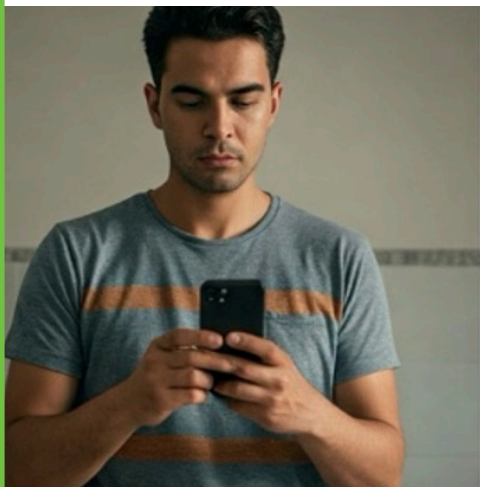
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, Employment Projections program. <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/massage-therapists.htm>

Men's Wellbeing Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: John Toomey, CEO, The Wellbeing Thought Leaders, Australia

Initiative Vice-Chair: Vishal Patel MD PhD, Chief Science and Innovation Officer, Sensei, United States

Men's wellbeing is undergoing a profound transformation. Once defined by stoicism and self-reliance, masculinity is now being reexamined through the lens of mental health, emotional resilience, and self-care. Media reports highlight a crisis—men facing increasing loneliness, career stagnation, and mental health struggles, with suicide rates remaining disproportionately high. At the same time, a new masculinity is emerging. Social media fosters both toxic influences, like Andrew Tate's who is he? hyper-masculinity, and positive support networks that encourage men to seek help and embrace vulnerability. Research shows shifting attitudes, with 95% of men prioritizing mental health, while the \$90B+ men's self-care industry flourishes. From barbershops to fitness coaching, male spaces are evolving into hubs for emotional and physical wellness. As men navigate modern masculinity, the focus is shifting from survival to thriving.



[> Explore the Men's Wellbeing Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: Media Spotlight on Men's Wellbeing in Crisis

Major publications have zeroed in on an apparent crisis in men's wellbeing. Cover stories and opinion pieces highlight troubling indicators: young men's loneliness, academic and economic stagnation, delayed adulthood milestones, and rising mental health struggles. *Esquire's* 2025 feature bluntly lists how many men feel "angry ... lonely and friendless," falling behind their female peers at school and work, and "killing themselves at alarming rates." Similarly, *GQ* and others point out that young men report unprecedented social disconnection and are increasingly dropping out of school and the workforce. These outlets note that many men feel culturally sidelined and unsure of their role, which can fuel extremist politics or toxic online subcultures. At the same time, mainstream media also advocates for change. In the UK, *The Guardian* covered calls for a national men's health strategy as new data showed 133,000 British men die early each year (15 every hour). Overall, 2024–2025 media narratives balance alarm with encouragement: they shine a light on men's higher suicide rates, loneliness, and health disparities, while also showcasing positive stories of men embracing wellness and calling for better support from society and policy.

Resources:

- *Esquire* 2025. "How do young men see the world?" Available here: <https://www.esquire.com/news-politics/a63613007/young-men-america-2025/>
- *GQ* 2024. "The Strange History of Toxic Masculinity." Available here: <https://www.gq.com/story/the-strange-history-of-toxic-masculinity>
- *Guardian* 2024. "English councils call for national men's health strategy."
- *Guardian* 2024. "Call for action on UK men's health as 133,000 die early every year." Available here: <https://www.theguardian.com/society/article/2024/jul/17/movember-men-male-early-deaths-uk-call-for-action>

TREND 2: Men's Networks – Toxic Influencers vs. Positive Masculinity Movements

On social platforms, competing narratives of masculinity have come to the forefront. Influencers in the "manosphere" from controversial figures like Andrew Tate to certain podcasters attract millions of young men by tapping into their frustrations. These personalities often promote a hyper-masculine, anti-feminist ethos, framing any critique of "traditional" manhood as an attack on men. Their popularity reflects a real audience of young men who feel sidelined or devalued in modern society. In extreme cases, disaffected men gravitate to incel (involuntary celibate) communities that blame women for their problems. Research in 2024 linked such involvement to men's struggles with rigid masculine norms and social isolation. Yet an equally powerful positive movement has risen in response. Across Reddit, YouTube, and TikTok, pro-mental-health advocates encourage men to open up about depression, trauma, and loneliness. Supportive hashtags and forums counter the stigma of vulnerability. Offline, new networks foster healthy masculinity: for example, the global ManKind Project (with chapters in more than 27 countries) runs retreats and trainings to help men become "emotionally mature, powerful, compassionate, and purpose driven." Grassroots communities like the Heare Brotherhood (now counting about 7,000 members) have formed to "end loneliness" by giving men safe spaces to talk honestly. Even as polarizing figures garner attention, many men in 2024–2025 are rejecting extremes. They are instead embracing "positive masculinity" ideals, balancing strength with empathy, and banding together in support networks to redefine what being a man means in a healthier way.

Resources:

- Roberts, S., Jones, C., Nicholas, L., Wescott, S., & Maloney, M. (2025). Beyond the Clickbait: Analysing the Masculinist Ideology in Andrew Tate's Online Written Discourses. *Cultural Sociology*, 0(0). <https://doi.org/10.1177/17499755241307414>
- Maryn, A., Keough, J., McConnell, C. et al. Identifying Pathways to the Incel Community and Where to Intervene: A Qualitative Study with Former Incels. *Sex Roles* 90, 910–922 (2024). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-024-01478-x>
- *Deseret News* 2024. "Men are lonely and disconnected. Can men's groups help?" Available here: <https://www.deseret.com/lifestyle/2024/03/24/male-loneliness-depression-mens-groups>
- Heare Brotherhood Co. Available here: <https://hearebros.com/>
- Mankind Project. Available here: <https://mankindproject.org/>

TREND 3: Research Highlights – Challenges and Changing Attitudes

Recent studies and surveys confirm serious challenges for men's wellbeing globally. For instance, men consistently have shorter life expectancies than women and far higher suicide rates. In the US, men die by suicide nearly four times more often than women, and one in ten men suffers from depression or anxiety, though only about half seek treatment. Social research underscores a growing loneliness epidemic among males: according to 2021 data from the Survey Center on American Life, most men today have fewer friends than they did 30 years ago, and 15% of them have no close friendships at all, a five-fold increase since 1990. Such isolation and unresolved mental distress can feed into other issues (substance abuse, extremist ideologies, or violence). On the other hand, emerging data also signal positive shifts. A broad 2023 survey by Men's Health found 95% of men now say mental health is as important as physical health, and most men (especially younger cohorts) are taking proactive steps for their mental wellbeing. Recent research on male psychology have produced new tools—like the Man Box scale—that shed light on pathways to positive and negative masculinity. Studies using these tools have revealed that, while many young men still feel pressured to appear tough, self-reliant, and aggressive, they increasingly reject the most extreme gender stereotypes. Men who cling to rigid ideals of masculinity report worse outcomes—one study noted significantly higher suicidal ideation (19%) among men strictly living in the Man Box—reinforcing how harmful traditional norms can be. These findings have spurred health organizations and policymakers to address men's unique needs. From the WHO to local health networks, there's a growing emphasis on tailored interventions to reduce male suicide, improve social support, and encourage help-seeking. In short, data in 2024–2025 paint a picture of men at a crossroads: facing persistent health crises yet slowly becoming more open to change.

Resources:

- The National Health Council. 2024. "The Quiet Crisis Growing in Men's Health." Available here: <https://nationalhealthcouncil.org/blog/the-quiet-crisis-growing-in-mens-health>
- CDC. 2024. "Suicide mortality in the United States, 2002-2022." Available here: <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db509.htm>
- Survey Center on American Life. 2021. "Men's Social Circles are Shrinking." Available here: <https://www.americansurveycenter.org/why-mens-social-circles-are-shrinking/>
- Men's Health. 2023. "The State of Men's Mental Health." Available here: <https://www.menshealth.com/health/a45324315/state-of-mental-health-men-survey/>
- Equipundo. 2017. "The Man Box: A Study on Being a Young Man in the US, UK, and Mexico." Available here: <https://www.equipundo.org/resources/man-box-study-young-man-us-uk-mexico/>

TREND 4: Men's Products and Services: Self-Care Goes Mainstream

Men's consumer habits in 2024–2025 reflect a newfound embrace of self-care, both in products and lifestyle services. Grooming and skincare for men have boomed. Traditional male toiletries—i.e. basic deodorant and shaving cream—are now joined by moisturizers, serums, and even cosmetics as everyday items for many men. Industry reports note that the men's personal care market has surged to roughly \$90+ billion globally and continues to grow rapidly. This growth is fueled by a cultural shift: it's increasingly normal for men to invest in their skin and appearance, shedding the old notion that skincare is “unmanly”. Social media has played a key role: hashtags like #mensskincare (over 200 million views) feature male influencers sharing their routines, which helps normalize grooming for a broad male audience. Younger men especially drive this trend: between 2020 and 2023 the share of 18 to 34-year-old men open to buying skincare/cosmetics jumped from 7.3% to 8.8%, and they are far more likely than older men to use beauty products to feel confident and improve mood. In response, companies have adapted their branding and products. Grooming startups (e.g. Dollar Shave Club, Harry's) have expanded beyond razors into full skincare lines, while legacy brands like Axe and Dove Men+Care have pivoted marketing toward authenticity and wellness rather than macho clichés. Beyond products, gyms and fitness programs are increasingly positioning themselves as mental health outlets for men, not just places to “get swole.” Boutique men's coaching services, therapy apps, and support groups are gaining users as men seek guidance in careers, relationships, and emotional resilience. Even classic barbershops are doubling as community hubs where men feel comfortable discussing life challenges—some initiatives train barbers in mental health first aid, recognizing the barbershop as a crucial touchpoint for men. Meanwhile, retreats and workshops tailored for men's personal growth (from adventure-style bootcamps to mindfulness retreats) are popping up worldwide. In summary, modern masculinity now often includes skin routines, workout recovery sessions, therapy or coaching, social bonding, and other forms of self-improvement. This balanced focus on looking good, feeling good, and building community marks a significant shift in male consumer behavior and lifestyle.

Resources:

- YouGov. 2024. “One brand has seen consideration shoot up as men's skincare enters mainstream.” Available at: <https://business.yougov.com/content/48979-growth-mens-skincare-grooming-market-2024>
- Lefty.io. 2024. “The Rise of the Men's Cosmetics Industry”. Available here: <https://lefty.io/blog/the-male-cosmetics-industry>
- BeautyMatter. 2024. “Understanding the Men's Skincare Boom”. Available here: <https://beautymatter.com/articles/understanding-the-mens-skincare-boom>
- Stand Together. 2024. “The Confess Project: Starting a mental-health movement in Black barbershops.” Available here: <https://standtogether.org/stories/health-care/the-confess-project-mental-health-movement-in-black-owned-barbershops>

Mental Wellness Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Prof. Gerry Bodeker, PhD, Green Templeton College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom; & Dept. of Epidemiology, Columbia University, New York, United States. Public Health Academic & Clinical Psychologist

Initiative Co-Chair: Alina Hernandez, Organizational Advisor, Germany

The Mental Wellness Initiative 2025 Trends reflect a continuous shift towards proactive mental wellness and health approaches. The 2025 trends reflect a more granular view of previous trends and move away from generalities, aiming toward more precision and greater understanding of mental wellness pathways. These continue to evolve as greater knowledge and advancement in modalities arrive from both research and real-world applications.



[> Explore the Mental Wellness Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: Longevity Mental Wellness

The Intentional Curation of Environment for Positive Human Exposome

Resistance training, stretching, mindfulness practices together with cardiovascular activity are being programmed into models to support holistic mental health and wellness, and healthy aging. This means an opportunity to seamlessly integrate these activities in everything from fitness to hospitality. There has been a plethora of published research in the last three years reviewing the positive effects of exercise on mental health: from the effects of yoga on people with schizophrenia, to the improvement of sleep quality, to alleviating alcohol dependence—because of exercise's ability to decrease cravings. There also is persistent evidence to suggest that physical exercise improves depression and anxiety symptoms.

Translating all the evidence of the benefits of physical exercise on mental health into clinical practice, fitness, and wellness environments is of paramount importance for long-term positive impact.

There is a need for greater recognition of the financial cost of NOT addressing brain health. At DAVOS 2025, brain health/brain wealth was a key theme. During the conference, it was noted that brain health is no longer just a health issue, it's an economic emergency. The McKinsey Health Institute estimates brain health disorders cost the global economy \$5 trillion annually. "By investing strategically in brain health, we can build the foundations for future prosperity. Without this we risk economic decline and wasted human potential".

TREND 2: Resistance Training Found to Be Crucial for Brain Health

A focused approach informs us that resistance training (particularly in later life) enhances cognitive function, improving memory, and even reducing the risk of age-related brain degeneration. This type of training promotes blood flow to the brain, which is essential for delivering nutrients and oxygen to brain cells.

Resistance training can stimulate the release of brain-derived neurotrophic factor (BDNF), a protein that plays a crucial role in brain cell growth, learning, and memory. It can also have a positive impact on mental health, helping reduce anxiety and depression, and improve sleep.

Look for resistance training to take a front burner position in programs to enhance brain health and mental wellness.

TREND 3: Gut-Brain Research Is Becoming More Granular

New research is linking specific bacterial groups with several mental health conditions. In studying a cohort of prisoners convicted of violent assaults and a matched group of non-impulsive prisoners from the same facility, researchers found that impulsive offenders had a higher presence of *Bacteroides* and *Barnesiella* bacteria, while non-impulsive individuals had greater levels of *Catenisphaera*. The researchers suggest that *Bacteroides*, in particular, may play a role in regulating serotonin, a neurotransmitter linked to impulse control and aggression. This opens possibilities of tailored nutritional, probiotic, and gut microbiota-based treatments to manage specific mental health and behavioral conditions.

TREND 4: Combatting Microplastics in the Brain

Twenty years of investigation and over 7,000 research papers have examined the effects of microplastics in the environment and on the human body—including smaller particles of microplastics in our lungs, livers, kidneys, blood and reproductive organs. Microplastics have crossed protective barriers into our brains and hearts. The concentration of microplastics has been found to be about six times higher in brain samples from people who had dementia. As part of a wellness lifestyle routine, these steps are being highlighted to prevent or get rid of microplastics in our bodies:

- Prioritize a plastic-free diet and plastic free cooking implements.
- Avoid plastic takeout.
- Avoid heating food in plastic containers.
- Avoid plastic water bottles—research shows that in some cases bottled water
- contains up to 22 times more microplastics than tap water.
- Boil water—this may help remove up to 90% of microplastics.
- Use high-quality filters like reverse osmosis or activated carbon to reduce
- plastic contamination.
- Eat a fiber-rich diet to support digestion and excretion of microplastics.
- Choose fresh, organic foods over packaged and processed options.
- Take regular sauna sessions to eliminate toxins through sweat.
- Use natural-fiber clothing to minimize synthetic fiber shedding.
- Take probiotics.

As to probiotics, a study published in January 2025, found that specific probiotics absorbing and excreting microplastics show potential gut health benefits. Probiotics like *Lactocaseibacillus paracasei* DT66, a major probiotic well known for its anti-inflammatory properties, and *Lactiplantibacillus plantarum* DT88, commonly used in the food industry, can effectively absorb and facilitate microplastic excretion. Nutritional and naturopathic wellness treatments are likely to evolve as therapies for removing microplastics from the gut and, via the gut-brain axis, from the brain.

Expect procedures such as microplastic removal for brain and body health to become front burner offerings in the medical wellness space.

TREND 5: The Evolution of the Social Mind

Combating Loneliness While Promoting Conscious Living, Part 2

Last year, we talked about combating loneliness through new design approaches in hospitality. This year we continue the theme and focus on activities that build connectivity and strengthen social cohesion and mental wellness.

According to Oxford Academic, “Social cognition is how we encode, analyse, store, and use information about the people we meet and the relationships that define us.” Having an interest in society—specifically, being interested in social welfare or the wellbeing of society as a whole—is also referred to as having a Social Mind . According to the 2025 World Happiness Report, “Sharing meals proves to be an exceptionally strong indicator of subjective wellbeing, on par with income and unemployment. Those who share more meals with others report significantly higher levels of life satisfaction and positive affect, and lower levels of negative affect.”

Bathing Traditions and the Social Mind

We see examples of social wellness in the continuing evolution of millenary bathing traditions, from Japan’s Onsen, to the Russian Banya, to Finnish Sauna, that bring people together to bond, as well as Japanese forest bathing traditions (Shinrin-yoku) and provide fulfilling and engaging ways to come together and build cohesion while nudging people into mental wellness.

TREND 6: The Evolution of Self-Care Through Self-Awareness and Self-Responsibility

With a myriad of wearables available, measuring all sorts of different biomarkers, we are becoming increasingly disconnected from ourselves, relying on external clues to pay attention to ourselves, while possibly getting increasingly anxious about our results.

Self-awareness will be more important than ever in order to learn how to listen to our body instead of relying mainly on devices.

As we are responsible for our own mental wellbeing, self-responsibility will play a crucial role. By being conscious of what our body is crying out about, once we are tuned in, we are unable to stop listening. We will need to act, with self-care being a direct result.

Self-care, as a deliberate decision, will become more exploratory and will include multisensorial elements and experiences—social, emotional, physical and intellectual—to support it.

Music for Health and Wellbeing Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Freddie Moross, Founder and CEO, Myndstream, United Kingdom

Initiative Vice-Chair: Rob Marshall, Consultant, United Kingdom

The intersection of music and wellbeing is gaining significant traction across various sectors. Academic research is increasingly validating music's therapeutic benefits, while consumers are actively incorporating music into their wellness routines. Governmental and institutional support is growing, aiming to integrate music into healthcare systems. Commercially, music-based interventions are expanding, addressing diverse health needs. Simultaneously, there's a rising awareness of musicians' mental health challenges, prompting industry initiatives and greater openness from artists. Creativity itself is being recognized as a powerful tool for mental wellbeing, particularly among young and marginalized groups. Digital technologies are further democratizing access to personalized music wellness experiences, coupled with a clear surge in mindful listening events. This is reflective of a broader cultural shift towards intentional engagement with music for relaxation and wellbeing.

TREND 1: Increasing Public Awareness of Music as a Tool to Support Health and Wellbeing

The growing recognition of music's therapeutic potential is evident across academic, consumer, institutional, and commercial sectors. Academic interest has surged, with PubMed showing a threefold increase in "music and health" titled publications from 2014 to 2024, enhancing our understanding of music's potential as a non-pharmacological, non-invasive and cost-effective tool to support health and wellbeing. For instance, a pioneering program by the Welsh National Opera demonstrated that singing and breathing exercises could alleviate chronic pain and improve mental health among participants.

Consumers are actively integrating music into their wellness routines, demonstrated by the sustained popularity of wellness music on streaming platforms, representing 5% of Spotify's global monthly streams, and a 42% rise in Google searches for "music therapy" over five years.



[> Explore the Music for Health and Wellbeing Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Governmental and institutional support is pivotal, as demonstrated by initiatives like Sound Health, a collaboration between the Kennedy Center and NIH, and by proposed funding like the £1 billion Social Prescribing Fund in the UK. These efforts aim to integrate music into healthcare through policy, funding, and interagency collaboration, promoting preventative care and addressing health inequalities.

