I've been asked to present the Employer's perspective on diabetes management. IBI is a membership association with over 1,000 corporate members representing primarily large but also midsize employers. We help employers and their supplier partners see the business value of investing in workforce health. We do that by providing research, measurement tools and educational opportunities. Our next annual conference is in March in San Francisco. (http://ibiweb.org/forum/)

With the ads done, let me get to the key issue.
Many of you may have seen some version of this slide. We work with lots of employers and what we know is that they are keenly aware of their medical spend -- how much they contribute to cover the medical and pharmacy costs of their employees. But we also know from a growing body of research that these costs represent only a portion of the overall costs associated with ill health -- just the tip of the iceberg. While employers may be able to shift the risk of spending on health care away to consumers or government funders, they cannot shift the costs associated with lost productivity due to absence, lower performance and work disability. They must effectively manage these costs by preventing health-related lost productivity or minimizing the effects of illness in the workplace.
In order to understand how employers think about health investment, we have conducted a series of surveys with CFOs in partnership with CFO magazine.

In all studies we’ve found that CFOs understand that employees’ health affects business results, but they lack clarity on how to measure the connections between employee health, productivity improvements and business results. Outside of a business context, in a clinical context, work function is a key quality of life dimension. Declining work function is associated with a range of negative socio-emotional and economic consequences for patients. In a business context, for an employer, that functional decline or symptomatic episodes of functional impairment can translate to attendance problems, job performance declines and episodes of work disability and even permanent exit from the labor force.
So in our CFO surveys we have been interested in how key decision-makers think about these sorts of health-related work outcomes and ways to measure them. Across a broad array of work outcomes CFOs would find expanded measurement useful. Of course, the cost of benefits looms largest, but since one only manages what is measured we get to our next slide …
While CFOs are highly interested in receiving information on productivity and job performance, only half receive productivity reports, while fewer than a quarter receive information on presenteeism, or health-related job performance.
In a recent literature review we completed we found over 150 studies that connect employee health to work outcomes.

Increases in health risks are associated with increased medical costs, sick leave, work disability and poorer job performance.

Specific chronic conditions including diabetes have been associated with increased costs and many of those go under-diagnosed and under-treated.

These costs extend beyond benefits and include a broad range of work outcomes.

The solutions include more targeted and evidence-based benefits solutions – but also include "beyond benefit" solutions such as worksite-based programs that can provide better access and reinforce behavior change.
Specific to diabetes there have been numerous studies on work-related outcomes. I present a small selection of those studies here but there are a set of common themes.

In general diabetes is associated with work disruption particularly when it is un-, under- or poorly-treated. Symptoms such as fatigue, irritability and mobility-limiting infections have been associated with work disruptions. More severe events such as stroke and limb amputations can result in significant even permanent work disability.

Normal blood glucose levels were associated with less work disruption.

All this suggests that reliable treatment and monitoring methods might diminish these negative work outcomes.

Thanks for inviting me to present the employer perspective. In doing so I hope the importance of continued work function for the employee has also been made clear. I look forward to the conference and discussion.
Register now to attend IBI’s Annual Forum,
March 16-18, 2015
The Fairmont, San Francisco

http://ibiweb.org/forum/