



Weekly Bulletin – February 10, 2023



WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK?

The ERISA Industry Committee (ERIC) is Urging the Senate Judiciary Committee to Advance Legislation to Enhance Prescription Drug Competition and Affordability



On February 8, via a letter to Congress, ERIC urged them to vote in favor of several bills which would **improve transparency, promote competition, and prohibit practices that discourage affordability within the prescription drug market.**

In Washington, DC and in Tallahassee, the Florida Alliance team has witnessed first-hand or reviewed testimony from the PBM Industry and have been shocked to hear them say that EMPLOYERS are the ones to blame for lack of transparency, spread pricing, challenges with uptake of biosimilars, and affordability, in general. They have said “we just do what the contracts tell us to do.”

We are working with the National Alliance Health Policy Strategy Group to weigh in at a federal level and working with our advocacy/policy consultant to weigh in here in Florida to educate them about the challenges that employers have with achieving true transparency with their PBM.

ERIC has asked us (the Florida Alliance) to support the proposed legislation. If your organization has a government affairs team or lobbyist, would you please connect them to karen@flhealthvalue.org to see if we could work together to share the employer voice with our elected officials on this issue and other issues as we become more engaged on the policy front? Thank you.

Click [HERE](#) to read ERIC’s letter to Congress.

Don't Forget! Mental Health/Substance Use Employer Learning Collaborative Session #6 – February 20, 2:00PM – 3:30PM ET

The sixth session of this ELC series will include the rollout of the **“Voice of the Purchaser” Survey**, a follow up on the EAP presentation, a discussion about prescription digital therapeutics coverage and how Florida Medicaid has added this benefit to their plans, and an update on the federal Mental Health Parity laws.



To review the slides, the meeting recordings, and other materials from all the sessions of the Mental Health/Substance Use ELC meetings, please visit our Mental Health/Substance Use ELC webpage <https://flhealthvalue.org/our-work/mental-health-substance-use-elc/> This webpage also includes the resources that are referenced at each session.

If you did not receive a calendar invitation for session 6 or need the invitation re-sent, please contact Lisa Hain, lisa@flhealthvalue.org.

Depression Calculator for Employers



Depression affects millions of Americans on an annual basis, with costs on both the home front and workplace. It costs the U.S. economy in excess of \$200 billion per year in medical care, work absenteeism, and decreased productivity. The Center for Workplace Mental Health, a recent presenter at the Mental Health/Substance Use Employer Learning Collaborative, offers **a tool to help employers gain a better sense of the multitude of areas in which depression affects their organization.** It can be found here: [Depression](#)

[Calculator \(workplacementalhealth.org\)](#)

Total Cost of Care Saving Tool for Addiction Recovery Services

Affiliate Member Alliance for Addiction Payment Reform has developed a tool to help payers, providers, employers, and government entities determine the **potential total cost of care annual savings by aligning incentives and promoting system integration through the implementation of an Alternative Payment Model (APM) focused on SUD.** The tool can be found [here](#).



For question about this tool or the APM, please contact Director of Quality Improvement, David Cavalleri, at David@flhealthvalue.org



In Case You Missed It

The End of the COVID-19 Emergency: What Employers Need to Know

The White House has announced it will end the COVID-19 national emergency declarations on May 11, 2023. Emergency declarations were designed to reduce red tape around COVID-19 prevention and care—so **the end of the emergency may complicate the way employees access COVID-19 tests, boosters, and treatments.**



The Health Action Alliance, a Florida Alliance trusted source, has summarized what will change and what will remain the same with the ending of the COVID-19 emergency declaration:

WHAT WILL CHANGE

COVID-19 Tests

- Employers' healthcare plans will no longer be required to cover the full cost of at-home COVID-19 tests (currently up to 8 tests per month)
- For many employees, changes in coverage could mean COVID-19 testing will only be covered if a doctor has ordered a test.