Commercially, the rise of music-based interventions targeting diverse health issues ranging from neurological disorders to insomnia, reflects this trend. As the market expands, cross-sector collaboration is crucial to ensure the responsible creation and distribution of music designed for health and wellbeing.

Resources

- PubMed. (2014). music and health - Search Results - PubMed. [online] Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/?term=music+and+health>
- Google.com. (2024). Google Trends. [online] Available at: <https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=today%205-y&q=Music%20therapy&hl=en-GB>
- National Institutes of Health (NIH). Sound Health. [online] Available at: <https://www.nih.gov/research-training/medical-research-initiatives/sound-health>. <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC8257764/>
- https://www.theguardian.com/music/2025/mar/24/pioneering-project-by-welsh-national-opera-suggests-music-can-alleviate-chronic-pain?utm_source=chatgpt.com

TREND 2: Growing Awareness of Musicians' Health and Wellbeing

The latest findings from the UK Musicians' Census reveal that almost a third of professional musicians in the UK (30%) are experiencing poor mental health.

The burgeoning awareness of musicians' health and wellbeing reflects a crucial shift within the music industry. Academic research is increasingly focused on the unique physical and psychological stressors faced by musicians, including performance-related injuries, anxiety, depression, and the detrimental effects of demanding schedules. This research aims to develop preventative strategies and support systems, fostering sustainable careers and thereby supporting the industry.

Musicians themselves are driving this change, with popular artists such as Lewis Capaldi and Selena Gomez openly discussing mental health struggles and advocating for self-care, e.g., taking a break from touring. Touring professionals, in particular, face heightened risks of suicidality, depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout. There is a vast dichotomy between perception and reality. For example, there is the widespread idea that all artists love playing live (some do, but many tour to pay their bills), that touring is always a good time (it can also be lonely, confining, overwhelming, and boring), and that artists and teams are in venues for 1-3 hours (they are often there for 6-9 hours for soundcheck and pre-show).

Social media platforms and online communities facilitate these conversations, reducing stigma and promoting a culture of support. There's a growing demand for resources addressing stress, anxiety, and physical strain, with artists actively pushing for healthier industry practices. Demand is also growing to connect music industry professionals with accessible healthcare programs and services that prevent and treat illness as well as promote overall wellbeing.

Institutions and industries are responding by integrating wellness programs into music education curricula and funding initiatives that provide musicians with access to mental health services and physical therapy. Policies addressing fair compensation and safe working conditions are also being explored. For example, Spotify's Loud & Clear initiative aims to increase transparency around artist payouts and royalty structures.

This trend signifies a move towards a more holistic and sustainable music industry, where the health and wellbeing of its creators are prioritized.

Resources

- Help Musicians (2023). Three in ten musicians report having low mental wellbeing - with.... [online] Help Musicians. Available at: <https://www.helpmusicians.org.uk/media-and-press-office/three-in-ten-musicians-report-having-low-mental-wellbeing-with-those-at-the-start-of-their-career-most-impacted>.

- King, B., Koenig, J. and Berg, L. (2024). Popular Musician Occupational Stress and Psychological Ill Health: An Exploratory Factor Analysis. *Medical Problems of Performing Artists*, [online] 39(2), pp.72–81. doi:<https://doi.org/10.21091/mppa.2024.2010>.
- Music Health Alliance. <https://www.musichealthalliance.com/>
- Spotify (2022). Loud and Clear by Spotify. [online] Loud and Clear. Available at: <https://loudandclear.byspotify.com/>.
- <https://www.musicares.org/news/headlining-mental-health-tour-study-amber-health-sign-up>

TREND 3: Creativity as a Mental Wellness Booster

At a time when nearly one billion people globally live with a mental health disorder, creative expression—which encompasses music creation and other activities involving music—has been found to bring heightened personal and mental health benefits, especially among young people, the LGBTQ+ community and other marginalized groups. Additionally, people within these communities, and their allies, often use music to raise awareness on various social issues.

A recent study conducted among 2,000 people aged 13 and above by the Adobe Foundation and the National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) reveals key findings on the transformative benefits of creativity, the motivations behind creative expression, and the breadth and depth of creators. Among those who report engaging in any creative activity, nearly two-thirds (63%) identified an improved sense of confidence in their abilities as a benefit. In comparison, 61% noted creative activities reduce their feelings of stress or anxiety. Additionally, 57% reported that it improves their overall mental wellbeing.

Among younger creators, aged 13 to 17, singing or composing music is among the most popular creative expressions (29%). And people aged 13 to 25 were more likely than the general population to cite a strengthened sense of identity or purpose (50% vs. 47%) and the possibility of developing a sense of belonging in a community (37% vs. 33%) among benefits.

LGBTQ+ respondents were more likely than heterosexual respondents to say reduced feelings of depression or hopelessness (57% vs. 44%), and the possibility of developing a sense of belonging in a community (42% vs. 31%), were potential benefits of engaging in a creative activity. Popular television fare, such as MTV Entertainment Studios' *RuPaul's Drag Race*, is increasingly connecting dots to uplift viewers' creative flow and ability to rise above negative noise.

Resources

- <https://www.nami.org/press-releases/new-research-from-adobe-foundation-and-nami-shows-powerful-benefits-of-creative-activities-on-mental-health-especially-for-young-people-lgbtq-community/>
- <https://www.trackyouthmentalhealth.com/>
- <http://animatingdemocracy.org/sites/default/files/Potts%20Trend%20Paper.pdf>

TREND 4: Digital Technology as a Tool to Deliver Music and Wellness Experiences

Digital technologies are transforming the delivery of music for wellness, with a growing number of apps and platforms designed to provide personalized music experiences for various therapeutic purposes. These digital tools enable the delivery of music interventions tailored to specific needs, such as improving sleep quality, enhancing focus, and supporting mental health. With smartphones in nearly everyone's pocket, these musical interventions have moved beyond clinical settings and into our daily lives. Crucially, these technologies enable the personalization of music wellness, which—studies have shown—can enhance the effect of such interventions.

AI is playing an increasingly important role in tailoring music to individual needs and even physiological responses. Algorithms can analyze musical characteristics to create evidence-based playlists designed to achieve specific outcomes, such as reducing heart rate and stress hormones while promoting relaxation. Some systems even monitor physiological responses in real time via wearable devices, using

AI to dynamically adjust the music if the desired effect is not achieved. Some of these systems have taken hold within the wellness industries, with generative and adaptive AI models that support crafting choreographed massage treatments.

This is not just a passing trend—there is real momentum in the development of technology for music and wellness, and this is reflected in the new crop of companies at the forefront of innovation in this area. They range from personal wellness apps for day-to-day use, to professional healthcare services for use in clinical settings. These new technologies deliver a wide range of outcomes, from better sleep through personalized music experiences to utilizing musical reminiscence to improve the quality of life for dementia patients. Unique new techniques have been reported to reduce cognitive decline. One of them, “brain flossing,” involves listening to spatialized audio, creating an immersive experience that stimulates both brain hemispheres. This technique is reported to promote relaxation, reduce stress, and enhance cognitive functions.

Resources

- Park, S., Lee, S. Howard, S. Yi, J. (2024). Technology-Based Music Interventions to Reduce Anxiety and Pain Among Patients Undergoing Surgery or Procedures: Systematic Review of the Literature, [online]. Available at: <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38976863/>
- “This startup wants doctors to use music in the ICU” (2024), FastCompany, [online]. Available at: <https://www.fastcompany.com/91106648/medimusic-health-music>
- https://nypost.com/2025/03/20/health/brain-flossing-explained-and-5-tips-for-how-to-do-it-right/?utm_source=chatgpt.com

TREND 5: Geographic Spotlight - London

The Rise of Mindful Listening

There has been a significant shift towards mindful listening experiences in London, with an increase in the number of events and spaces dedicated to creating intentional ways of engaging with music. These settings, such as deep listening sessions, sound baths, and listening bars, provide opportunities for participants to connect with sound in a way that promotes relaxation and emotional wellbeing. This shift reflects a broader cultural trend of seeking more meaningful, focused interactions with music, moving away from passive consumption or the usual loud, fast-paced settings typically associated with nightlife.

The impact of these spaces goes beyond simply offering an alternative to traditional nightlife. Research shows that intentional listening practices can positively impact health and wellbeing. Providing a space for people to engage with music in a focused, meditative manner, these events allow for a deeper connection to the music itself, encouraging participants to experience sound as a strategic tool for wellbeing rather than just entertainment.

This change in engagement also correlates with a change in the wider cultural landscape of London's nightlife. As people seek more restorative, conscious ways to spend their time, the demand for fast-paced, alcohol-fueled clubbing experiences has been slowly declining. The rise of spaces for mindful listening, such as Om Being, Shai Space, and 180 Health Club, signals a desire for balance and mental clarity, offering an alternative that contrasts with the overstimulation often found in typical nightlife settings. These events appeal not only to those already familiar with wellness practices, but also to those looking for alternative ways to engage with music that is more grounded, restorative, and enriching. In this way, mindful listening experiences are part of a broader movement toward wellness and intentional living, reshaping how music is experienced.

Resources

- <https://www.cntraveller.com/gallery/best-sound-baths-in-london>
- <https://mixmag.net/feature/best-hi-fi-listening-bars-high-fidelity-vinyl-check-out-london>

Nutrition for Healthspan Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Michael Don Ham, Founder, Wild Orchard Tea Company, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Alina Tyszkiewicz, International Business Development, Chief Wellbeing Officer, Poland

The 2025 global nutrition trends emphasize a shift toward health-focused, sustainable food choices. Consumers are prioritizing nutrient-dense foods, with a focus on soil health and regenerative agriculture to enhance food quality. Personalized nutrition and gut health are gaining traction as research highlights the gut-brain connection and the benefits of individualized diets. There is also a growing movement toward clean eating and reducing toxins, with governments and health organizations advocating for stricter food safety regulations. Lastly, alternative proteins—including plant-based, mycoprotein, and cultivated options—are transforming the way people consume protein, driven by concerns about environmental impact and health. These trends reflect a collective effort to improve health, longevity, and sustainability in the global food system.

TREND 1: Nutrient Density and Soil Health

The Foundation for a Healthier Future

In 2025, the focus on nutrient density—the concentration of essential vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients in food—is intensifying. Central to this movement is the understanding that soil health directly influences the nutritional quality of our food and beverages.



[> Explore the Nutrition for Healthspan Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Consumers are becoming increasingly aware that industrialized farming practices have led to soil degradation, resulting in diminished nutrient levels in crops. In contrast, regenerative organic agriculture—which emphasizes soil biodiversity, carbon sequestration, and natural nutrient cycling—has been shown to enhance the micronutrient content of food.

This trend is driving innovation in the food and beverage industry, leading to:

- Functional foods and beverages with verified nutrient density that offer higher levels of antioxidants, polyphenols, and essential minerals.
- Increased transparency in food sourcing, with brands showcasing their commitment to regenerative organic farming practices.
- Advancements in nutrient testing, enabling consumers to assess food quality beyond standard organic certifications.

However, as the term “regenerative” gains popularity, concerns about greenwashing have arisen. Some brands label their products as regenerative without fully adopting sustainable practices. To address this, certifications such as the Regenerative Organic Certification (ROC) play a crucial role. Established in 2017 by the Regenerative Organic Alliance, ROC sets rigorous standards encompassing soil health, animal welfare, and social fairness, ensuring that products labelled as regenerative meet comprehensive criteria. This certification helps consumers distinguish genuinely sustainable products from those with misleading claims.

Scientific research continues to underscore the connection between soil health and human health, emphasizing the importance of consuming foods grown in nutrient-rich environments. As awareness grows, more products are expected to feature nutrient-dense ingredients, particularly in categories such as teas, juices, and plant-based proteins.

By prioritizing regenerative organic soil health and supporting credible certifications, we not only enhance our land’s vitality, but also lay the groundwork for healthier lives and a healthier planet.

Resources

- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, “Micronutrient Deficiencies and the Role of Soil Health.” [Link](#)
- USDA, “Nutrient Density in Crops: Trends and Implications for Health.” [Link](#)
- Regenerative Organic Alliance, “[Farm like the world depends on it - Regenerative Organic Certified.](#)”
- *Forbes*, “[Why Regenerative Farming Needs Organic Certification—And Vice Versa.](#)”
- Rodale Institute, “The Connection Between Healthy Soil and Nutrient-Dense Food.”

TREND 2: Getting Personal with Our Nutrition and Gut Health - Is Your Gut and Nutrition in Alignment?

It’s no longer just for dietitians and medical representatives to evaluate and dissect. As the trend for understanding our bodies and the desire for a vibrant healthspan increase, gut health has consumers taking charge of this vernacular. With that, and the confirmation that gut health is linked to brain health, showing that they are rapidly in communication (think neurons, proteins, and chemicals), people want to personalize their approach. Aptly named, “the gut-brain axis,” they equally influence one another, which means what you eat matters a lot. Our gut microbes (bacteria), along with our nervous system, have a direct impact on our mental and cognitive health. So, how do you ensure that you fuel your body for success?

According to Stefani Sassos, a registered dietitian and director of the Good Housekeeping Institute Nutrition Lab, “We’re starting to really understand that there is no one-size-fits-all approach to diet (and exercise, for

that matter).” No, that protein powder that your best friend swears by may not be perfect for your sensitive stomach. Personalized nutrition means more than your name slapped across a sticker on the front of a supplement bottle—it involves products and tools that are specifically created for your unique needs, based on genetics, lifestyle, environment, and more. Some services are more evidence-based than others, but there is certainly promise in these customized options as the category continues to grow and evolve.

Your overall daily wellbeing relies heavily on what you put into your body. It’s in everyone’s best interest to take stock of this. A good rule of thumb for improving your gut health naturally is to eat a diverse variety of whole foods, with a strong emphasis on plants. A more diverse diet leads to a more diverse gut microbiome, which is beneficial for your overall gut health. Whole foods and plants also pack more nutrition per calorie than processed foods, leaving less room for harmful additives, sweeteners, and saturated fats.

To personalize your gut health journey, consider consulting with a registered dietitian or nutritionist specializing in gut health who can create a personalized plan based on your needs and symptoms, or a gastroenterologist if you suspect a digestive disorder. Start taking stock of your inner self and rise to a better you.

Resources

- *Good Housekeeping*, “[The 10 Biggest Food & Nutrition Trends for 2025, According to Our Health Experts](#),” Dec. 31, 2024
- Cleveland Clinic, “[The Gut-Brain Connection](#),” 2023

TREND 3: The Rise of Alternative Proteins

The way we consume protein is undergoing a major transformation. With growing concerns over sustainability, health, and food security, traditional animal-based proteins are no longer the default choice. Instead, consumers and the food industry are turning toward alternative proteins—plant-based, fermentation-derived, and cultivated meat products—as viable, eco-friendly solutions. These alternatives offer comparable nutritional benefits while reducing environmental impact, making them a key driver of the future of food.

Why does protein matter? Protein is an essential macronutrient composed of amino acids, which are crucial for muscle repair, immune function, and overall metabolic health. Unlike fats and carbohydrates, protein is not stored in the body; therefore, it requires continuous dietary intake. While animal proteins are traditionally considered “complete” sources, advancements in food science are enabling plant-based and alternative proteins to offer similar benefits, making them more accessible and nutritionally competitive.

As the demand for more sustainable and health-conscious food options grows, the environmental impact of traditional animal-based protein sources is prompting a shift toward more sustainable alternatives.

1. The Environmental Imperative

Animal agriculture is a leading contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation, and water consumption. Beef production alone accounts for roughly 25% of all food-related emissions. In contrast, plant-based proteins and fermentation-derived alternatives significantly reduce environmental impact. Studies suggest that shifting toward alternative proteins could lower global diet-related emissions by up to 80%.

2. Health and Nutrition Benefits

Consumers are increasingly turning to plant-based proteins due to their health benefits, including lower saturated fat and higher fiber content. The 2025 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Committee recommends increasing the consumption of plant-based protein sources like legumes, nuts, and seeds to promote cardiovascular and digestive health. Additionally, new technologies are enhancing alternative proteins with essential amino acids, vitamins, and minerals, enabling them to rival traditional meat.

3. Types of Alternative Proteins

- **Plant-Based Proteins:** Derived from soy, peas, lentils, and grains, these proteins are widely used in meat alternatives and dairy substitutes.
- **Mycoprotein (Fungi-Based):** Produced from filamentous fungi, mycoprotein is a high-protein, meat-like alternative found in brands like Quorn.
- **Algae-Based Proteins:** Microalgae such as spirulina and chlorella offer a rich source of protein, essential fatty acids, and antioxidants.
- **Precision Fermentation:** This cutting-edge technology utilizes microorganisms to produce animal-identical proteins, such as dairy proteins, without the need for livestock.

The shift toward alternative proteins is more than a trend—it's a necessary evolution of our global food system. By embracing these sustainable, nutritious, and innovative protein sources, we can support both human health and planetary wellbeing, ensuring a future where food production is ethical, efficient, and environmentally responsible.

Resources

- Oxford Martin School, University of Oxford, "[Alternative Proteins](#)," 2019
- Bright Green Partners, "[A Positive Perspective on the Plant-Based Food Market](#)."
- Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future, "[Food Trends for 2025 Focus on Healthful Foods, Viral Trends and Protein](#)," 2025
- *Food & Wine Magazine*, "Big Changes Are Coming to US Dietary Guidelines – Here's What to Know," 2025
- European Commission, Knowledge4Policy, "The Importance of Alternative Proteins: A Triple Win for Climate, Public Health, and Animal Welfare," 2023

TREND 4: Consumers Prioritize Cleaner Eating

US Government Vows to Begin Eradicating Toxins in Food and Environment and Daily Detox Is Key to Health and Longevity

A 2025 survey by the Kaiser Family Foundation (KFF) found that 58% of US respondents believe stricter limits on chemicals in the food supply should be a "top priority." More than ever, American consumers are increasingly aware of the significant presence of toxins in the US food supply including pesticides, processing chemicals, dyes, additives, and other artificial and industrial substances. Toxins are also present in drinking water, cosmetics, personal care products, cleaning products, plastics, packaging, and throughout the environment. The harmful effects of these toxins are becoming well documented, and many toxins have been banned in other countries for years, yet they are still permitted in the USA. Most alarming is a group of toxins known as PFAS, or "forever chemicals." The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) warns that "exposure to PFAS has been linked to deadly cancers, impacts to the liver and heart, and immune and developmental damage to infants and children." The EPA further emphasizes, "For decades, the American people have been exposed to the family of incredibly toxic 'forever chemicals' known as PFAS with no protection from their government. Those chemicals now contaminate virtually all Americans from birth."

