

# Total Well-Being Serves All

## A Discussion With The Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann

**Whole person health embodies the concept that to be truly well, we must address the physical, mental, social, financial, and spiritual well-being of the individual.**

Portico Benefit Services saw the need for holistic health benefits more than two decades ago. Today, Portico continues to innovate, leveraging the latest technology and advancements to help plan members strengthen their health so they can serve others.

To understand the origin and growth of Portico's total well-being strategy, we sat down with The Rev. Jeffrey Thiemann, president and CEO of Portico Benefit Services. Rev. Thiemann is passionate about taking a whole-person approach to helping people live well. Here, in his own words, Rev. Thiemann describes Portico's journey and approach to total well-being.



# 78%

**OF EMPLOYERS CONSIDER EMPLOYEE WELL-BEING TO HAVE A MEANINGFUL ROLE IN THEIR BUSINESS STRATEGY.**

Source: Fidelity Investments and National Business Group on Health, Employer Investments in Employee Well-being, April 2019



*Working together, we can bring God's work to the people we serve.*

-REV. JEFFREY THIEMANN

## Q & A

### Q. WHY DID PORTICO GET INVOLVED WITH TOTAL WELL-BEING?

A. Roughly 20 years ago, Portico saw the need to transition from a disease model to a wellness model. While the concept is now widely recognized as a best-in-class approach, many organizations still have not implemented a solution that truly addresses holistic health.

As a trusted nonprofit ministry of the ELCA, Portico has the unique opportunity to engage with our plan members from a place of trust and an understanding of what it means to choose a life of service. This has translated into measurable, meaningful results like improved retirement readiness and better health and resilience.

### Q. WHY SHOULD EMPLOYERS WANT TO OFFER TOTAL WELL-BEING BENEFITS TO THEIR EMPLOYEES?

A. Offering meaningful benefits that address whole person health demonstrates that you care for your staff by supporting their needs on many levels – financially, emotionally, and physically.

In addition to improving the lives of the people on your team, a review of your financials may quickly reveal that investing in whole person health is a sound business decision demonstrated through better retention, lower health care costs, and improved retirement readiness.

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## Q. WHAT DOES TOTAL WELL-BEING LOOK LIKE FOR A PORTICO CUSTOMER AND ITS STAFF?

A. In many ways, Portico plays the role of “coach” in the wellness journey. We start by helping members identify their own goals for holistic health. Because all goals are unique to the person, we cannot tell someone what their goal is, but we can work with them to identify and reach their goals. We then provide tools, resources, education, and support.

By focusing on goals, members can avoid issues that get them off track, and receive the support they need to recover quickly if they do get off track.

## Q. WHAT IS THE CONNECTION BETWEEN THE CONCEPT OF TOTAL WELL-BEING, PORTICO'S VALUES, AND THE ELCA?

A. John 10:10 tells us, *“I came that they may have life and have it abundantly.”*

This scripture passage is so very important to the work we do at Portico and to the concept of whole person health. God intended for each of us to live with abundance; it is a gift we have been given, which we should embrace, living life to our fullest potential. To live abundantly and to live well, we must invest in ourselves at multiple levels.

For us to use, enjoy, and share our gifts, we need to take care of our whole being. When we do this, we celebrate that we are freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor – *“God’s work, our hands.”*

## Q. HOW DOES A WHOLE-PERSON HEALTH APPROACH LEAD TO RESILIENCE?

A. Healthy leaders across all vocations enhance lives – of their employees, of their peers, and of their communities. For us to have an impact on others, we must have capacity. And to have capacity, we must care for ourselves.

At Portico, our focus on total well-being helps employees, employers, pastors, congregations, seminaries, and universities prepare for the most demanding seasons of their lives.

## Q. HOW IS PORTICO EVOLVING TO ADDRESS ORGANIZATIONAL NEEDS FOR RESILIENCE?

A. Portico continues to serve at exceptionally high levels as reflected by our member satisfaction scores, engagement levels, and positive impact on claims costs. Others have recognized and acknowledged the value of Portico’s health plan model. We are on a path to grow significantly, especially as we see more and more social ministry organizations and ELCA colleges and universities look for new ways to address the high costs of health care. We will continue to work tirelessly to positively influence the lives of plan members so they may achieve success whenever possible and benefit from resilience when it is needed.

I am extremely proud of the work the Portico team does to support our leaders, our plan members, and our community. Working together, we can bring God’s work to the people we serve.

## ABOUT THE REV. JEFFREY THIEMANN, PRESIDENT AND CEO OF PORTICO BENEFIT SERVICES

Rev. Thiemann was drawn to lead Portico by the opportunity to combine two things he cares about deeply: solving the complex challenges of health care and retirement planning, and helping more people through God’s work.

When he became president and CEO of Portico in 2011, Rev. Thiemann was able to combine his passions, leading the talented team at Portico to help bring over 40,000 members holistic health benefits so they can better serve the congregations, employees, and communities of the ELCA.

## About Portico

Portico Benefit Services is dedicated to helping nonprofit and faith-based organizations realize their missions, by providing trusted benefit solutions that support members’ financial, emotional, and physical well-being.

To learn more and find out how Portico can align with your benefits needs, please email [Christina Womack](mailto:Cwomack@PorticoBenefits.org) [Cwomack@PorticoBenefits.org](mailto:Cwomack@PorticoBenefits.org) or visit [PorticoBenefitPlans.org](http://PorticoBenefitPlans.org).