

## COVID-19 Workplace Commons: Keeping Workers Well Case Study – Ada Health

The [COVID-19 Workplace Commons: Keeping Workers Well](#) initiative leverages the World Economic Forum’s platform, networks and global convening ability to collect, refine and share strategies for returning to – and remaining in – the workplace safely as part of the broader COVID-19 recovery. The initiative is jointly led by Arizona State University and the World Economic Forum with support from The Rockefeller Foundation.

As part of this initiative, we have selected several dozen exemplary organizations to be **case studies**. Through multiple interviews with crisis management teams, Chief Human Resource Officers, and others, we have sought to understand their responses to provide you with a deeper dive into how a diverse set of organizations around the world have handled the COVID-19 pandemic.

### Ada Health

Ada is a global health company founded by doctors, scientists, and industry pioneers to create new possibilities for personal health. Ada’s core system connects medical knowledge with intelligent technology to help all people actively manage their health and medical professionals to deliver effective care. Ada is proud to collaborate with leading health systems and global non-profit organizations to carry out this vision. Twenty million assessments have been completed since Ada’s global launch in 2016.

Question	Response
<p><b><i>When did your organization become aware that the COVID-19 pandemic would affect your operations?</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Our in-house epidemiology and public health team took an early interest in COVID-19, becoming aware in <b>January</b></li> <li>✓ The team worked closely with the Medical Knowledge Team to start <b>modelling COVID-19</b> into Ada’s core technology and databases, making it available within our app by mid-February</li> </ul>
<p><b><i>How did your organization set up the initial response to the pandemic?</i></b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ By march, we knew we would have to start <b>thinking differently</b> about our operations and how Ada could best support employees and the global health community</li> <li>✓ We quickly organized an internal COVID-19 Taskforce along with a Business Task Force to explore and develop products that could be used to support to global health community, including a <a href="#">COVID-19 assessment and screener</a></li> </ul>

<p><i>When did you begin implementing response actions?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We began closely monitoring the COVID-19 pandemic in January, and during the second week of March we activated our <b>internal</b> and <b>external COVID-19 workgroups</b> and response</li> </ul>
<p><i>How has your response changed as the pandemic has evolved?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We've developed operational and people policies that are continuously reviewed to ensure we're responding appropriately to new developments as they happen.</li> <li>✓ We transitioned to a more <b>flex-remote work environment</b>, where most of our team is still working from home</li> <li>✓ Beyond COVID-19, we are thinking of how we can <b>take forward the learnings</b> and best practices that have emerged from this pandemic into our operations</li> </ul>
<p><i>What has been your organization's approach to bringing your workforce back (or keeping your workforce on site) to the physical workplace during the pandemic?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have decided to <b>keep a flexible remote policy</b> through the end of the year, where employees may choose to work remotely from any location that best supports their personal health and safety. Our team adapted well to a remote way of working <b>and we are considering keeping the policy</b> more flexible even post-COVID-19.</li> <li>✓ We have <b>kept our offices open</b> for those who prefer to work from an office space, in accordance with local health guidelines.</li> </ul>
<p><i>How has your strategy varied depending on facility location? By type of facility?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have been working closely with our local health authority and following local and in-house guidance to inform our strategy.</li> <li>✓ Because we are a global organization and have offices and people working in multiple countries, we've created <b>customized strategies</b> based on <b>local guidelines</b> and the <b>current epidemiological context</b>.</li> </ul>
<p><i>Are you requiring your workers to tested for COVID-19 as part of returning to the physical workplace?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Regular testing of people coming to the office is not part of these recommendations.</li> <li>✓ As long as people are not having any symptoms or contact with COVID-19 cases they can come to the office. But we of course have a hygiene concept in place that allows highest safety for the employees</li> </ul>
<p><i>How do you integrate contact tracing into worker safety efforts?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ At Ada, we have implemented contact tracing to monitor who is working from our different office locations, following local guidelines and consultation with the local health authority.</li> </ul>
<p><i>What has been your strategy for workers who test positive for COVID-19 or show symptoms of it?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Our People and Workplace team has developed a contract tracing and case management policy to address this.</li> <li>✓ Contacts would be identified based on the infectious time period and the attendance list employees need to fill out, when they come to the office. Close contacts need to stay at home for at least 14 days.</li> </ul>
<p><i>What is an example of an innovative practice you have implemented that others might learn from?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ If we've learned anything from this pandemic, it is that <b>people are hungry for credible knowledge</b> and want to see that their organizations are thoughtful in their response.</li> <li>✓ At the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, we began hosting <b>Q&amp;A sessions</b> with our in-house public health expert and had weekly updates from him as this global health crisis unfolded.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ These sessions were very well received by our team, and we even <b>expanded this Q&amp;A format to our Ada users</b> on social media.</li> <li>✓ Experts are still the most trusted source for information, and we think it's valuable to facilitate that type of knowledge sharing forum from experts at your organization- whether that be internal or outside expertise brought in.</li> </ul>
<i><b>What do you think will be most challenging in the next several months when it comes to worker safety?</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have very motivated employees and many of them are used to having slightly common cold symptoms during winter, which would not always prevent them from working from the office.</li> <li>✓ During this winter, it will be very important to be <b>vigilant about one's own health, think of one another</b> and be responsible to not come into the office in case of any signs of symptoms. That will be a joint effort.</li> </ul>
<i><b>Has COVID-19 made you rethink your physical/real estate investments or how your spaces are laid out?</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have the benefit of a spacious office, where the desk distances were already "<b>COVID-19 compliant</b>".</li> <li>✓ In addition we have decided to keep a <b>flexible remote policy</b> through the end of the year, where employees may choose to work remotely from any location that best supports their personal health and safety.</li> <li>✓ Our team <b>adapted well</b> to a remote way of working and we are considering keeping the policy more flexible even post-COVID-19.</li> </ul>
<i><b>Have you put restrictions on travel? Does this vary for business or personal travel?</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ We have reduced Business Travel to a minimum, replaced by virtual meetings, and always in accordance with the local safety guidelines..</li> </ul>
<i><b>Employee morale and productivity – how has COVID-19 affected your workforce's output and team cohesion?</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Both personally and professionally, the COVID-19 pandemic has altered daily life for so many of us around the world. Families, governments, health organizations and businesses are being rapidly and significantly affected by the pandemic.</li> <li>✓ As a public health challenge, COVID-19 is unparalleled in its scope and scale, and it's been challenging for everyone. <b>We've been proud of how the people at Ada have really stepped up to meet this challenge</b>, working through how we can be most effective as a team and galvanising around our purpose.</li> </ul>
<i><b>Is there anything else you'd like to tell us about your efforts to keep workers safe during COVID-19?</b></i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ The uncertainty around COVID-19, but also the emotional and psychological effects of the counter measures have an immense impact on many people, including our employees.</li> <li>✓ We believe that it is one of our priorities to <b>also ensure the mental health and psychological wellbeing of our team</b>, by providing even more people-related guidance and support to help our people managers best support their teams.</li> </ul>