In October 2023, California became the first state to ban four food additives: brominated vegetable oil (BVO), potassium bromates, propylparaben, and Red Dye No. 3, with the ban taking effect in January 2027. Since then, 58 state bills have been introduced with various bans and effective dates, and several have passed. These groundbreaking initiatives at the state level are significant—and it's crucial that a comprehensive national effort with sweeping emphasis on removing harmful toxins be implemented with urgency to best protect the health of Americans. In 2025, Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. pledged to prioritize "advancing food safety and radical transparency to protect the health of all Americans, especially our children. We will strengthen consumer trust by removing toxins

from our food.” Secretary Kennedy has initiated the first phase of this massive effort by meeting with CEOs of the largest food companies, urging proactive efforts in eliminating artificial dyes and “getting the worst ingredients out of food.” The HHS is collaborating with the FDA to eliminate the current USA GRAS (Generally Recognized as Safe) rule. The GRAS rule allows food companies a self-affirmation process, creating a “loophole that has allowed new ingredients and chemicals, often with unknown safety data, to be introduced into the U.S. food supply without notification to the FDA or the public.” Closing this loophole will give the FDA greater oversight of ingredient safety and enhance transparency for consumers. Sara Brenner, MD, MPH, Acting FDA Commissioner, states the FDA will work together to “protect the health of consumers to ensure that food is a vehicle for wellness.” Additionally, the FDA and HHS launched a new transparency tool to enhance the understanding of chemical contaminants in food, thus furthering the latest and primary emphasis of HHS to end “America’s epidemic of chronic illness by focusing on safe, wholesome food, clean water, and the elimination of environmental toxins.”

The removal of toxic ingredients from our food supply and the environment will lead to a significant victory for public health, but it will take time. So, what can we do today? Think “Daily Detox.” The body has its own highly effective detoxification systems, that works primarily through the liver, kidneys, lungs, digestive system, and skin. However, the typical American diet is often lacking in the micronutrients and functional food components that support the optimal functioning of these organs for daily detoxification. Therefore, it’s essential to prioritize healthy habits every day. As an example, Jason Karp, exemplifies the power of clean, toxin-free food on health and disease. In his twenties, he was diagnosed with several autoimmune diseases and an incurable degenerative eye disease that would eventually leave him blind. Refusing to give up, Jason dramatically improved his nutrition and lifestyle by focusing on whole, unprocessed foods and eliminating chemical additives commonly found in most consumer products. As a result, Jason healed his ailments and restored his eyesight. He then left his successful finance career to devote his efforts to promoting health and wellness as the CEO and founder of HumanCo while actively advocating against food toxins. Here are seven strategies to empower you to reduce toxins in your diet and boost toxin-fighting nutrients for optimal daily detox:

- Avoid ultra-processed foods (UPF), a term that indicates food products filled with toxins.
- Buy certified organic produce and products as much as possible.
- Maintain optimal hydration and electrolyte balance to support kidney function and toxin elimination; limit or avoid alcohol.
- Eat a wide variety of high-fiber and antioxidant-rich foods, including beans, legumes, vegetables, fruits, whole grains, green tea, dark chocolate, herbs and spices, and make sure to choose organic. These foods aid digestion, boost gut health, promote toxin elimination, strengthen the immune system, and reduce inflammation and oxidative stress from toxins.
- Sweat with exercise and sauna for daily elimination of toxins.
- Sleep well to support the glymphatic system, which clears toxins.
- Consult a functional medicine physician or dietitian if you have symptoms or health issues that need additional care.

Psychedelics and Healing Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Mary-Elizabeth Gifford, EVP, Psyence, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Julia Mirer, MD, Director of Strategy, NeuroPain Health, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Rick Doblin, PhD, Founder & Executive Director, Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS), United States

The psychedelic industry is experiencing a dramatic renaissance, driven by a surge of groundbreaking scientific research, shifting cultural attitudes, and growing political and financial support. Peer-reviewed studies published in top medical journals legitimize psychedelics as promising treatments for mental health conditions such as PTSD, depression, and addiction. High-profile advocates, including researchers, veterans, and investors from Silicon Valley and Wall Street, are accelerating the mainstreaming of these substances, while media coverage—ranging from Oprah to *60 Minutes*—keeps public interest high. This momentum has inspired a patchwork of successful state and local decriminalization efforts, although no local reform provides a safe harbor from federal law.

This modern psychedelic revival is rooted in both ancient ritual and recent history, with cultural icons, scientific pioneers, and policy reformers shaping a new era of consciousness exploration. From the countercultural highs of the 1960s to the setbacks of the War on Drugs in the 70s, and now toward a potential pharmaceutical future, psychedelics are re-emerging with a powerful blend of spiritual legacy and medical promise. As public sentiment shifts and investor interest intensifies, the path ahead is complex but hopeful, signaling that psychedelic medicine may soon move from the fringes into the heart of global wellness and mental health care.

Five emerging trends reveal the new geography of psychedelic healing: the landscape for 2025 holds both hills and valleys, with a bright horizon ahead.



[> Explore the Psychedelics and Healing Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: Washington, D.C., the New Psychedelic Capital

When did the unofficial psychedelic capital of America shift from its longtime spiritual home in San Francisco's Haight-Ashbury neighborhood to 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue? Some say it may have happened on October 25, when then-candidate for Secretary of Health and Human Services, Robert F. Kennedy Jr., stated (via X) that “the war on public health is about to end. This includes its aggressive suppression of psychedelics.” Others point to February 13, when Kennedy's nomination was confirmed by a vote in the US Senate, officially making him the 26th Secretary of Health and Human Services.

As the lead agency overseeing the FDA, Secretary Kennedy's HHS is now at the forefront of psychedelic policy. The FDA has already approved a record number of six Phase 3 investigational trials evaluating psychedelic compounds, including psilocybin for treatment-resistant depression, psilocybin and a psilocybin analog for major depressive disorder, a derivative of LSD for generalized anxiety disorder, ketamine for alcohol use disorder, and MDMA for PTSD.

“We can be cautiously optimistic about the future of FDA-regulated psychedelic medicine,” said Melissa Lavasani, CEO and founder of the Psychedelic Medicine Coalition, the only Washington, D.C.-based nonprofit advocating for both psychedelic medicine and patient care on Capitol Hill.

Resources

- <https://x.com/RobertKennedyJr/status/1849925311586238737?lang=en>
- <https://psychedelicalpha.com/data/psychedelic-drug-development-tracker>
- <https://thedaesreport.com/psychedelics/melissa-lavasani-and-whiz-buckley-on-psychedelic-trends-in-2025/>

TREND 2: Make Ibogaine Great Again

The “Year of Ibogaine” kicked off in January 2025, when former Texas Governor Rick Perry was reportedly spotted in Joe Rogan's Austin recording studio—minus his signature Stetson, and instead wearing a “Make Ibogaine Great Again” hat.

While ibogaine—a traditional healing remedy derived from the bark of the *Tabernanthe iboga* root native to West Central Africa—may be making headlines now, it's been on the radar of Rex Elsass for years. Elsass, founder of the REID Foundation, has long championed emerging treatments for addiction and mental health, along with the policy reforms needed to support them. Ibogaine, he says, is at the center of research efforts because of the staggering human toll of addiction and the lack of viable treatment options, noting that the US spends about \$1.5 trillion annually on opioid-related issues.

According to Elsass, recent studies suggest that ibogaine may be capable of resolving addiction with a single dose, delivering long-lasting results. Researchers are also investigating the use of magnesium infusions to reduce the significant cardiac risks associated with the treatment.

The Texas Ibogaine Initiative, a groundbreaking public-private partnership backed by the REID Foundation, aims to fund ibogaine-based therapies for opioid use disorder and co-occurring mental health conditions. The initiative, now before the Texas legislature, has full support from Governor Perry, who publicly endorsed it on Joe Rogan's podcast in January.

That same month, another high-profile ibogaine supporter was seen in the Capitol Rotunda: Google co-founder Sergey Brin, the world's ninth-richest person, who attended the presidential inauguration alongside several tech elites. Brin has made a multi-million-dollar investment in the psychedelic biotech firm Soneira, which is conducting cutting-edge research into the pharmaceutical applications of iboga alkaloids.

“Ibogaine biopharma development may be essential for public health,” observed Simeon Schnapper, managing partner of JLS Fund, who first became aware of ibogaine when he was 17 years old, living in Ghana. “Evidence-based studies indicate that regulated medicinal ibogaine may help address a spectrum of urgent public health challenges,” he added. Schnapper noted that ibogaine may make a difference to epidemiological medical outcomes in this nation, as Americans “continue to drop dead from fentanyl, suffer from a lack of treatment options for TBI (traumatic brain injury), and reckon with the ongoing and shameful epidemic of 20 veteran suicides per day.”

Resources

- [The Joe Rogan Experience #2251 - Rick Perry & W. Bryan Hubbard](#)
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0378874107004321?via%3Dihub>
- <https://psychedelicalpha.com/news/p%CE%B1-psychedelic-bulletin-186-as-trump-takes-office-impact-on-psychedelics-field-remains-unclear-the-jurvetsons-discuss-psychedelics-at-dld-gh-shares-poc-data>

TREND 3: Ethics and Safety

“Safety and ethics are now the number one concern of industry players, and even more so of consumers,” says Jules Evans, a writer and researcher focused on the history of wellness. He runs a nonprofit called the Challenging Psychedelic Experiences Project. He edits a Substack called *Ecstatic Integration*, both of which explore the darker side of wellness, particularly to psychedelics.

“With more tripping will come more psychic terror,” *Wired* magazine once predicted. And while psychedelics have been used medicinally for millennia, they are not a panacea, according to Evans. He credits the pandemic-era increase in public awareness of mental health with fueling interest in psychedelic therapies, but that exploration also had a downside. “During the pandemic, people were drawn to powerful healing practices like psychedelics, but some people got hurt,” he noted.

His nonprofit works to provide education about “psychedelic harms and how to avoid, reduce, or respond to them through academic research.” His efforts have been featured by NBC, Oprah, the *Daily Mail*, *Vox*, and the BBC. The Challenging Psychedelic Experiences Project also launched the first online support group for people experiencing post-psychedelic difficulties.

Although Evans may have been among the first to raise public awareness of the existential distress that some psychedelic experiences can provoke, he is no longer the only voice. Among those seemingly inspired by his pioneering work is the newly launched Psychedelic Safety Institute, which describes itself as “a collaborative initiative to improve psychedelic public health and safety.” It joins the nonprofit Fireside Project, which runs a peer-support hotline, as a growing resource in the field.

Even the world’s largest psychedelic science research center, Johns Hopkins Center for Psychedelic & Consciousness Research, has shared a Public Service Announcement titled “Risks, Side Effects, and Potential Harms.”

The evidence-based message stands in contrast to the 1980s Partnership for a Drug-Free America, ‘80s Anti-Drug Commercial - Your Brain On Drugs which states: “this is your brain on drugs.”

Resources

- <https://www.ecstaticintegration.org>
- <https://challengingpsychedelicexperiences.com/>
- <https://firesideproject.org/>
- [JHMI - Psychedelic Risks, Side Effects, and Potential Harms](#)

TREND 4: Psychedelics for Active-Duty Military and Veteran Health

Active-duty members of the military are now eligible to enroll in a first-ever psychedelic study held at Walter Reed Medical Center and at a second location in Texas. The study will investigate whether MDMA, informally known as Ecstasy or Molly, can relieve symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Congress appropriated \$9 million in funding for the study to the Department of Defense, with the support of retired Marine Lieutenant General Jack Bergman, a Republican congressman who co-chairs the bipartisan Psychedelic Caucus in Congress alongside Rep. Lou Correa (D-California).

This bipartisan effort, known as PATH, the Congressional Psychedelics Advancing Therapies Caucus, is not a decriminalization initiative, nor does it advocate for the legalization of recreational psychedelic use. Instead, the caucus supports federally backed research into therapeutic applications.

What's next on its agenda? With strong support from the D.C.-based nonprofit, the Psychedelic Medicine Coalition, the caucus plans to introduce legislation to fund veteran access to psychedelic-based treatment options.

"This is a watershed moment," said Melissa Lavasani, founder and CEO of the Coalition. "The data is clear: these therapies work. Veterans deserve access to safe, evidence-based treatments that address the root causes of their suffering, and this legislation delivers just that."

The bill calls for the Department of Veterans Affairs to establish five innovative centers focused on treating conditions such as PTSD that have resisted traditional therapies. Psychedelic treatments highlighted in the bill include MDMA, psilocybin, ibogaine, 5-MeO-DMT, ketamine, and others, as determined by the Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

"The legislation is a model of bipartisan collaboration and science-driven reform," said Lavasani, who called it "a blueprint for a new era of mental health care in the United States."

Resources

- <https://psychedelicalpha.com/news/mdma-for-active-duty-troops-aaron-wolfgang-on-dods-unprecedented-study>
- <https://www.militarytimes.com/news/your-military/2025/03/17/dod-commits-98-million-to-study-psychedelics-for-active-duty-troops/>
- <https://www.psychedellicmedicinecoalition.org/advocacy>

TREND 5: Big is Back - Big Pharma - Big Vision

Spravato, a form of ketamine approved for the treatment of depression, has been called the first psychedelic to achieve FDA approval. It reached another milestone in 2024 by generating \$1 billion in sales for Johnson & Johnson. This blockbuster figure earned recognition in March from the *Wall Street Journal*, which highlighted the growing opportunity in psychedelic biopharma. "Despite significant patient demand, innovation in mental health drugs has lagged," the Journal noted, adding, "This isn't for lack of patient demand. More than one in five Americans lives with a mental illness."

The Journal further observed: "Yet for those willing to endure the risks, the rewards, both financial and clinical, can be significant."

"Take the psychedelics industry: there are now dozens of startups conducting clinical trials on substances such as LSD, MDMA, and psilocybin. Scientists don't fully understand yet how psychedelics help patients,

but it is clear that many report benefits for a variety of conditions such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), anxiety, and depression,” reports the WSJ, adding, “While these therapies haven’t yet widespread backing from Big Pharma, some biotech companies, including Compass Pathways and Cybin, are moving the ball forward.”

AbbVie, the world’s fifth-largest pharmaceutical company, isn’t waiting on the sidelines. It has invested \$65 million in Gilgamesh Pharmaceuticals, which is researching novel neuroplastogens, compounds some describe as next-generation psychedelics without the hallucinogenic effects. According to a report from psychedelic biopharma analyst Josh Hardman, the agreement could be worth nearly \$2 billion for Gilgamesh. Hardman, a graduate of the London School of Economics, is the founder of *Psychedelic Alpha*, widely considered the gold standard for psychedelic industry news and data.

But Big Pharma isn’t the only source of momentum for psychedelic medicine. Some of the larger-than-life entrepreneurs who’ve reshaped how Americans live, work, and explore the world are also getting involved.

Notably, new investors in psychedelic medicine include Antonio Gracias, a private equity investor involved in several Elon Musk ventures, including Tesla, SpaceX, and, most recently, efforts to overhaul the US Social Security system. Gracias is reportedly considering majority ownership of Lykos, a biopharma company developing MDMA-based treatments. Another high-profile investor is Sergey Brin, co-founder of Google, who has reportedly invested in Soneira, a biotech firm developing ibogaine therapies for neuropsychiatric conditions.

Resources

- <https://www.wsj.com/tech/biotech/big-pharma-walked-away-from-mental-health-why-some-are-coming-back-e2f1ec15?st=fWB9En>
- <https://psychedelicalpha.com/news/breaking-abbvie-inks-deal-with-gilgamesh-pharmaceuticals>
- <https://www.ft.com/content/ae447a7f-4252-4150-9eee-6bba7ce99905>

Respiratory Wellness Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Leo M. Tonkin, Founder & CEO of SALT Chamber, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Dr. John Ryan, Chief Strategy Officer, Allergy Standards Ltd., Ireland

The 2025 Respiratory Wellness Initiative trends reflect accelerating climate impacts, technological integration, and systemic health challenges. Building on the foundations established in previous years, this year's forecast emphasizes adaptive innovations, cross-sector collaboration, and targeted interventions for emerging environmental threats. Below are eight trends shaping respiratory wellness.

TREND 1: Greener Cities Designed for Better Breathing

Urban green corridors with trees and vegetation enhance air quality by reducing particulate matter and cooling urban areas through natural processes, such as transpiration. Cities worldwide are adopting green urban planning strategies to combat pollution and promote respiratory health.

Resources

- <https://blog.bluebeam.com/green-corridors-climate-change/>
- <https://blog.mipimworld.com/guide-green-real-estate/green-real-estate-shaping-urban-cities-sustainability/>



> [Explore the Respiratory Wellness Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 2: Intensified Agricultural Respiratory Risks

Changing farming practices and climate-driven shifts in land use are creating new respiratory hazards. Increased use of biofertilizers, desertification dust storms, and crop-burning particulates contribute to agricultural pneumoconiosis cases rising 22% in key grain belts. Converting natural ecosystems to agricultural land alters local climate patterns and reduces biodiversity. Clearing forests for livestock-related activities not only eliminates an important tool for absorbing CO₂, but also contributes to increased CO₂ emissions in the atmosphere, exacerbating global warming.

Resources

- “Deforestation and Climate Change,” <https://www.climatecouncil.org.au/deforestation/>
- “Pulmonary Health Effects of Agriculture,” <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4764055/>

TREND 3: Global IAQ Standardization Partnerships

The WHO-UNEP Clean Air Accord establishes unified indoor air quality metrics across 48 nations, mandating CO₂ thresholds (maximum of 800 ppm) and PM_{2.5} limits (10 µg/m³) in public buildings. Governments and organizations are implementing stricter IAQ regulations in 2025, driven by health concerns and sustainability goals.

Resources

- <https://iaqcert.com/the-importance-of-indoor-air-quality-in-2025-and-how-to-get-certified/>

TREND 4: AI-Driven Predictive Pulmonary Networks

AI-powered wearables and predictive models are revolutionizing respiratory care by monitoring conditions like asthma and COPD in real-time, enabling timely interventions.

Machine learning algorithms are being used to predict exacerbations of respiratory diseases based on environmental and patient-specific data. The EU’s RESPIRE project demonstrated 34% fewer asthma hospitalizations through machine learning models predicting individual susceptibility windows during pollen/ozone spikes.

Resources

- <https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/digital-health/articles/10.3389/fdgth.2024.1502434/full>
- <https://theconversation.com/listening-to-asthma-and-copd-an-ai-powered-wearable-could-monitor-respiratory-health-175301>
- <https://www.clinicbarcelona.org/en/news/the-respire-excel-project-has-won-an-award-from-the-marie-sklodowska-curie-actions-doctoral-network-in-the-horizon-europe-framework-programme>

TREND 5: Wellness Travel Focused on Clean Air

Destinations like Switzerland and New Zealand are gaining popularity for their pristine air quality and eco-friendly tourism initiative. Certifications for wellness travel now emphasize clean air standards, aligning with sustainable tourism practices. More and more travelers are booking accommodations with an emphasis on clear air. Likewise, hospitality is adopting cleaner standards, incorporating such measures as in room air purifiers, filtration and monitors.

Resources

- <https://www.projectboldlife.com/experiences/7-vacation-spots-when-you-want-breath-clean-air/>

TREND 6: Better Vaccines for Older Adults

New RSV vaccines for older adults are showing high efficacy rates in preventing severe respiratory infections, addressing age-related vulnerabilities in lung function. These vaccines represent a significant advancement in protecting aging populations from respiratory diseases.

Resources

- “Efficacy and Safety of an mRNA-Based RSV PreF Vaccine in Older Adults,” <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38091530/>
- <https://www.yalemedicine.org/news/should-you-get-an-rsv-vaccine>

TREND 7: Innovations for Wildfire Air Safety

Wildfires contribute significantly to poor air quality through particulate matter emissions, which exacerbate respiratory conditions like asthma and bronchitis.

Efforts such as drone technology for creating clean-air corridors during wildfires are being explored to mitigate these risks. While other environmental measures are needed, the respiratory impact to the first responders and citizens is causing increased respiratory conditions.