COVID-19 Vaccines

- Employers' healthcare plans will no longer be required to cover the full cost of COVID-19 vaccines offered by out-of-network providers. At the moment, the federal government still has millions of booster and vaccine doses and it has pledged to continue providing them for free while supplies last.
- Up to 18 million Americans will gradually lose health coverage from Medicaid, and about 4 million are likely to become completely uninsured, which may impact their uptake of vaccines and testing when those services are no longer universally free.

COVID-19 Treatments

- Under most plans, employees will likely have to share costs (e.g., co-pays, deductibles, or co-insurance) for COVID-19 treatments – the prescription medication currently provided for free by the federal government. For now, the federal government still has millions of treatment doses and will continue to make the current supply available for free.

WHAT WON'T CHANGE

- COVID-19 vaccines and boosters will remain free from in-network providers
- COVID-19 treatments, vaccines, and test that are currently authorized on an emergency-use basis by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) will remain available for use until further notice by the FDA.
- As noted above, the federal government will continue providing free COVID-19 vaccines and treatment as long as current supplies last.

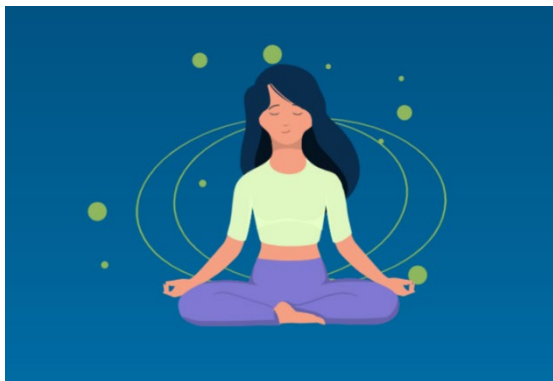
Although the emergency declaration is ending, the virus is still circulating and many Americans – about 3 in 5 – are at high risk of getting very sick from COVID-19. **Join the Health Action Alliance (HAA) and the National Safety Council on Tuesday, February 28, at 2PM ET for the free webinar, *Act Fast: New Strategies to Protect Your Workforce***, to hear how employers can empower their workers to access treatment now and after the conclusion of the national COVID-19 emergency. **Attendees will be the first to receive a comprehensive new toolkit** to help employees understand their risk for severe COVID-19 and create the plan that's right for them to prevent severe illness.



Click [HERE](#) to register.

FREE Webinar: Wellbeing 2023 and Beyond – February 23, 1:00PM ET

Learn where leaders at top organizations are focusing on and what they are prioritizing and de-prioritizing in employee wellness and benefits. **This webinar explores what is working and what isn't as leaders share the challenges and barriers facing workplace wellness**, with insights into effective approaches to wellness, and how changing the routine and trying new things could help organizations leap forward. **Panel members include Florida Alliance Board Chair, Rosa Novo**, as well as leaders from Johns Hopkins Medicine, Phillips 66, and AECOM.



Click [HERE](#) to register.

Catalyst for Payment Reform's First Catalyst Debate: Will Healthcare Be More Affordable in 5 Years?

On February 2, Catalyst for Payment Reform gathered healthcare luminaries to discuss the most critical challenges we face – affordability, access, equity, adequate competition, transparency, quality, and more. **Among those participating in the debate was Christin Deacon,**



Principal Owner of VerSan Consulting, who we are lucky to have confirmed as a speaker at our April 19 Annual Conference.

To catch the lively debate, click [HERE](#) to access the recording.



Employer Member Corner

Request for Marketing Materials about Humira's Amjevita

On January 31, 2023, the first biosimilar for Humira, Amjevita, was made available for patients in the U.S. This drug is the first of many biosimilars to come to market this year. Would you please share with us any marketing materials you have received from your PBM or Specialty Pharmacy vendor about this biosimilar specifically and/or generally about how they are going to handle the biosimilars as they come available in the market? We would greatly appreciate it. Please send the information to Ashley (ashley@flhealthvalue.org).