Resources

- “Climate Change and Respiratory Diseases,” <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9487563/>

TREND 8: Promoting Fair Access to Respiratory Health Resources

Addressing disparities in respiratory health requires eliminating environmental risks and improving access to healthcare for underserved communities. Programs by organizations like the American Thoracic Society focus on achieving health equity through advocacy, education, and policy changes.

Resources

- <https://site.thoracic.org/clinicians-researchers/health-equity>

Sleep Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Allison Howard, Founder and CEO, Nollapelli, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: JD Velilla, Founder, Designing Sleep, United States

The Future of Sleep: Five Key Trends Shaping 2025

Sleep is undergoing a transformation as science, technology, and wellness converge. Sleep apnea innovation is making early detection easier with AI-driven diagnostics and new treatments like GLP-1 medications. Sleep anxiety is emerging as a major wellness concern, driven by digital overload and economic stress, with experts advocating mindful sleep practices over perfectionism. AI-powered sleep solutions are revolutionizing sleep research, consumer tech, and hospitality, from smart CPAP machines to personalized sleep coaching. Meanwhile, sleep tourism is evolving beyond luxury mattresses—hotels like Sensei and Carillon Miami Beach are integrating biometrics, circadian lighting, and tailored relaxation programs to enhance rest. At the same time, more couples are reconsidering traditional sleeping arrangements, with the “sleep divorce” trend continuing to gain traction as individuals prioritize sleep quality over sharing a bed. As sleep science advances, businesses that embrace these trends will redefine how we sleep, recover, and recharge.

TREND 1: Restless Minds, Sleepless Nights – The Rise of Sleep Anxiety in a 24/7 World

Sleep anxiety is emerging as a critical wellness challenge in 2025, fueled by increasing digital dependency, economic uncertainty, and the lingering effects of pandemic-era sleep disruptions. Defined as excessive worry about sleep quality or the inability to fall asleep, sleep anxiety affects millions worldwide, contributing to the broader sleep deprivation crisis.



According to the American Academy of Sleep Medicine, sleep anxiety has become more prevalent, particularly among younger generations, who experience heightened stress from social media, career instability, and 24/7 connectivity. A recent study published in *Sleep Medicine Reviews* found that nearly 40% of Gen Z adults report sleep-related anxiety at least three times a week, a significant increase from previous years.

Technological advancements in sleep tracking devices and apps, while designed to improve sleep hygiene, may paradoxically exacerbate sleep anxiety. A study published in the *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine* highlights the rise of “orthosomnia,” a phenomenon where individuals become obsessed with achieving perfect sleep, leading to heightened stress and poorer sleep outcomes.

[> Explore the Sleep Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

In response, wellness brands and sleep experts are advocating for mindful sleep practices, including cognitive behavioral therapy for insomnia (CBT-I), digital detox strategies, and sleep-focused AI solutions that prioritize relaxation over rigid sleep goals. As sleep anxiety continues to rise, businesses that integrate stress-reducing sleep solutions will play a crucial role in reshaping the sleep industry in 2025.

Resources

- American Academy of Sleep Medicine. (2024). "The Impact of Sleep Anxiety on Public Health."
- *Sleep Medicine Reviews*. (2024). "Generational Sleep Anxiety Trends: A Longitudinal Study."
- *Journal of Clinical Sleep Medicine*. (2024). "Orthosomnia and the Psychological Effects of Sleep Tracking Technology."

TREND 2: The AI Sleep Revolution– Smarter Tech, Better Rest

Rapid improvements in AI technology are fundamentally disrupting many industries and disciplines. And sleep is no exception. While the technology is still maturing, AI is already making significant impacts in sleep research, consumer sleep technologies and services, treatments and disorder management, and hospitality experiences.

Sleep Research and Diagnostics

- AI-driven algorithms are driving new solutions, such as EnsoData, that analyze polysomnography (PSG) data more efficiently, helping detect sleep disorders like sleep apnea and insomnia with higher accuracy.
- Advancements in sleep medicine: Artificial intelligence enables analysis of "big data," which combines clinical, environmental and laboratory-based objective measures to allow a deeper understanding of sleep and sleep disorders. AI is now being deployed in the screening, endotyping, diagnosing, and treating sleep disorders.

Consumer Sleep Technology and Services

- Personalized sleep insights and AI-powered sleep coaching: Machine learning models process large datasets from individuals to provide tailored sleep recommendations. Many consumer products and services collecting user sleep data will deliver power insights to help people improve their sleep outcomes.
- Smart sleep products: Traditional product categories, such as mattresses, lighting, thermostats, and watches, are being transformed using AI-technology to deliver data-driven personalized sleep experiences.

Treatment and Sleep Disorder Management

- AI-driven CPAP machines: AI optimizes CPAP settings for individuals with sleep apnea, improving adherence and comfort. A great example of this is ResMed's patient-centered application MyAir, which allows users to view CPAP data and features [AI-powered chats](#) to support the patient and improve CPAP adherence success.
- Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for Insomnia: AI-powered services are now providing evidence-based digital therapy for insomnia without needing a human therapist.
- Real-Time Sleep Disorder Detection: AI-enabled home monitoring solutions can detect irregular breathing, restless leg syndrome, and other sleep issues.

Hospitality Experiences

- AI-Powered smart rooms: Hotels are now looking to integrate AI-driven experiences based on guest preferences. Smart room features include voice-controlled assistants (e.g., Alexa for Hospitality), and IoT-connected lighting, climate control, and beds that optimize sleep experiences.

- Chatbots and virtual concierges: AI-powered chatbots and virtual assistants provide 24/7 guest support, answering common questions, even managing bookings, and offering personalized recommendations to optimize the guest experience.

Resources

- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/34166990/>
- <https://www.ensodata.com/ai-scoring-faq/>
- <https://investor.resmed.com/news-events/press-releases/detail/384/resmed-unveils-new-collection-of-digital-and-personalized-solutions-designed-to-improve-sleep-health>

TREND 3: Sleep Sells – Hotels are Cashing in on the Multi-Billion Dollar Rest Revolution

Sleep tourism is evolving beyond luxury mattresses to holistic, science-backed sleep experiences. As travelers increasingly prioritize rest, hotels are responding with specialized sleep programs, premium bedding, and even sleep coaching services—turning quality sleep into a marketable, high-value amenity.

According to a [2024 survey](#) by the GWI Sleep Initiative and Serta Simmons Hospitality Bedding, 91% of frequent travelers are willing to pay up to 10% more for sleep-enhancing accommodations. This comes as 63% of travelers report worse sleep while away, with noise (75%), lighting (72%), and bedding (70%) as top disruptors. Leading hotels are tackling these issues head-on.

Hilton highlights “[Sleep Tourizzzm 2.0](#)” as a top trend in their 2025 Trends Report and notes that more than one in four travelers will book a spa or wellness treatment to enhance their sleep while on vacation. Other hospitality brands are also expanding beyond premium bedding to full sensory sleep experiences like in-room sound baths and guided meditation services to help guests unwind.

Luxury wellness retreats are at the forefront of this movement. [Sensei Porcupine Creek](#) combines cutting-edge biometric tracking with science-backed sleep coaching to optimize rest, while [Carillon Miami Wellness Resort](#) offers sleep-focused spa treatments and AI-powered smart beds designed to enhance recovery. Properties like [Six Senses](#) provide specialized sleep programs with personalized consultations, and others integrate circadian lighting and aromatherapy-infused turn-down services. This shift reflects a broader industry movement toward holistic, multi-sensory sleep solutions designed to enhance rest and relaxation.

Beyond luxury, demand for wellness-driven sleep features is growing. 74% of travelers value eco-friendly sleep amenities, and 59% actively seek out properties offering sleep-focused perks like white noise machines, blackout curtains, and relaxation apps. Some hotels even offer sleep concierges, reinforcing rest as the ultimate hospitality luxury.

As 2025 unfolds, expect hotels to push the boundaries—monetizing circadian lighting, soundproofing, air quality, smart mattresses and bespoke relaxation rituals. In a world where rest is increasingly scarce, hotels that master the art of sleep will reap the rewards.

Resources

- <https://beautyresthospitality.com/road-warrior-survey/>

TREND 4: A New Dawn for Sleep Apnea – Advances in Detection and Treatment

While sleep apnea is one of the two most common sleep disorders (i.e., sleep apnea and insomnia), under-diagnosis has historically been an issue. Untreated sleep apnea can be associated with hypertension, type 2 diabetes, stroke, depression and drowsy driving accidents. The classic approach for diagnosing sleep apnea is for patients to have an overnight sleep study (i.e., polysomnography) or home-sleep study. Either

due to stigma (e.g., patients not wanting to admit snoring), or insufficient focus on health, we are not seeing sufficient detection of sleep apnea. It has been thrilling for the sleep medicine community to see [Apple launch early detection of sleep apnea](#). This addition makes it much easier for early signs of sleep apnea to be captured by simply having an app launched on the cell phone.

In addition, we are seeing a trend in advancements of treatment approaches for sleep apnea. To start, there is continued growth in the number of patients implanted with hypoglossal nerve stimulators (e.g., Inspire). This treatment is offered to individuals who fail to acclimate to CPAP and meet the appropriate criteria for surgery. Also, given the strong correlation between weight gain or obesity and sleep apnea, the most recent trend in treating sleep apnea involves the use of GLP-1s (glucagon-like peptide-1), a naturally occurring hormone released by the intestines in response to food intake and essential for controlling blood sugar levels and appetite. [In October 2024, the FDA approved the first GLP-1 for management of sleep apnea.](#)

Innovations in the sleep apnea management space are highlighting a growing trend in awareness about the disorder, and new access to identify and treat it. While it might take time to significantly reduce the high prevalence of undiagnosed and untreated sleep apnea, it's exciting to see the trends supporting such changes.

Resources

- [FDA Approves First Medication for Obstructive Sleep Apnea | FDA](#)

TREND 5: The Continuing Rise of the “Sleep Divorce” – A Growing Trend in Modern Relationships

The “sleep divorce” trend—where couples opt for separate sleeping arrangements to improve rest—is continuing to gain traction. A 2024 American Academy of Sleep Medicine (AASM) survey found that more than one-third of Americans (35%) occasionally or consistently sleep in a separate room from their partner due to issues like snoring, differing sleep schedules, and restlessness. Sleep scientist Wendy Troxel, a leading expert on the topic, notes that prioritizing rest doesn't mean sacrificing intimacy but rather enhancing wellbeing for both partners. A 2024 RAND Corporation analysis suggests that rebranding this choice as a “sleep alliance” better reflects its benefits, emphasizing collaboration over separation.

High-profile advocates, including Cameron Diaz and Barbara Corcoran, have recently shared their support for separate bedrooms, adding to a growing cultural shift. A 2025 *Guardian* op-ed further argues that societal expectations around co-sleeping need re-examining, as research increasingly highlights the negative impact of disrupted sleep on health and relationships.

While objective sleep data often supports solo sleeping, many couples still prioritize emotional closeness. As awareness grows, more people are experimenting with flexible arrangements—like designated nights apart or sleep-friendly room designs. With sleep science advancing and personal wellbeing taking center stage, this trend is likely to keep evolving, challenging long-standing norms about what it means to share a bed.

Resources

- American Academy of Sleep Medicine. “Americans opting for ‘sleep divorce’ to accommodate a bed partner.” July 15, 2024. <https://aasm.org/americans-opting-sleep-divorce-accommodate-bed-partner/>
- RAND Corporation (2024) – “Sleep Alliance: Rebranding ‘Sleep Divorce’ for Better Rest” <https://www.rand.org/pubs/commentary/2024/07/sleep-alliance-rebranding-sleep-divorce-for-better.html>
- Mizoguchi, Karen. “Barbara Corcoran Says She Prefers Separate Bedrooms from Husband Bill Because It Keeps Sex ‘Short’ (Exclusive).” *People*, December 2, 2024. <https://people.com/barbara-corcoran-why-she-likes-having-separate-bedroom-from-husband-bill-sex-short-exclusive-8754092>
- *The Guardian* (2025) – “Separate Beds Can Save Your Relationship—So Why Is ‘Sleep Divorce’ Still Taboo?” <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2025/jan/08/sleep-divorce-separate-beds-relationship>

Sport and Hospitality Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Patricia Ladis, Holistic Physical Therapist, Behavioral Breathing Analyst, Biomechanical Analysis Founder & CEO, WiseBody PT, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Lynelle Lynch, Owner, Running Y Resort & Bellus Academy, United States

The sports hospitality sector is undergoing a dynamic transformation as we enter 2025. Driven by a convergence of technology, shifting consumer behaviors, and a growing emphasis on wellness and sustainability, this sector is evolving into a key touchpoint for experiential travel, brand engagement, and elite athlete support. Fans and guests are no longer just spectators—they are active participants seeking immersive, personalized, and high-performance environments. From AI-driven concierge services to wellness lounges and corporate-hosted events, the future of sports hospitality is as much about connection and innovation as it is about the games themselves. These trends reflect the future-forward trajectory of this rapidly expanding space.

TREND 1: Smart Technology Integration in Sports Venues

By 2025, sports venues are anticipated to transform into digitally immersive hubs through the incorporation of smart technologies. Augmented reality (AR) and virtual reality (VR) enhance fan engagement via interactive displays, virtual tours, and live-game improvements. AI-driven services provide real-time feedback, personalized concierge assistance, and crowd management. Hotels associated with sports events are also upgrading their rooms with connected devices, AI voice assistants, and mobile-integrated



[> Explore the Sport and Hospitality Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

check-in systems. These advancements foster a seamless and tailored guest experience, fulfilling the expectations of digital-native fans.

Resources:

- [ScienceDirect – Emerging Technologies and the Future of Sport Hospitality, 2025](#)
- [LinkedIn Pulse – Trends Shaping the Sports Hospitality Industry, Navnath Shete, 2025](#)
- [Knowland – Sports Tourism Events for Hotels, 2024](#)

TREND 2: Sustainability as a Competitive Advantage

Sustainability is now a key aspect of the sports hospitality experience. Consumers are prioritizing eco-friendly options, and venues are responding with renewable energy solutions, plastic-free policies, and locally sourced food. Hotels supporting major sporting events are embracing LEED-certified architecture, carbon offset programs, and energy-efficient technologies. Sustainable practices are viewed not only as ethical imperatives but also as competitive differentiators that attract environmentally conscious travelers and business partnerships alike.

Resources:

- [LinkedIn Pulse – Trends Shaping the Sports Hospitality Industry, Navnath Shete, 2025](#)
- [TBRC – Sports Hospitality Market Overview, March 2025](#)
- [ScienceDirect – Emerging Technologies and the Future of Sport Hospitality, 2025](#)

TREND 3: The Surge of Sports Tourism

Sports tourism is emerging as one of the fastest-growing segments in the hospitality industry and is projected to generate billions in economic impact. Events such as the Olympics, the World Cup, and Formula 1 attract waves of international travelers, prompting hospitality providers to create packages that combine event access with luxury accommodations, wellness treatments, and curated experiences. Cities like Melbourne, which hosts the Australian Grand Prix, report over \$50 million in economic benefits from such events. This surge is compelling hoteliers to incorporate sport-centric experiences into their guest offerings.

Resources:

- [The Australian – Sydney Fireworks vs Taylor Swift, 2025](#)
- [Knowland – Sports Tourism Events for Hotels, 2024](#)
- [TBRC – Sports Hospitality Market Overview, March 2025](#)

TREND 4: The Rise of Corporate Sports Hospitality

Corporate investment in sports hospitality is growing as brands seek premium spaces to host clients, motivate employees, and connect with aspirational lifestyle messaging. Hospitality suites at sporting events provide exclusive access, networking opportunities, and gourmet experiences. Companies are increasingly utilizing these high-touch environments as platforms for relationship-building and brand storytelling. With a projected CAGR of 22.1%, the global sports hospitality market is expected to reach \$61.94 billion by 2030.

Resources:

- [Globe Newswire – Sport Hospitality Market Forecast to 2030, December 2024](#)
- [TBRC – Sports Hospitality Market Overview, March 2025](#)

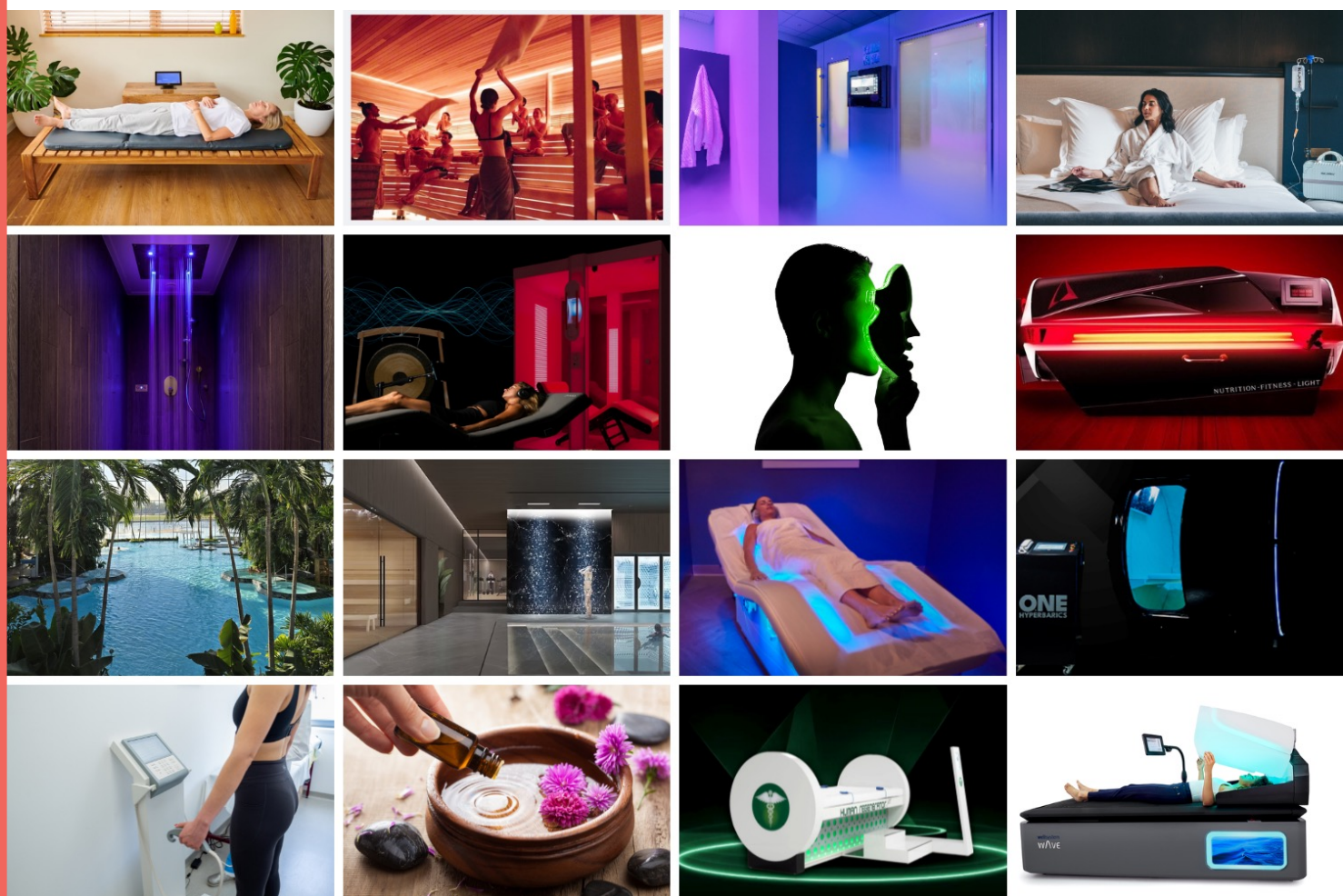
Touchless Wellness Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Erin Lee, Founder of the Touchless Wellness Association, United Kingdom

Initiative Vice-Chair: Alina Hernandez, Wellness Concept Creator/Advisory Board Member, Germany

Over the past year, touchless wellness has firmly established itself as a bridge integrating high-tech solutions with traditional high-touch models. This integration marks a significant shift within the Fourth Industrial Revolution rather than just a passing trend. Building on last year's advancements, this year's trends serve as a continuum, reinforcing the foundational principles of touchless wellness and highlighting the sector's ongoing growth and evolution. Like any innovation, integrating these principles takes time, but is crucial for designing and delivering touchless treatments, products, and services across existing and new business models.



[> Explore the Touchless Wellness Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: Think Quantum II

Many of us believe that the new understanding of the nature of the world and all existence is something new. And this is far from true by most accounts, as we now know, in the Second Quantum Revolution. The practical application of new knowledge that began in the late 19th century is already here in the technological advances we are seeing popping up everywhere. What are some of the concrete takeaways and applications?

- The more precise we are about certain properties of something, the less precise we will be about others—we call this the “precision paradox.”
- Perception, limiting beliefs, and mindset help us understand the nature of “quantum,” the biology of belief, and the shifting nature of reality.
- Quantification of energy exchange, including human interaction.
- Hardware technologies in health and wellness include lasers, LEDs, optical fibers, barcodes, and your new wellness lounge.

Resources

- [Polytechnique Paris Insights](#)

TREND 2: Embrace the Hybrid Wellness Experience by Using Service Design

Manage the complexity of integrating hardware technologies and new knowledge by starting with human-centric service design. This method is an efficient and highly effective way to design the guest and user experience. Starting with the user/customer’s desires and needs, it allows to reverse engineer and deliver high value and big ROI. This approach is particularly crucial as environments evolve to be seamlessly integrated— in-person and online—while balancing human service providers with robotics, digital assets, diagnostics, and customer management systems.

TREND 3: Integrate Behavior Autonomy with Objective Data

“The more you try to insert information and advice into others, the more they tend to back off and resist.” This insight, encapsulated in the field of motivational interviewing, is generally accepted as the guiding principle for successful long-term behavioral change. When applied to the use of any technology, wellness routine, or other health-related element, it is essential to recognize that people will only engage with things they perceive as interesting and likeable.

Therefore, consider this knowledge when designing multi-vertical services with both human and touchless products and services. Ultimately, the long-term success of owners, operators, and customers depends on effectively managing and implementing this approach across tools, devices, products, and services.

Resources

- Miller and Rollnic, *Motivational Interviewing*, The Guilford Press, 2023

TREND 4: Curating with AI and Other Digital Assets to Support the Transition from Personalization to Precision

The wellness industry is shifting from broad personalization to precision solution distribution, leveraging emerging AI and digital assets to deliver hyper-targeted, data-driven delivery models. This is the next evolution of health and wellbeing.

Rather than generalized personalization, AI now processes real-time biometrics, genetic data, and behavioral insights to craft precision-based wellness recommendations that will continue to be more definitive, effective, and accessible.

AI-driven analytics and digital assets—including blockchain technologies that produce AI-driven wellness “passports”—are creating a landscape that is becoming more predictive, proactive, and precise.

This means wellness is no longer one-size-fits-all, or even one-size-fits-some: it can be uniquely tailored to an individual’s biology, lifestyle, and real-time needs, creating an autonomous and constantly evolving ecosystem of precision wellness. Precision needs curation to account for the ever-changing upgrades and shifts of both technology and behaviour, which means that even “precision” is constantly evolving.

TREND 5: Harnessing Technology to Deliver “Wellness for All”

Technology continues to pave the way for more inclusive and accessible wellness products and services. This is bringing innovative treatments to a much broader audience—beyond the luxury or high-discretionary sector. Touchless solutions—from salt rooms to vibroacoustic loungers, cold plunges and breathing techniques—are making preventative wellness more widely available, regardless of age or socio-economic status.

As technology becomes ever more ubiquitous, the problem of overstimulation is accurate, and gamification can lead to addiction. Touchless wellness provides a much-needed counterbalance, offering parasympathetic experiences, promoting relaxation, reducing stress, and helping to alleviate screen fatigue while fostering a healthier relationship with technology.

By integrating technology as both a wellness tool and a “circuit breaker” against digital overload, we are moving closer to “wellness for all.”

Resources

- Touchless Wellness Association White Paper, *Embracing Tomorrow, Today*, GWI, 2024

Wellness Architecture & Design Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Lahra Tatriele, Co-Founder & Chief Wellness Strategist, Alchemy Concepts and Co-Founder, Fivelements, Asia

Initiative Vice-Chair: Valentina Cereda, Founder & Integrative Architect, Dubai

Discover the latest trends in architecture and design, from regenerative developments to integrating ancient practices and AI. Explore the concept of harmonic and silent architecture and the importance of designing analogue spaces for better sleep. Embrace innovative ideas that prioritize wellbeing, sustainability, and meaningful connections in built environments.

TREND 1: Regenerative Development for the Earth, Culture, Community, and Humanity

Regenerative development goes beyond sustainability by actively restoring ecosystems and human communities. It applies to various types of development, focusing on healing the land while ensuring equitable economic growth. This approach respects natural, cultural, and economic history, using past wisdom to guide present actions. Key principles include understanding ecosystems, preserving cultural



heritage, using local materials and labor, integrating native landscapes, and fostering community involvement. Regenerative development emphasizes holistic thinking, recognizing the interconnectedness of people, nature, and time.

TREND 2: Harmonic Architecture: Designing Spaces that Resonate with Human Wellbeing

Ancient civilizations have long understood the vibrational qualities of space, from the resonance of sacred temples to the natural frequency of earthen structures. Today, architects and designers are exploring how design can “tune” spaces to promote relaxation, cognitive clarity, and emotional balance. Research on architectural resonance, bio-harmonic design, and vibrational medicine shows that materials, proportions, and spatial design influence human physiology, cognition, and emotional states, affecting the nervous system and overall wellness.

[> Explore the Wellness Architecture & Design Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Architects can create environments that enhance wellbeing by integrating organic materials like bamboo, adobe, and clay with modern insights into frequency harmonization. This approach transforms buildings into living instruments that resonate with the human body, pioneering a new dimension of wellness architecture beyond aesthetics and sustainability.

TREND 3: Silent Architecture: Designing for acoustic wellness and mental clarity

Silent architecture is an emerging wellness trend, focusing on the creation of acoustically balanced, low-stimulation spaces that promote mental clarity, relaxation, and emotional wellbeing. As noise pollution and digital overload impact health, architects are integrating sound-absorbing materials, biophilic soundscapes, and EMF-free environments to foster focus and sensory restoration. These spaces incorporate organic forms, natural textures, and strategic zoning to reduce disturbances and enhance tranquility. From wellness retreats and meditation sanctuaries to quiet workspaces and urban zones, silent architecture is redefining how we experience space, offering a refuge from overstimulation and a path to mindfulness.

Key Principles

- Acoustic zoning and soundproofing: Layered soundproofing, quiet zones in public spaces, and insulation to reduce sound transmission.
- Natural soundscaping: Features like running water, wind chimes, and nature sounds, as well as green roofs, open courtyards, and living walls, reduce urban noise.
- Low-interference design: Minimizing mechanical noise from appliances and elevators, using anti-reverberation materials like felt and terra-cotta to absorb echoes.
- Architecture that breathes silence: Soft, organic materials, curved walls, void spaces, and layered facades to enhance tranquility.
- Psychological and cognitive benefits: Encourages neuroplasty, improves sleep, reduces anxiety, and supports deep focus—essential to creative and meditative work.

Future Vision

- Quieter cities: Urban planning focusing on silent zones with noise-reducing and EMF-free materials.
- Deep work offices: Silent pods designed for distraction-free productivity.
- Acoustic wellness at home: AI-driven sound masking systems and silent mediation rooms.

TREND 4: Designing Analogue Spaces for Better Health and Sleep

As technology and smart systems become more integrated into our daily lives, our environments are increasingly exposed to artificial electromagnetic fields (EMFs), which can negatively impact our health. These invisible frequencies disrupt our connection to the Earth's natural electromagnetic fields, leading to cellular stress, free radical formation, and inflammation. Integrating technology in a safer way can create healthier spaces that support overall wellbeing.

Key Principles

- Minimize radio frequencies: Wireless devices like Bluetooth speakers, cordless phones, air purifiers, and WiFi routers continuously emit EMFs. Opting for wired connections instead of wireless networks helps reduce exposure when designing wellness spaces.

- **Manage electrical cables:** Avoid placing electrical circuits under or behind beds, and keep reading lamps away from pillows, as they emit high electric fields even when turned off.
- **Reduce dirty electricity:** Avoid light dimmers and WiFi-connected switches. Instead, use traditional on/off switches and layered lighting for a healthier environment.
- **Optimize device placement:** Thoughtful positioning of technology in living and workspaces can significantly reduce EMF pollution. By following low EMF design strategies, we can create spaces that harmonize technology with wellbeing, promoting healthier and more balanced physical environments.

TREND 5: Off-the-Grid Living – Seeking Truth and Sustainability in a Disconnected World

As global tensions rise—political, social, and environmental—many people are turning to off-the-grid living to escape the stress of modern life. This movement emphasizes a return to authenticity and self-sufficiency, with individuals seeking truth in all aspects of life: food ingredients, energy sources, building materials, and healthcare. There's a growing desire for transparency and a rejection of misinformation. Many are opting for self-sustaining homes in remote locations, designed with sustainability in mind. These homes use renewable energy like solar or wind power, rainwater collection, and natural materials, offering a sanctuary from the chaos of modern society. The trend reflects a deeper yearning for peace, clarity, and a closer connection to nature, away from work and political upheaval complexities.

TREND 6: The Transformative Impact of Generative AI on Wellness Architecture

Generative AI tools, such as ChatGPT and DeepSeek, are assisting in revolutionizing wellness architecture and property development by enhancing the design processes through better datasets in several keyways:

- **Design optimization:** Generative AI can create multiple design options based on wellness criteria, allowing architects to explore innovative and tailored solutions that prioritize the health of the occupants.
- **Sustainability insights:** By analyzing trends in natural lighting, green spaces, and air quality, AI aids in integrating wellness principles into designs, ultimately promoting healthier living conditions.
- **Cost-effective solutions:** AI optimizes project budgets by assessing requirements and resource allocation, ensuring cost efficiency while maintaining high-quality solutions.
- **Enhanced decision-making:** By processing vast datasets, AI uncovers market trends and property values, improving investment strategies and enabling more informed decisions.

The adoption of these technologies brings with it navigational challenges, such as privacy risks and information overload, which require a guardianship to ensure accountability. DeepSeek utilizes a Mixture-of-Experts (MoE) approach, activating relevant parameters from its 671 billion parameters for efficiency, while ChatGPT relies on a traditional transformer model, resulting in notable trade-offs.

Ultimately, AI tools will reshape the property development industry and architectural designs, facilitating the creation of high-quality, personalized content. As technology continues to evolve, architects and developers must be cautious in recognizing the positive and negative outcomes when shaping a new narrative for a innovative living and working environment.

TREND 7: The Integration of Interactive Bio-Tracking Powered by AI

AI-powered bio-tracking is changing how we design wellness spaces, making them more intuitive, responsive, and deeply connected to human needs. Imagine walking into a room that instantly adjusts the lighting, temperature, and air quality based on how you're feeling—helping you focus, relax, or recover effortlessly. This is the future of intelligent design, where architecture and technology work together to create healthier spaces without overwhelming us.

How AI Is Transforming Wellness Spaces

- Spaces that adapt to you: Instead of static environments, AI allows lighting, sound, and airflow to shift dynamically, creating the perfect conditions for work, rest, or energy renewal.
- Smarter fitness & recovery: AI-powered motion tracking and virtual trainers help tailor workouts, ensuring better performance and safer rehabilitation.
- Better sleep, better health: Circadian lighting, AI-enhanced smart beds, and immersive sleep settings sync with your body's rhythm for deeper rest.
- Stress-reducing environments: AI-assisted meditation pods and stress-responsive office spaces help people feel calmer, more focused, and balanced throughout the day.
- Technology that feels natural: By blending AI with biophilic elements, sensory wellness strategies, and human-first design, we create spaces that feel organic, not over-engineered.

What's Next?

The future of AI-powered wellness design is already taking shape:

- Homes that learn from you: Spaces that adjust lighting, air filtration, and acoustics based on real-time biometrics.
- Workplaces designed for wellbeing: Offices that detect cognitive fatigue and automatically adapt to improve productivity.
- Wellness-driven cities: AI-enhanced green spaces, silent zones, and pollution monitoring for urban health.

TREND 8: The Placebo Effect of Design: Awareness Shapes Wellbeing

The placebo effect demonstrates that belief in an intervention can significantly impact outcomes—an idea that can be applied to design. A study from the early 2000s revealed that hotel maids who believed their cleaning duties counted as exercise lost more weight, even though their activity levels didn't change. This illustrates how awareness of an environment's wellness benefits can enhance the experience. As designers, we have the power to help people recognize the wellness potential in the spaces they inhabit. Despite growing discussions on wellness design in construction and hospitality, public awareness remains low. By creating engaging, accessible content—such as soundbites, fireside chats, and in-depth articles—we can make wellness design more relatable and mainstream, encouraging people to embrace its positive impact on their wellbeing.

Wellness Communities & Real Estate Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Teri Slavik-Tsuyuki, Principal, tst ink LLC, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Jean-François Garneau, Chief Development Officer, INITIAL Real Estate, Founder & Chief Possibilities Officer, ALIÖ – Building Wellbeing, Switzerland

The real estate industry is rapidly evolving to address growing consumer demand for wellness-centered spaces and the challenges of a changing world. This report explores six key trends shaping the future of real estate development and design in 2025. These trends emphasize holistic wellbeing, sustainability, and technological innovation to create spaces that enhance the lives of their occupants and communities.

TREND 1: Brain-Friendly Buildings - Real Estate That Rewires Your Brain

Integration of Neuro-Architecture for Mind Wellness

Developers and design teams embrace neuroscience to create environments promoting mental clarity, emotional resilience, and overall wellbeing. Neuro-architecture integrates features like biophilic design, circadian lighting, attention to acoustics, and sensory elements to optimize human health. Iconic examples like The Spine building in Liverpool showcase innovations like light-adaptive workspaces, integrated greenery for better air quality, and mindfulness zones designed to reduce stress.



[> Explore the Wellness Communities & Real Estate Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Residential applications are gaining traction. They offer restorative layouts and environments, improve focus, and integrate indoor and outdoor spaces for a deeper connection to nature and community. This shift reflects a growing recognition of the connection between mental health and the built environment, positioning real estate as a catalyst for improving quality of life.

Why This Matters

- Improved productivity and happiness: Biophilic design and optimized lighting can increase cognitive performance, reduce stress, and improve emotional wellbeing.
- Mental health priority: Tenants and buyers are willing to pay premiums for spaces that improve their quality of life.
- Aging population: With dementia rates doubling every five years after age 65, neuroscience-driven environments could support cognitive health and improve longevity.
- Market differentiation: Neuro-architecture positions developments as leaders in an increasingly competitive, health-focused market.

Key Questions for the Development Industry

- How can neuro-architecture principles be adapted for housing developments and other real estate assets?
- What tools or methods can measure the impact of these designs on mental wellness?
- How can developers implement these concepts in dense urban settings with limited access to natural elements?
- Can neuro-architecture features drive higher rents, faster sales or leasing, or stronger resale values?

Resources

- Terrapin Bright Green, "[The Economics of Biophilia](#)," 2022
- Arch Daily, "[The Science of Design: How Neuroscience Can Help Architects Shape the Built Environment](#)," 2024
- Arch Daily, "[Neuroarchitecture: How Your Brain Responds to Different Spaces](#)," 2022

TREND 2: Smart Wellness Ecosystems - Homes and Communities That Know You

The Rise of AI-Integrated Wellness Ecosystems

What if your house was your wearable? This bold vision is shaping the future of real estate. By integrating AI, IoT, and wellness design, homes can actively learn and adapt to occupants' needs—monitoring air quality, sleep patterns, the freshness of food in the refrigerator, and energy consumption while suggesting personalized health improvements. These technologies proactively enhance wellbeing while optimizing resource use.

Beyond individual homes, this trend extends to digitally connected communities. Wellness platforms integrate shared amenities, virtual fitness classes, and mental health resources, connecting residents to networks that foster social bonds and collaboration. Future innovations will focus on improving the accessibility and usability of wellness data to drive further design improvements and operational efficiencies, potentially impacting health insurance provision.

Why This Matters

- Health innovation: AI-powered homes and connected communities enhance health outcomes and lower operational costs for occupants.
- Market demand: Buyers are willing to pay more for proactive wellness features that improve quality of life and reduce resource consumption.
- Reduced turnover: Connected ecosystems promote belonging, leading to happier tenants and lower churn rates.
- Higher valuations: Smart wellness features increase property appeal, driving higher rents and resale prices.

Key Questions for the Development Industry

- How can developers balance affordability and accessibility when incorporating wellness technology?
- What are the ethical implications of collecting and utilizing health data in real estate?
- Can enhanced health and energy efficiencies reduce vacancy rates or improve long-term returns?
- How can AI-driven insights inform the design of future projects?

Resources

- Gartner, "Smart Home Technology Adoption Trends," 2023.
- Pew Research, "Digital Tools and Emotional Wellness," 2023.

TREND 3: Live, Work, Zen - Wellness Takes Main Stage

Wellness-Centric Mixed-Use Developments

Developers are redefining communities with wellness as their foundation, with as much attention paid to it at the start of a project as traditional infrastructure. Mixed-use developments are evolving into wellness hubs, where residential, commercial, and recreational spaces are seamlessly integrated, and wellness consultants, designers, and developers cooperate across asset classes, leveraging their collective strength from project conception to financing to partnerships to space design. These hubs prioritize wellness infrastructure like walkability, green spaces, social connections, healthy food access, fitness centers, micro-mobility, and access to healthcare, creating environments designed to promote holistic wellbeing.

Designed this way from the ground up, specifically considering their evolution and activation over time, these integrated and intentional projects promote long-term health and sustainability while meeting the demand for vibrant, connected spaces that offer convenience and a higher quality of life.

Why This Matters

- Holistic living: Communities that integrate work, leisure, and health improve overall wellbeing.
- Market demand: Younger generations increasingly prioritize wellness amenities and connected living.
- Sustainability: Walkable, car-free developments support environmental goals while fostering healthier lifestyles.
- Faster lease-ups: These projects attract buyers and renters faster, creating more substantial financial returns.

Key Questions for the Development Industry

- What role do public-private partnerships play in funding wellness hubs?
- How can developers maintain affordability while integrating high-quality wellness features?
- What innovations ensure these communities evolve to meet future resident needs?
- Can wellness hubs improve absorption rates and deliver more substantial exit valuations?

Resources

- Global Wellness Institute, “Wellness Real Estate: Trends and Opportunities,” 2022.
- National Association of Realtors, “2023 Home Buyer and Seller Trends,” 2023.
- Forbes.com, “[Residential Wellness Real Estate Explodes in Popularity, According to New Report,](#)” 2024.

TREND 4: Hot Spots and Cool Escapes - Wellness in a Changing Climate

Redefining Tourism and Real Estate for Resilience

Developers are taking note: the world is changing, and we need to stay ahead of the curve. Climate change is reshaping global tourism and residential destinations, with wellness emerging as a crucial framework for managing these shifts. Warmer destinations are losing tourist appeal during peak seasons due to extreme heat, while cooler northern regions—such as Canada and Scandinavia—are attracting interest as climate migration redirects development.

A climate-focused and wellness-centered approach integrates adaptive change to existing sites, renewable energy, green infrastructure, and regenerative practices in new sites to create long-term, sustainable solutions. Developers must balance innovation with respect for natural elements, prioritizing spaces harmonizing with local conditions. These efforts ensure livability and resilience in the face of a changing climate.

Why This Matters

- Resilience: Climate-conscious developments ensure long-term viability.
- Market opportunity: Cooler regions are becoming key hubs for future growth, while hotter regions need to embrace climate-friendly development practices.
- Sustainability: Wellness and eco-conscious practices are increasingly linked in consumer expectations.

Key Questions for the Development Industry

- How can existing housing stock be adapted to respond and become more climate resilient?
- How can developers incorporate regenerative practices into existing projects?
- What metrics can be used to measure climate resilience in real estate?
- When is it more responsible to not build in vulnerable areas?
- What impact will future climate-migration patterns have on establishing new development regions?

Resources

- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "[AR6 Synthesis Report: Climate Change 2023](#)"
- World Bank Group, "[Groundswell: Preparing for Internal Climate Migration](#)," 2018
- UNEP, "[Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation in Tourism](#)," 2008.
- Global Wellness Institute, "Wellness Real Estate and Climate Resilience," 2023.

TREND 5: Gen Alpha Approved - Homes for the AI-Native Generation

Bio-Adaptive Living for a Tech-Savvy Generation

Real estate developers must design with the future in mind, especially for Gen Alpha, the first fully AI-native generation and one facing more significant housing affordability challenges than previous generations. This demographic will demand homes that maximize space and functionality and seamlessly integrate work, learning, and leisure under one roof.

Bio-adaptive hybrid flexible spaces, rather than single-purpose rooms, and modular designs that adapt to natural biological processes, environmental conditions, and wellness-focused smart tech integration will become standard expectations for this tech-savvy generation. Their "phygital" lifestyle will demand their homes blend the best physical and digital experiences to align with their needs and lifestyles prioritizing mental and physical wellness.

Why This Matters

- Generational impact: Designing for Gen Alpha influences housing trends for decades.
- Futureproofing: Modular, tech-forward homes ensure adaptability to changing needs.
- Market appeal: Wellness-focused, hybrid spaces attract premium buyers.

Key Questions for the Development Industry

- How can developers create affordable yet tech-integrated housing?
- What role will bio-adaptive spaces play in reducing energy use and improving health outcomes?
- How can existing housing stock evolve to meet future demand?

Resources

- JLL, "The Future of Real Estate for Gen Alpha," 2023.
- CBRE, "The Impact of Hybrid Design on Wellness", 2023.
- Mapabear, "[Gen Alpha Redefines Digital Engagement and Family Dynamics](#)", Insights from Kantar 2024.

TREND 6: The Convergence of Placekeeping and Placemaking

Keeping an Eye on the Past and an Ear to the Future

In a world increasingly divided by ideology, social unrest, and a growing loneliness epidemic, physical places have a significant opportunity to provide a much-needed platform for positive social interaction. Regionally responsive architecture that connects people to their existing places, communities, and cultures is critical to honoring a location's uniqueness and pride. Placemaking—intentional or not—has often catalyzed gentrification and privileged dominant cultures, overshadowing a place's unique character and nature.

Financial engineering drove much of 20th-century real estate development, where designers followed codified, bureaucratized, and homogenized ideas about what a place “should” become, often without fully honoring or understanding what's already there.

Placemaking converges with the principles of authentic placekeeping, respects existing characteristics, cultures, and social connections, and involves collaborative design *with*, not *for*, stakeholders. This approach results in more resilient, socially connected, and authentic places where people can thrive.

Why This Matters

- Homogenization of the built environment: The commodification of spaces has led to
- real estate development that often disregards cultural history and community needs.
- Integration of existing infrastructure: Both social and physical infrastructure can be more effectively leveraged, reducing resource waste and improving resilience.
- Addressing inequity: Prioritizing placekeeping reduces the wealth and wellness gap caused by developments that favor privileged groups.
- Cultural relevance: Honoring a place's cultural and social characteristics creates stronger emotional connections with end users, leading to higher satisfaction and longer occupancy rates.

Key Questions for the Development Industry

- How might developers embrace a design-thinking approach integrating end users to co-create spaces?
- How can architects and designers promote regionally representative projects that connect people to their existing places and cultures?
- What creative financing mechanisms can support placekeeping while ensuring long-term economic viability?
- How can real estate projects adapt existing housing stock to integrate placekeeping principles?

Resources

- *The Architecture of Urbanity: Designing for Nature, Culture, and Joy*, Vishan Chakrabarti, 2024.
- “Public Space: Paradoxes, Possibilities, and Propositions,” Vikas Mehta, 2023.
- Canada's Placemaking Community, “[Toolkit for Placemakers](#),” 2023.

Wellness for Cancer Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Julie Bach, Wellness for Cancer Charity, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Joelle Kaufman, Crushing the Cancer Curveball, United States

Introduction: The New Wave of Cancer Recovery and Wellness

Cancer recovery and prevention are undergoing a transformative shift, with innovative trends reshaping the way we think about survivorship, wellness, and support. From outdoor recreation programs that empower cancer survivors through adventure, to the rise of self-empowerment initiatives led by survivors themselves, these trends are redefining the cancer journey. Employers are stepping up, integrating cancer prevention and support into workplace wellness programs, recognizing the need for early detection, personalized care, and financial assistance. Additionally, the growing trend of cancer-friendly travel encourages patients to embrace life and explore the world with proper support. These developments highlight a collective movement toward empowering cancer patients and survivors, providing them with the tools, resources, and support needed to not just survive but thrive. Each of these trends demonstrates the power of innovation and community in reshaping the future of cancer.



[> Explore the Wellness for Cancer Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 1: Healing in the Wild

How Outdoor Recreation is Transforming Cancer Recovery

Cancer survivorship is no longer solely about treatment—it's about reclaiming life. Around the world, outdoor recreation programs are transforming the recovery journey, demonstrating that adventure, movement, and connection to nature can be as healing as medicine. Organizations from the Rocky Mountains to the European Alps are leading nature-based healing programs, assisting survivors in rebuilding strength, resilience, and joy. The following are some of them.

Epic Experience - Pushing Boundaries, Restoring Confidence

Nestled in the Colorado Rockies, Epic Experience offers free adventure camps for adult cancer survivors. Through activities such as whitewater kayaking, snowshoeing, and hiking, participants rediscover their physical capabilities while forming lasting bonds with others who share similar journeys. Hospitals and cancer centers increasingly support these programs, recognizing their role in mental and physical rehabilitation.

First Descents - Out Living It

First Descents takes young adults affected by cancer on transformational outdoor adventures—surfing in the ocean, climbing rugged cliffs, or paddling through whitewater. These experiences foster camaraderie, boost confidence, and instill a renewed sense of purpose, helping survivors reconnect with life beyond their diagnosis.

Outdoor Against Cancer - A Global Movement

Europe is increasingly embracing this trend. Outdoor Against Cancer (OACCUs) recently obtained funding from the European Union to incorporate outdoor activities, nutrition, and mental wellness into cancer recovery programs across several countries. This initiative highlights the growing acknowledgment of nature as a form of medicine.

Outdoor recreation is more than just an escape; it's a vital component of healing. Whether scaling mountains, riding waves, or simply hiking through the woods, survivors are reclaiming their bodies, minds, and sense of adventure—one step, paddle, or climb at a time.

Resources

- [Epic Experience](#)
- [First Descents](#)
- [Outdoor Against Cancer \(OACCUs\)](#)

TREND 2: Travel with Cancer

Embracing Joy, Connection, Relaxation, and Life

For many cancer patients, travel is more than just a getaway—it's an opportunity to embrace joy, strengthen social connections, and find relaxation amid life's challenges. Whether fulfilling a bucket list dream or simply stepping into a new environment, travel can be an empowering and healing experience. However, travelers with cancer have unique needs that require careful planning, support, and accommodations.

The Benefits of Travel for Cancer Patients

- Before the trip, the anticipation of travel can enhance emotional wellbeing and provide motivation.

Consulting healthcare providers, arranging medications, and selecting destinations with medical accessibility are crucial steps (Fox Chase Cancer Center, 2024).

- During the trip, travel offers relaxation, mental clarity, and social connection. A flexible itinerary, accessible accommodations, and an awareness of treatment side effects contribute to a smoother experience (Roswell Park, 2024).
- After the trip, the memories and sense of accomplishment from travel reinforce resilience and enhance mental health. Many cancer survivors discover that travel rejuvenates their energy and outlook on life (Cleveland Clinic, 2024).

Creating a Supportive Travel Experience

Travel advisors are enhancing their skills through programs such as Wellness Travel University and Travel with Cancer, acquiring knowledge in medical considerations, accessible travel planning, and emotional support. These specialized courses assist advisors in crafting enriching experiences tailored to the unique needs of cancer travelers.

Fulfilling the Bucket List

Stanford research highlights the importance of bucket list travel, demonstrating that meaningful experiences provide cancer patients with a sense of control, fulfillment, and joy in the present moment (ASCO, 2024).

With careful preparation and growing industry support, cancer patients can continue to embrace life—one journey at a time.

Resources

- Fox Chase Cancer Center, Travel Planning and Cancer: www.foxchase.org/blog/ready-set-go-making-travel-plans-when-you-have-cancer
- Roswell Park, “[Traveling During Cancer Treatment – What to Know Before you Go](#),” 2018
- Cleveland Clinic, “[Should You Go on Vacation When Being Treated for Cancer?](#)” 2021
- [Wellness Travel University](#)
- [Wellness for Cancer](#) ASCO, “[Traveling With Cancer: A Guide for Oncologists in the Modern World](#),” 2019

TREND 3: Employers Step Up

The New Wave of Workplace Cancer Prevention and Support

Cancer has become the primary driver of employer healthcare costs, surpassing musculoskeletal conditions. With 40% of employers anticipating an increase in late-stage cancer cases and 13% already experiencing this impact, businesses are taking action to enhance prevention and support.

How Employers Are Leading the Change:

- **Expanding Cancer Screenings and Genetic Testing:** Employers are enhancing benefits to include early detection and genetic testing. Walmart has teamed up with Mayo Clinic to offer employees access to specialized cancer care.
- **Personalized Cancer Care & Patient Navigation:** Companies are integrating personalized medicine and enhancing cancer navigation programs to assist employees in coordinating care, understanding treatment options, and managing costs.
- **Financial & Benefits Support:** Employers are covering out-of-pocket expenses, second opinions, and survivorship care. Early intervention strategies focus on reducing long-term healthcare costs while enhancing employee outcomes.

- **Addressing Social Determinants of Health:** Recognizing disparities in access to care, ExxonMobil donated \$10 million to MD Anderson Cancer Center to enhance prevention programs in underserved communities.

The Future of Workplace Cancer Care

Employers are shifting from treatment-centered approaches to prevention, early detection, and comprehensive support. By investing in screenings, care coordination, and financial assistance, businesses are reshaping workplace wellness to foster a healthier, more resilient workforce.

Resources

- Supermarket News, “[Walmart expands access to cancer care for employees](#),” 2024
- 12News, “[ExxonMobil gifts major donation to MD Anderson to launch Be Well Beaumont initiative](#),” 2025
- Employers boost cancer benefits as cases, costs rise: [apnews.com/article/f6d0589ecb0d214c613a17b820885eb4](#)
- AP, “[Walmart employees to get expanded cancer treatment options with the Mayo Clinic](#),” 2024:
- Kaiser Permanente’s guide to workplace cancer prevention: [business.kaiserpermanente.org/insights/mental-health-workforce/cancer-prevention-strategies](#)

TREND 4: Empowerment Rising

Cancer Survivors Leading the Charge

A growing trend in the cancer community is the emergence of self-empowerment initiatives led by survivors who transform adversity into platforms for change. These individuals are establishing organizations, writing books, and creating programs that inspire and support others facing similar challenges.

Joelle Kaufman’s *Crushing the Cancer Curveball*

Drawing on over 40 years of personal and family experience with cancer, Joelle Kaufman authored *Crushing the Cancer Curveball: A Playbook for the Newly Diagnosed and Their Family and Friends*. Her book offers practical strategies to help individuals navigate a cancer diagnosis with confidence and build a strong support network.

Kathy Giusti’s *Fatal to Fearless*

Kathy Giusti, a two-time cancer survivor, wrote *Fatal to Fearless: 12 Steps to Beating Cancer in a Broken Medical System*. Her book guides navigating the healthcare system, advocating for oneself, and making informed treatment choices.

Petra Thaller’s *Outdoor Against Cancer*

Petra Thaller, a cancer survivor, founded Outdoor Against Cancer (OAC) to promote physical activity as a part of recovery. OAC hosts outdoor events that build resilience and foster a sense of community among participants.

Trevor Maxwell’s *Man Up to Cancer*

Trevor Maxwell, a colon cancer survivor, founded Man Up to Cancer, a movement that helps men connect and avoid isolation. His organization fosters a robust support network, encouraging open discussions about the emotional and mental challenges of cancer.

This trend underscores the increasing impact of patient-led empowerment. Survivors are forming networks, advocating for improved healthcare, and encouraging others to seize control of their journeys with strength and resilience.

Resources

- *Crushing the Cancer Curveball* – Joelle Kaufman: [Amazon](#)
- *Fatal to Fearless* – Kathy Giusti: [HarperCollins](#)
- *Outdoor Against Cancer* – Petra Thaller: [Outdoor Against Cancer](#)
- *Man Up to Cancer* – Trevor Maxwell: [The Patient Story](#)

TREND 5: Hospitals Double Down with Free Acupuncture & Massage Practitioner Training

The IMAGINE project, led by Dr. Jun J. Mao of Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center and funded by the Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), is revolutionizing pain management in oncology. This initiative offers free acupuncture and oncology massage training to practitioners at 35 academic and community cancer centers across the US, thereby making integrative therapies more accessible to cancer patients (SIO, 2024).

Building on the success of the PCORI-funded IMPACT trial, which demonstrated the effectiveness of acupuncture and massage in managing pain for advanced cancer patients, the IMAGINE project focuses on real-world implementation. This initiative aligns with clinical guidelines from the Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO) and the American Society for Clinical Oncology (ASCO), which recommend these therapies as part of comprehensive cancer care (SIO, 2024).

Pain management continues to be a major challenge in oncology, and non-pharmacological methods such as acupuncture and massage provide evidence-based solutions that reduce dependence on opioids. By training practitioners in these therapies, the IMAGINE project guarantees that more patients can obtain effective, integrative pain relief.

As hospitals across the country commit to expanding integrative wellness support care, the IMAGINE project stands as a model for future advancements in complementary cancer treatment.

Resources

- Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO). (2024). PCORI funding award for the IMAGINE Project. Retrieved from <https://integrativeonc.org/latest-news/announcement-from-sio-president-pcori-funding-award-for-the-imagine-project/>
- Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO). (2024). Guidelines for Integrative Oncology Care. Retrieved from <https://integrativeonc.org>

Wellness for Children Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Christine Clinton, President, International Spa & Salon Services, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Connie Morris, Founder, Budding Yoga, United States

TREND 1: Teen Activities to Support Mental Health

Although time and opportunities for teens to play have decreased, studies continue to show the importance of play for teens. With one in seven 10 to 19-year-olds in the US and one in six five to 16-years-old in the UK experiencing mental health issues (WHO, 2024), developing accessible, inclusive, and safe areas for teens to meet and play is essential for their holistic wellbeing.

The benefits of play for teens include:

- Releases stress and promotes relaxation
- Sparks creativity and imagination
- Improves mood and mental wellbeing
- Strengthens physical wellbeing
- Grows social skills, problem-solving, and connections

To enable these benefits, there are trends to enhance teen mental health in spas and wellness centers. These include spa services such as adapted massage, hydrotherapy, facials, fitness circuits, relaxation therapies, sound vibrations and music therapies, halotherapy, and outdoor wellbeing that will enrich a teen's sleep, outlook, and overall wellness.



[> Explore the Wellness for Children Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

Several recreational activities for teens that are trending in the US are chess, journaling, social clubs, Japanese anime, puzzles, and drawing. It is essential to consider a teenager's interests and preferences when seeking opportunities and to always allow for personal choice.

TREND 2: Analog Wellness

Digital Detox retreats for young people are on the rise in several wellness destinations around the globe. It's an opportunity to disconnect, decompress, and discover what truly makes one happy. With many countries creating laws to manage teenagers' access to social media, we see a rise in global organizations such as World Digital Detox Day, sharing data and information for families on how best to manage social media use at home, school, and beyond.

TREND 3: Europe's Bathhouse Revival

Young Adults Fight "Happiness Recession"

In Europe, we see a renewed interest in bath houses and saunas, with more and more young people gathering to enjoy the health benefits and meet like-minded people. As young people adopt the term "happiness recession" to describe their loneliness, it only makes sense to focus on community wellbeing.

TREND 4: China's Youth Turn to "Reverse Consumption," Making Frugality Social

Chinese youth are becoming increasingly aware of how they spend their money. They are looking for "value for money" lifestyle, using terms such as "reverse consumption" to describe a change in shopping habits including, food, clothes and accessories. Saving money has become a fun and interactive way to make friends.

TREND 5: Lazy Health - Youth Embrace Easy, Affordable Wellness

Lazy Health indicates a movement among young people who add wellness practices to their life without spending a lot of money or overexerting themselves. Examples include a foot soak, getting to bed early, a walk in the park, and taking supplements. These simple, enjoyable experiences are on the rise everywhere.

TREND 6: Inclusive Family Travel

Sensory-Friendly Wellness for All Ages

Inclusive family travel trends are focusing not only on the needs of teens, but also on families within the neurodivergent community. The hospitality, spa, and wellness sectors can promote awareness, acceptance, appreciation, and accessibility through tailored, family-friendly experiences. Wellness for Children has initiated a sensory-supported certification, enabling spas and resorts to collaborate with us to create customized sensory designs for all ages. This training will empower staff to provide a positive and uplifting experience for all families.

Resources

- <https://www.globalwellnessforchildren.com>

Wellness Tourism Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Katherine Droga, Founder, Well Traveller + Well Traveller TV, Wellness Tourism Summit, Droga & co., Australia

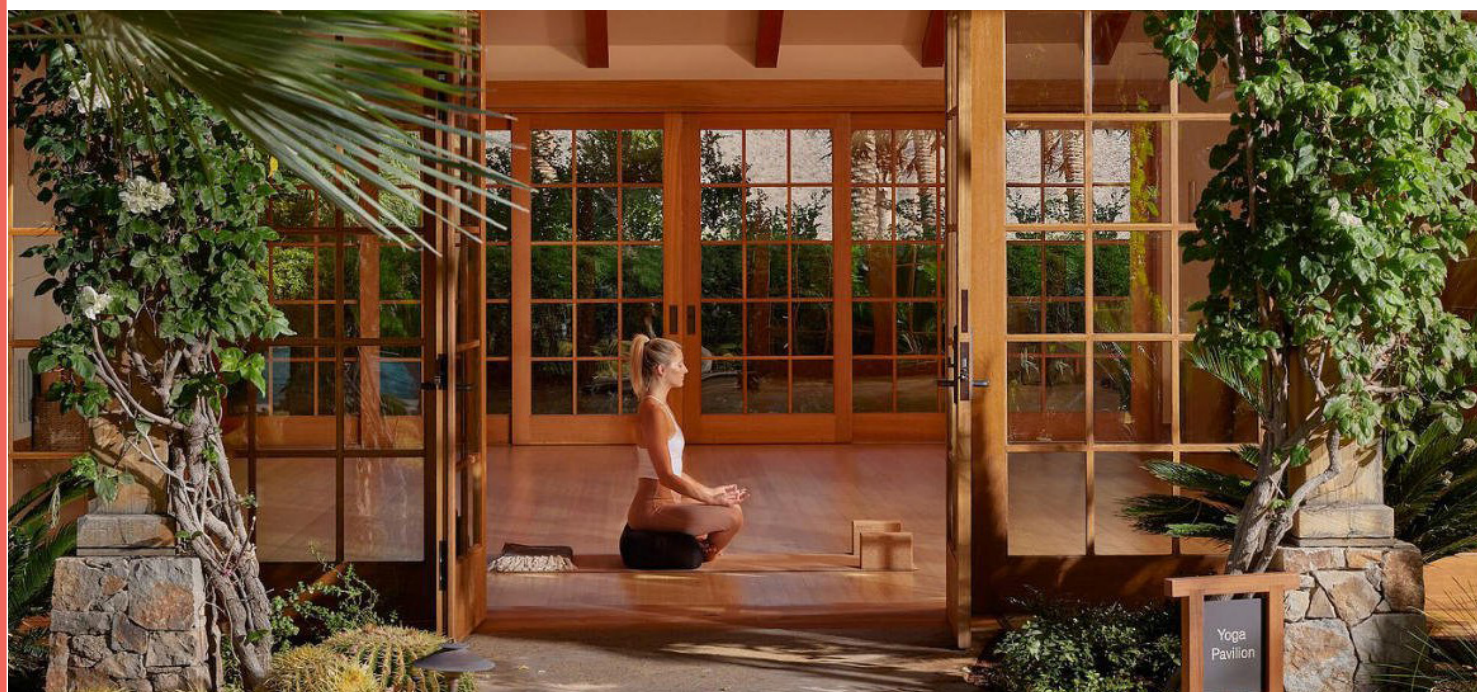
Initiative Vice-Chair: Lindsay Madden-Nadeau, Senior Director Wellness Strategy- Development, Meraki Bespoke Wellness Strategies, Global Head of Wellbeing- Accor Luxury Brands, France

TREND 1: New Green and Blue Government Led Wellness Development

Governments are leading the charge on developing major infrastructure and attractions with the wellbeing of locals and visitors in mind. Examples include the Singapore Tourism Board, whose new Marina South Coastal development site will celebrate wellbeing via therapeutic art, flotation, or light therapy-type experiences. The country is also proudly championing mental health tourism, opening 16 therapeutic gardens to soothe visitors with autism, dementia, anxiety, and ADHD. In Hawaii, regenerative tourism frameworks are now in state planning acts to support nature and culture-based wellbeing experiences, including “voluntourism” for travelers to give back during their stay. On a much larger scale, government-supported developments like Therme Dubai wellbeing resort and park, opening in 2028, will integrate relaxation, leisure, and healthcare for the community and visitors, featuring among other things the world's largest indoor botanical garden.

Resources:

- www.meethawaii.com/csr
- <https://www.visitredsea.com/en/destinations/amaala>



> [Explore the Wellness Tourism Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

TREND 2: Through Hardship Wellness Blooms

Natural disasters such as bushfires and floods have a devastating effect on tourist destinations and their local communities. But through this hardship, wellness experiences can bloom. Simple yet impactful infrastructure and attractions emerge to support local community healing while also attracting new travelers. Places like Adelaide Hills in South Australia developed an entire wellness tourism destination strategy and attracted new wellness investment after a devastating 2019 bushfire. Elsewhere in Australia, the Forestry Corporation of New South Wales has created immersive wellness walks in forests with interactive elements, such as listening pods, to encourage a return to places of green tranquility after fires. In the US, Sonoma County implemented initiatives like the Sonoma Wildfire Mental Health Collaborative, offering free resources like trauma-informed yoga and counseling to support long-term healing and resilience after their wildfires.

TREND 3: Optimizing Our Brain Health

In 2025, there is a growing recognition of the brain's integral role in overall wellbeing and how our brain ages. This preventative trend emphasizes the importance of mental fitness, stress management, and overall brain health to enhance cognitive functions and prevent or delay neurodegenerative diseases. Leading healthcare experts have responded to this growing demand, with offerings like Clinique La Prairie's Brain Potential Program, a comprehensive seven-day retreat designed to optimize brain health and performance. Developed in collaboration with neuroscientists from the University of Lausanne, the program focuses on neuroprotection and enhancement, aiming to slow cognitive decline, enhance brain function, manage stress, and build resilience. SHA Wellness Clinic's Cognitive Boost program is designed to enhance mental performance and prevent cognitive decline by combining advanced scientific knowledge with state-of-the-art technology. Similarly, Banyan Tree's Wellbeing Sanctuary at Bintan collaborates with Intellect, Asia's largest mental health company, to provide a personalized mental wellbeing experience through a dedicated app, integrating technology with traditional wellness practices.

TREND 4: Specialized Sports Rehabilitation Retreats

Sports rehabilitation retreats are emerging as a niche within the wellness tourism sector, catering to retired, injured, and high-performing athletes seeking credible expert-led recovery programs. These retreats offer structured, week-long programs that focus on physical rehabilitation and mental wellbeing, with an aim to facilitate a return to optimal performance levels while addressing the psychological aspects of recovery. Citius Retreats offers doctor-led sports medicine and wellness programs that integrate innovative, research-driven practices in partnership with Arthrosamid, a pharmaceutical company that provides injections for knee osteoporosis. Citius is set to launch a series of high-end retreats at Six Senses Ibiza, marking its debut in Europe. In funding stages, Eternal will utilize bloodwork, DEXA scans, and in-house performance testing by a team of specialists creating high-performance care plans for pro and lifestyle athletes, adaptable for injury, hormonal shifts, and chronic conditions. Lanserhof Lans, Austria, is renowned for its medical wellness approach, offering post-operative rehabilitation programs that blend medical treatments with wellness therapies and stress management techniques.

Resources:

- Citius Retreats <https://medium.com/@courtsidevc/why-we-invested-eternal-2ef438464b11>

TREND 5: Integrative Mental Health Retreats Rise Up

As mental health crises rise globally, wellness travel is shifting towards dedicated, bespoke retreats and experiences that combine clinical psychology with holistic therapies. This emerging trend addresses mental wellbeing through evidence-based treatments like psychotherapy, complemented by practices such as meditation, yoga, and breathwork to support emotional resilience and nervous system recovery. Leading examples like The Dawn Wellness Resort in Thailand and Quantum Prana in Bali provide immersive programs designed for deep healing, blending professional psychological care with nurturing, off-grid environments. This integrative approach offers both scientific credibility and holistic restoration for visitors who need genuine attention for depression, anxiety, PTSD, and trauma.

Resources:

- <https://thequantumprana.com/> <https://thedawnwellnesscentre.com>

TREND 6: Wellness and Medical Care Partnerships Grow

While the wellness industry has historically focused on general health optimization, there is a growing recognition of the need to accommodate individual post-surgery recovery programs, including post-operative care, cancer care, and palliative care in serene, nature-filled environments. These programs integrate medical care with wellness therapies, helping individuals heal physically and emotionally. The Philippines is emerging as a premier destination for medical tourism and post-recovery wellness, and The Farm at San Benito is responding by offering programs that combine evidence-based medicine, traditional healing, and holistic wellness, setting new standards for post-procedure recovery in a healing, nature-immersed environment. SHA Wellness Clinic has introduced programs that include supportive therapies for individuals recovering from cancer treatments. Kamalaya Wellness Sanctuary offers tailor-made wellness programs that can be adapted for individuals seeking supportive care during serious illness. Their approach includes therapies for emotional balance, pain management, and spiritual wellbeing.

TREND 7: Accessible Wellness Tourism

Providing inclusive access to wellness experiences for those with special needs to support their mental, physical, and social wellbeing continues to be demanded and delivered. Accessibility in spa and wellness resorts has shifted from a “nice-to-have” to an essential expectation. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has been at the forefront of championing accessible offerings and growing the accessible tourism market. Today’s travelers expect resorts and destinations to prioritize seamless movement throughout their visit with wheelchair-accessible design, adaptive equipment, and universally designed spaces. Red Sea Global is a developer in Saudi Arabia that is championing the creation of an accessible travel destination for all. In the European Union, ONAT4All is a co-funded project to boost the EU tourism value chain by providing SMEs with the necessary skills, competencies, and knowledge to deal with accessibility requirements.

Resources:

- <https://www.redseaglobal.com/en/-/media-center/red-sea-global-commits-to-accessible-tourism-for-all/>

Workplace Wellbeing Initiative

Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Jessica Grossmeier, Author, Speaker, Researcher, Jessica Grossmeier Consulting, United States

Initiative Vice-Chair: Ellenit Serrano, Advisor, Coach, Founder, Yoga Instructor, United States

The modern workplace requires a strategic approach to wellbeing. This means moving beyond a scattered menu of programs to embed wellbeing into an organization's culture. Such efforts position workforce wellbeing as a strategic business priority rather than a reactive response to a specific challenge. Leading organizations are integrating wellbeing into governance and policies, leadership training, and workflows and operating practices. This overarching trend is apparent in most of the trends featured below. Organizations continue to broaden wellbeing efforts to address the whole person, which is evident in trends related to brain health, recovery, alcohol-free lifestyles, social connection, and loneliness. Overall, these trends reflect a preventative, science-backed approach more likely to drive sustainable impact through increased employee engagement and performance.

TREND 1: Workplace Wellbeing as a Business Strategy

Workplace wellbeing has evolved from a peripheral initiative to a core business driver. Organizations now recognize that a comprehensive approach to employee health—one that addresses physical, mental, social, and financial wellbeing—enhances productivity, resilience, and competitive advantage.

A strong business case supports this evolution. Research demonstrates that integrating wellbeing into leadership development, centralizing its management, and ensuring managerial competence maximizes organizational impact. Companies prioritizing wellbeing report up to 20% higher productivity and



[> Explore the Workplace Wellbeing Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

reduced absenteeism. Employees who are supported show greater engagement and innovation, resulting in improved quality outcomes. Moreover, in today's competitive talent landscape, wellbeing serves as a key differentiator. Organizations that embed wellbeing into their culture experience 10% higher retention rates, fostering loyalty and attracting talent amid evolving hybrid work trends.

Skeptics may question the return on wellbeing investments during economic uncertainty, but strategically designed initiatives build organizational resilience by addressing health holistically, mitigating burnout that costs billions in lost productivity. When employees feel genuinely supported, they bring their best selves to work, increasing creativity, problem-solving, and the quality of customer service.

Leadership commitment and training are essential for positioning employee wellbeing as a core business driver. Wellbeing-focused training equips managers with emotional intelligence and stress management skills, enabling them to model healthy behaviors and create psychologically safe environments. Vital managerial competencies include planning, assessment, and compassionate leadership. Regular check-ins with employees help identify burnout risks and foster a sense of belonging.

The question for organizations and leaders is no longer whether to invest in wellbeing, but how quickly they can make it central to their business strategy and, in doing so, strengthen their organizational and employee outcomes. By aligning with standards like ISO 45003 for psychosocial risk management, organizations can transform workplace wellbeing from a nice-to-have perk into a strategic imperative that simultaneously enhances employee lives and delivers sustainable business performance.

Resources

- Hudson K. Jan 29, 2025. [McKinsey report says workplace wellness is a non-negotiable investment](#). HCM Magazine
- McKinsey Health Institute. January 16, 2025. [Thriving workplaces: How employers can improve productivity and change lives](#).
- Armstrong P. [How a digital-first wellbeing strategy helped this business boost year-on-year retention by 10%](#). HRM Online.
- Corporate Wellness Magazine. 2024. [Workplace Wellness Programs: Benefits and Implementation](#).
- ISO 45003. 2021. [Occupational health and safety management: Psychological health and safety at work](#).

TREND 2: Wellbeing Intelligence in the AI Age: Balancing Tech with Human Flourishing

As AI transforms the workplace in 2025, a new paradigm emerges, striking a balance between technological advancements and human-centered approaches. This shift recognizes that while AI drives efficiency, employee wellbeing remains crucial for organizational success, especially given concerns about increased workloads from AI implementation. "Wellbeing intelligence" is becoming a core leadership competency. Forward-thinking organizations are developing leaders who can navigate the human dimensions of technological transformation, excelling in leveraging AI systems while cultivating environments where human potential thrives.

Key aspects of this new leadership approach include:

- Fostering psychological safety in digital workplaces
- Cultivating human connections amid automation
- Supporting holistic employee development
- Addressing diverse teams' wellbeing needs
- Measuring success through performance and wellbeing indicators

Organizations are adopting a synergistic approach, where AI handles routine tasks, freeing humans to focus on creative, strategic, and emotionally complex work. Ensuring AI genuinely reduces workloads rather than intensifying demands is crucial. AI itself is enhancing wellbeing metrics, analyzing complex data to provide real-time insights into employee wellbeing. This supports a more proactive, data-driven approach to employee health and wellbeing. Research by the Upwork Research Institute and Accenture shows that companies that balance technological advancement with wellbeing-focused leadership outperform those that pursue technology alone. This suggests wellbeing may be the critical differentiator in realizing the full potential of AI investments.

By elevating wellbeing as a leadership imperative, the narrative around AI is shifting from human replacement to augmentation. The future workplace will leverage both AI and uniquely human capabilities for creativity, empathy, and connection, leading to a more balanced and fulfilling work experience.

Resources

- Accenture. 2025. [AI: A Declaration of Autonomy—Is trust the limit of AI's limitless possibilities?](#) Technology Vision 2025 Report.
- Monahan K and Burlacu G. July 23, 2024. [From burnout to balance: AI-enhanced work models](#). Upwork
- Morrone M. March 18, 2025. [AI is “tearing apart” companies, survey finds](#). Axios
- Mayer H, Yee L, Chui M, Roberts R. January 28, 2025. [Superagency in the workplace: Empowering people to unlock AI's full potential](#). McKinsey & Company
- Hougaard R, Carter J. June 6, 2024. [How AI can make us better leaders](#). Harvard Business Review

TREND 3: Companies Take Action to Address Loneliness, Increase Social Connection

There has been a growing awareness of the business implications of employee social connection and loneliness over the past decade, with research accumulating on the links between these factors and employee and team engagement, productivity, performance, and turnover retention. With the emergence of toolkits and advisories that include guidance for employers, organizations are beginning to translate knowledge into action. Strategies to increase social connection at work include maintaining hybrid work arrangements, hosting virtual and in-person social events to foster more meaningful connections, designing physical workspaces to promote collaboration, and training leaders to support open communication and active listening.

This trend of organizations taking action to address social connection at work is global. In Asia, initiatives are emerging that focus on team building and creating more supportive work environments to humanize the workplace. Australia has released guidelines on addressing psychosocial risk factors, prompting policies that better support mental health and prevent burnout. Social connection is a critical component, as remote work can be isolating and makes it more challenging to identify team members who may be struggling with a lack of support. Mental health initiatives are also surging in the UK and the Netherlands, with companies focusing on reducing isolation and providing platforms that allow employees to connect socially. In the United States, several organizations provide evidence-based guidance and tools to help organizations develop policies and strategies that foster social connection and address loneliness. The Foundation for Social Connection is actively developing an online resource center to identify emerging research and catalog the growing number of measurement tools and interventions. Accumulating knowledge on what works to support social connection at work, along with documentation on its value to business, will likely fuel continued growth in this global trend for years to come.

Resources

- Grossmeier J. 2025. [Knowing Well, Reading Well for Social Connection](#). American Journal of Health Promotion. Vol 39(3):537-545.
- Lawrence T. 2024. [5 Methods to Build Lasting Employee Connectivity](#).
- *The Times*. 2024. [How to Support Employee Wellbeing at Work](#).
- Foundation for Social Connection. 2025. [Resources](#).

TREND 4: Organizations Shift from Risk Management to Healthy Lifestyle Focus About Alcohol Use

Historically, workplace alcohol policies focused on a risk management approach to employee alcohol use through occupational health and safety initiatives and employee assistance programs. There is a paradigm shift underway as organizations introduce preventative strategies that normalize and support alcohol-free choices. This evolution reflects a deeper understanding that workplace wellbeing extends beyond addressing crises to creating environments that promote healthy lifestyle choices. Organizations are recognizing that supporting employees who choose not to drink alcohol—regardless of whether they have a history of problematic use—is not only beneficial for individual health but also enhances workplace productivity.

This shift is fueled by an accumulation of research raising awareness about health risks associated with using alcohol within traditional recommended limits. The World Health Organization and other global health authorities have linked small amounts of alcohol to seven different types of cancers. The underlying mechanisms are related to how the body metabolizes alcohol and the International Agency for Research on Cancer classifies alcohol among the highest carcinogens alongside tobacco and asbestos.

While the 2025 US Surgeon General's advisory has amplified the conversation in America, this shift toward preventive approaches is decidedly global. The United Kingdom's Dry January campaign has shifted from a focus on individual participation to corporate sponsorship, with companies creating year-round alcohol-awareness workplace policies. The Nordic countries have implemented workplace wellbeing frameworks that address alcohol prevention in addition to intervention. In Australia and New Zealand, the Hello Sunday Morning movement has inspired workplace policies that actively support employee decisions to reduce or eliminate alcohol consumption. In Japan, corporations are introducing wellbeing initiatives aimed at countering the well-established after-hours drinking culture. These global shifts represent a significant opportunity for workplace wellbeing programs to align with emerging public health priorities while supporting employees in making informed choices about alcohol consumption.

Resources

- World Health Organization (WHO). 2022. [No level of alcohol consumption is safe for our health](#).
- IARC Working Group on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans. 2012. Personal habits and indoor combustions. IARC Monogr Eval Carcinog Risks Hum. Vol. 100(Pt E):1-538. PMID: 23193840; PMCID: PMC4781577.
- U.S. Surgeon General (USSG). 2025. [Advisory on Alcohol and Cancer Risk](#).
- Alcohol Change UK. [Dry January in Your Community](#).
- Nordic Welfare Centre. 2023. [Labour Market Integration of Adults with Alcohol and Substance Abuse Problems in the Nordic Countries](#).

TREND 5: Recovery in the Workplace

In today's fast-paced work landscape, recovery is emerging as a pivotal trend in workplace wellness. This shift recognizes that employee wellbeing extends beyond traditional health initiatives, emphasizing the necessity for structured downtime and proactive recovery strategies that prevent burnout, enhance resilience, and improve long-term productivity.

A key indicator of this trend is the Right to Disconnect movement, with legal protections emerging in countries such as France, Australia, and Canada. These policies legally protect employees from work-related communications outside of business hours, reinforcing the need for clear boundaries between work and personal life to support recovery. In Australia, a new law coming into effect in 2024 grants employees the right to ignore after-hours emails and calls without consequences. In parallel, shorter workweeks are gaining momentum as companies and governments experiment with four-day workweeks.

to improve work-life balance. In Japan, the Tokyo Metropolitan Government is introducing a four-day workweek for public sector employees starting April 2025, as part of broader efforts to address overwork and population decline.

Recovery is not just about reducing work hours—it also addresses the global sleep crisis. Nine out of ten people are experiencing problems with their sleep, with one in three experiencing sleep poverty due to environmental stressors like poor living conditions, noise pollution, and workplace demands. These factors contribute to chronic sleep deficits, which in turn impact cognitive function, increase health risks, and reduce overall wellbeing and workplace productivity.

To address these challenges, businesses are investing in:

- Flexible work arrangements to support personalized recovery rhythms
- Mental health days to encourage proactive wellbeing
- On-site nap spaces to boost energy and focus
- Digital detox initiatives to reduce burnout

By embracing recovery as a core strategy, organizations are fostering healthier, more sustainable work environments while improving retention, performance, and overall wellbeing.

Resources

- Goodwin E. 2024. [New law gives Australians the right to ignore their bosses' emails after hours](#). Business Insider.
- MBN staff. December 20, 2024. [Tokyo adopts four-day workweek for public employees](#). Mexico Business News.
- The Sleep Charity. 2024. [Sleep manifesto 2024](#).
- Chattu VK, Manzar MD, Kumary S, et al. 2019. [The global problem of insufficient sleep and its serious public health implications](#). Healthcare. Vol. 7(1).
- [Sleep Statistics](#). Centers for Disease Control

TREND 6: Brain Health in Workplace Wellbeing

Brain health is becoming a central focus in workplace wellbeing, with organizations prioritizing cognitive function, mental clarity, and emotional resilience to enhance employee performance. In 2025, companies are recognizing the connection between brain and mental health strategies to combat stress, burnout, and cognitive decline—especially as the workforce ages. Furthermore, companies are increasingly turning to neuroscience insights to design work environments and schedules that align with natural cognitive rhythms.

Key brain health strategies being used by organizations include:

- Cognitive wellness programs, including mindfulness and meditation training to reduce stress, brain-training apps, and workshops on neuroplasticity.
- Mental recovery breaks, including short, restorative breaks to prevent mental fatigue and implementing “focus time” or “no meeting blocks” to support deep work.
- Sleep and rest prioritization, including educating employees on sleep’s impact on cognitive performance and offering flexible schedules to align with natural energy rhythms.
- Nutrition for brain health, including providing brain-friendly snacks in the workplace, and education on dietary choices that promote mental clarity and energy.
- Mental health integration, including combining cognitive health initiatives with mental wellbeing support and destigmatizing discussions on cognitive struggles like brain fog.

- Neuroscience driven workplaces, including circadian-based work policies to align tasks with peak mental performance and neuro-inclusive spaces that reduce sensory overload and enhance focus.

Organizations that succeed in the future will be those that treat brain health as a fundamental business priority and not just another program. This includes training managers to become architects of sustainable performance by fostering environments where cognitive wellbeing drives both individual and organizational resilience in an increasingly complex world.

Resources

- Galagali T. January 23, 2025. [Brain health emerges as top priority at Davos](#). *Forbes*
- Hayes J. January 12, 2025. [5 unconventional wellness trends that will shape the workforce in 2025](#). *Forbes*
- Deloitte. 2024. [2024 Global Human Capital Trends](#). Deloitte Insights
- Hellström C. January 10, 2025. [5 trends transforming workplace wellbeing in 2025](#). Benefits Pro
- Health Enhancement Research Organization. 2024. [Brain health and the aging workforce](#). 2024 Winter Think Tank Proceedings.

TREND 7: The Shifting Narrative on DEI

In 2025, diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) efforts stand at a critical crossroads. Corporate giants like Meta and JPMorgan Chase are dramatically scaling back DEI programs, buffeted by legal challenges and political headwinds. A 2024 Harris Poll reveals a stark reality: 40% of Americans are now using their spending power to counter corporate moral stances with which they disagree, making supporting DEI a potential business risk.

Rather than scaling back their DEI efforts, forward-thinking companies are reimagining inclusion, strategically reframing DEI as “belonging.” This nuanced approach aims to promote equity without triggering divisive debates. This pivot represents more than semantics; it’s a calculated response to a rapidly changing social landscape.

The stakes remain high. Catalyst research demonstrates inclusive workplaces boost employee satisfaction by 32% and overall wellness by 43%. McKinsey’s data underscores a compelling business case: diverse companies consistently outperform their peers financially. Starbucks offers a telling example, maintaining its DEI focus despite boycott pressures and ultimately retaining both talent and customer loyalty.

Globally, the narrative is complex. While US companies recalibrate, European regulations continue pushing for meaningful inclusion. The future of DEI requires reinvention, including the development of evidence-based policies that unite rather than divide. As boundaries blur and workforces become increasingly interconnected, the most adaptable organizations will transform their DEI efforts from a corporate checkbox to a genuine competitive advantage. In a fractured world, DEI’s next chapter will be written by organizations that seek to bridge divides, recognizing equity as both a moral imperative and a business necessity.

Resources

- Tran H. August 30, 2024. [DEI policies work best when they are designed to include everyone and are backed by evidence](#). The Conversation
- Heaton R. February 11, 2025. [What companies are rolling back DEI policies in 2025?](#) Tech Target
- Catalyst Staff. February 4, 2025. [10 inclusive workplace trends for 2025](#). Catalyst
- Wingard J. January 27, 2025. [DEI in 2025: Should companies double down or pivot to new priorities?](#) *Forbes*
- Dixon-Fyle S, Dolan K, Hunt DV, Prince S. May 19, 2020. [Diversity wins: How inclusion matters](#). McKinsey & Company

Yoga Therapy Initiative Micro-Trends

Initiative Chair: Bija Bennett, Author, President, BijaB, Yoga Therapist, United States

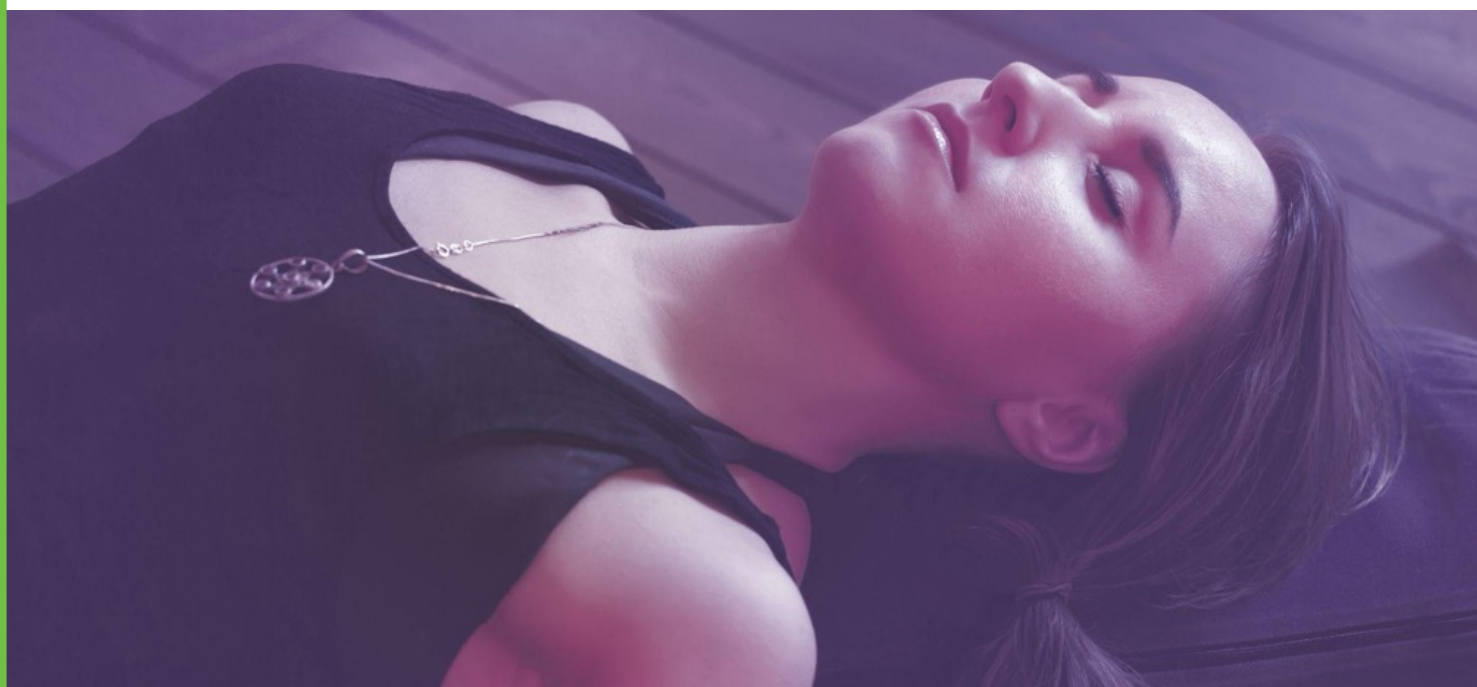
Initiative Vice-Chair: Leah Nduati, CEO, Certified Yoga Instructor, Founder of Yoga Experiences Africa

Yoga and yoga therapy are emerging as key players in the evolving wellness landscape. This year's trends reflect a growing desire for both science-backed innovation and holistic tradition—from biohacking for longevity to the expanding role of yoga therapy in addiction recovery. Mental health remains front and center, with rising interest in yoga as a precise, therapeutic tool for managing mental health conditions. Women's midlife transitions are receiving long-overdue attention, and yoga provides integrative support. As society seeks more personalized and preventative health solutions, yoga therapy takes center stage as an essential modality for navigating stress, aging, and personal transformation. Together, these shifts point to a future where yoga is not just practiced—but strategically applied to support deeper healing and resilience at every stage of life.

TREND 1: Biohacking for Longevity

Biohacking is gaining popularity in the wellness industry as a newly coined term. It is defined as a series of “incremental changes you can make to your body and lifestyle. This approach has the potential to improve our overall health and longevity through sustained practice.”

The integrative science of yoga is the original biohacking. Through the use of asana, pranayama, and meditation, yoga students and practitioners have been utilizing tools from this ancient tradition to achieve this goal for centuries, improving overall health and promoting physical and emotional wellbeing. Many people are unaware that yoga is a collection of ancient and often scientifically substantiated practices



[> Explore the Yoga Therapy Initiative on the GWI Website](#)

that originated for precisely these reasons—to address the difficulties, demands, and stresses that human beings have faced in their lives for millennia.

Yoga therapy practices counteract the effects of aging on the mind and body by consciously controlling and regulating the autonomic nervous system, as well as increasing neuroplasticity. Current research indicates that a contributing factor of life-shortening diseases such as metabolic disorders and cancer is increased cortisol and its effects on physical health and aging.

Evidence shows that falling due to poor balance is highly correlated with mortality in older adults. Using the tools of movement and breath for increased coordination, strength, and mobility can greatly improve balance, reduce falls, and enhance both lifespan and healthspan.

Resources

- https://www.scripps.org/news_items/7709-what-is-biohacking-how-does-it-work
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC4428135/>
- <https://www.rupahealth.com/post/the-cortisol-aging-connection-can-lowering-stress-hormones-slow-aging>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7235a1.htm>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/39173784/>

TREND 2: Shift Towards Yoga Therapy to Regulate Mental Health Symptoms

As yoga therapy gains traction in the wellness industry, there is an excellent opportunity for it to be accepted as a therapeutic modality in treating mental health conditions with more precision and fewer complications. In the world of psychiatry and psychological research, it's well known that techniques like deep breathing, when intentionally combined with other integrated protocols, can calm the nervous system, foster a sense of groundedness, and enhance overall mental health and wellbeing.

Pranayama, or conscious breathing techniques used as part of a yoga therapy protocol, can heighten and improve a person's ability to intentionally regulate their nervous system and alleviate symptoms such as depression, anxiety, ADHD, PTSD, obsessive-compulsive disorders, and more. Yoga practices also include meditative and somatic awareness techniques, movements/postures, foundational lifestyle skills, and psycho-emotional teachings. These powerful technologies, when incorporated into a therapeutic practice, enable the practitioner to regulate their autonomic nervous system, including the balance between sympathetic and parasympathetic systems.

Regulation of the central autonomic system reduces symptoms of anxiety, improves energy and motivation, increases a person's ability to tolerate intrusive or traumatic memories, and helps a person improve the ability to focus and concentrate. These benefits underscore the potential of yoga therapy as a complementary approach to mental health care, offering individuals accessible, holistic tools for long-term wellbeing and resilience.

Resources

- <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/providers/digest/yoga-for-health-science>
- <https://positivepsychology.com/yoga-therapy/>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC9877284/>

TREND 3: Yoga Therapy Cools Hot Flashes

Aging in Hollywood and beyond is no longer about becoming invisible. Stripes Beauty founder Naomi Watts makes the declaration, “Welcome to a world where menopause isn’t a dirty word.” Drew Barrymore famously discusses her experience of perimenopause on her eponymous show, *The Drew Barrymore Show*. These high-profile celebrities represent women worldwide who seek healthy ways to manage their self-care during this stage of life.

In the United States alone, approximately 1.3 million women enter midlife each year. Four out of five women experience symptoms including hot flashes and night sweats (vasomotor symptoms), sleep challenges, brain fog, skin changes, weight gain, bone density loss, and increased stress. Vasomotor symptoms alone affect 80% of perimenopausal and menopausal women.

According to the science of yoga therapy, transitions are vulnerable stages in life that need special attention. Evidence-based research suggests that the tools of yoga practice can promote positive psychophysiological changes in post-menopausal women and act as a complementary therapy to hormone replacement therapy. Some of the integrative tools include asana/posture, pranayama/breathing techniques, meditations/yoga nidra, daily routines, sleep hygiene, and lifestyle management—which can all help decrease menopausal symptoms and improve health. Some of these benefits stem from yoga therapy’s natural ability to help modulate the body’s stress response overall.

Resources

- <https://www.cntraveler.com/story/menopause-wellness>
- <https://www.joinmidi.com/post/menopause-statistics>
- <https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2025/03/10/menopause-is-having-a-moment>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/35191141/>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30401547/>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27261993/>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37008184/>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/38501518/>
- <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/28917368/>
- <https://www.axios.com/2025/01/23/menopause-influencers-symptoms-supplements>

TREND 4: Unplugging from Anxiety for the Anxious Generation

In today’s hyper-connected era, anxiety has surged to unprecedented levels, especially among Gen Z and millennials. Post-pandemic, the WHO reported a 25% global increase in anxiety and depression, while the CDC found that nearly 40% of young adults experienced significant mental health challenges during the pandemic. Digital engagement and social media overload have exacerbated these issues. The APA notes that individuals spending over six hours daily on screens can experience a 30% increase in stress levels and reduced attention spans.

Against this backdrop, many are turning to yoga therapy to unplug from digital stressors and restore mental balance. A 5,000-year-old science, yoga focuses on a range of mental, physical, and spiritual practices that include a philosophical mindset, a wide range of meditation, breathing, and chanting techniques, foundational lifestyle skills, and psycho-emotional teachings.

Strong evidence-based research, highlighted by the Mayo Clinic, suggests that incorporating mind-body techniques into one’s daily routine can have a positive impact on various health outcomes, primarily by reducing perceived stress levels and enhancing stress resilience. Studies from Harvard Medical School and NIH-supported research also indicate that regular yoga practice can reduce anxiety symptoms by up to 40% and significantly lower cortisol levels.

The rise of AI-driven wellness apps and on-demand yoga sessions has also democratized access to these benefits, making it easier for a tech-savvy but anxious generation to integrate holistic practices into daily routines. Gen Z, in particular, is redefining wellness by prioritizing mental, emotional, and social health over mere physical fitness. As this generation seeks balance in an always-on world, yoga therapy emerges as a vital tool in their arsenal against modern stress.

Resources

- https://www.ft.com/content/4b75300a-12ca-42b7-a07a-4519435ea4b8?utm_source=chatgpt.com
- <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0272494423002311>
- <https://www.apa.org/topics/stress/generation-z-millennials-young-adults-worries>
- <https://www.apa.org/news/monitor/2022/03/tech-use-mental-health>
- <https://www.health.harvard.edu/mind-and-mood/yoga-for-better-mental-health>

Trend 5: Losing the Grip on Addiction

Addiction is a growing crisis and a burden on economies around the world. According to estimates, the drug, alcohol, and other addiction treatment industry in the United States was valued at \$42 billion in 2020 and is expected to reach \$53 billion by 2025. Approximately 3.7 million people have received treatment in more than 14,000 facilities. These numbers are not shrinking; they are growing.

Simultaneously, there is an emerging shift redefining the way we approach addiction recovery. No longer is it only about medical treatments and therapy. Approaches to recovery are expanding to include holistic wellness practices and methods that are appearing in all areas of substance abuse protocols worldwide.

From sober-curious events and equine therapy to massage and meditation, treatment centers are incorporating wellness tactics into their programs to help patients feel better mentally, physically, and emotionally.

Yoga therapy plays a role in this—through the introduction of practices that connect our conscious minds to our unconscious behaviors. These interventions help people develop positive habits that not only influence addictive behaviors and motivators but inspire confidence in a person's ability to change. They can reduce cravings as well as improve a person's ability to tolerate the urge to use drugs.

Note: Yoga therapy protocols are always conducted in conjunction with medical treatments prescribed by a physician and are not meant to replace them.

Addiction treatment and recovery have become far more than medical interventions, especially since treatment centers need to stand out in a crowded marketplace. Top-tier facilities often incorporate medical treatment plans, clinical staff, nutritionists, yoga therapists, outdoor activities, and a myriad of other holistic offerings, creating programs that offer the opportunity for collaborative care.

Resources

- <https://www.globalwellnesssummit.com/product/2025-future-of-wellness-trends-report/>
- <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5812135/>
- <https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/4912339/the-u-s-addiction-rehab-industry-5th-edition>
- <https://drugabusestatistics.org/fentanyl-abuse-statistics/>
- <https://www.bijab.com/book/the-yoga-therapy-renaissance/>
- https://www.linkedin.com/posts/bijabennett_wellness-yogatherapy-research-activity-7310300152685019136-v5u0/?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop&rcm=ACoAACKZ3LwBMYbzU-V4wkSHUrsDicngKGFGO3Q



GLOBAL WELLNESS
INSTITUTE™

EMPOWERING WELLNESS WORLDWIDE

333 S.E. 2nd Avenue, Suite 2048
Miami, FL 33131

WWW.GLOBALWELLNESSINSTITUTE.ORG