



Weekly Bulletin – July 14, 2023



WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK?

Site of Care for Biologics and Biosimilar Medications – EBRI Research Findings

The Employee Benefits Research Institute (EBRI) published an issue brief on June 29, 2023 entitled “Location, Location, Location: Spending Differences for Biologic and Biosimilar Medications by Site of Treatment.” Paul Fronstin, Ph.D. and Christopher Roebuck, Ph.D. found that for all seven innovator biologics they examined, allowed charges were higher in hospital outpatient departments (HOPD) than in physician offices (PO). HOPD markups on innovator biologics are roughly doubling costs for employers and minimizing savings that could be achieved through biosimilar competition. In 2020, allowed charges were more than twice as high in HOPDs than in POs.

Click [HERE](#) to read the issue brief.

If you have any questions, please contact Ashley Tait-Dinger at ashley@flhealthvalue.org



Applications Being Accepted for 2023 John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Awards

The National Quality Forum and The Joint Commission have announced that applications are now being accepted for the 2023 John M. Eisenberg Patient Safety and Quality Awards. The deadline for applying is



August 7. Awards are bestowed in one of three categories: 1) Individual Achievement, 2) National Level Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality, and 3) Local Level Innovation in Patient Safety and Quality. To read more and apply, click [HERE](#).



CALL FOR EMPLOYER SPEAKERS!

The Florida Alliance is planning for three educational webinars in the coming months on **(1) biomarker testing, (2) cell and gene therapies, and (3) anti-obesity medications**. These webinars will be panel sessions with a clinician/medical outcomes specialist, a moderator, and an employer. **We are looking for an employer member from the Florida Alliance to participate on the panel for each topic.** We will have a prep call ahead of time. If you are covering any of these three areas in your benefit design and would like to share your thought process and experience in doing so with our members, please reach out to Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org Many thanks!



Employer Member Educational Programs, Reports, Resources, And Employer Learning Collaboratives (ELC)

Summer Book Club - A Review of a *Playbook for Employers: Addressing Pharmacy Benefit Management Misalignment*

Welcome to summer! The National Alliance of Healthcare Purchasers Coalitions recently published “A *Playbook for Employers: Addressing Pharmacy Benefit Management Misalignment*.” The playbook is full of great information but is a bit long. Since it is summer, **we are going to treat the review of this playbook like a book club and review small sections of the playbook over each of the next few weeks.**



We are starting with a review of pages 2 to 4. As with most conversations we have had on this topic since early 2022, the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) is the starting point. Unlike the data transparency requirement on medical benefits, the pharmacy data transparency requirement was delayed until the end of 2022; the concepts and definitions were not. There are two basic concepts: a) fiduciary obligation to disperse plan assets in a **prudent manner**, and b) “the prudent standard for fiduciaries is a **prudent expert standard**.” A good faith effort is not considered to be enough.

We tend to group medical and pharmacy plan and vendor mechanics together, but we should not. There is no federal regulatory oversight of PBMs at this time. PBM vendors do not view themselves in the same way as traditional medical vendors; therefore, PBM vendors do not think the CAA applies to them. (As a side note, Florida has enacted the most comprehensive PBM legislation in the country in May. As the details of how the law will be enforced become available, Florida Alliance staff will review them and share the information with you.)

Bottom line, PBMs wield a lot of power that results in more revenue streams for them. Examples are referral fees to consulting firms, and incentives for favorable formulary placement. These schemes have led to a united front by the PBMs to obscure their business practices.

As employer/healthcare purchasers of pharmacy benefits, you should be looking at 7 different drivers: drug price, drug mix, utilization, appropriateness, site of care, affordability, and value.

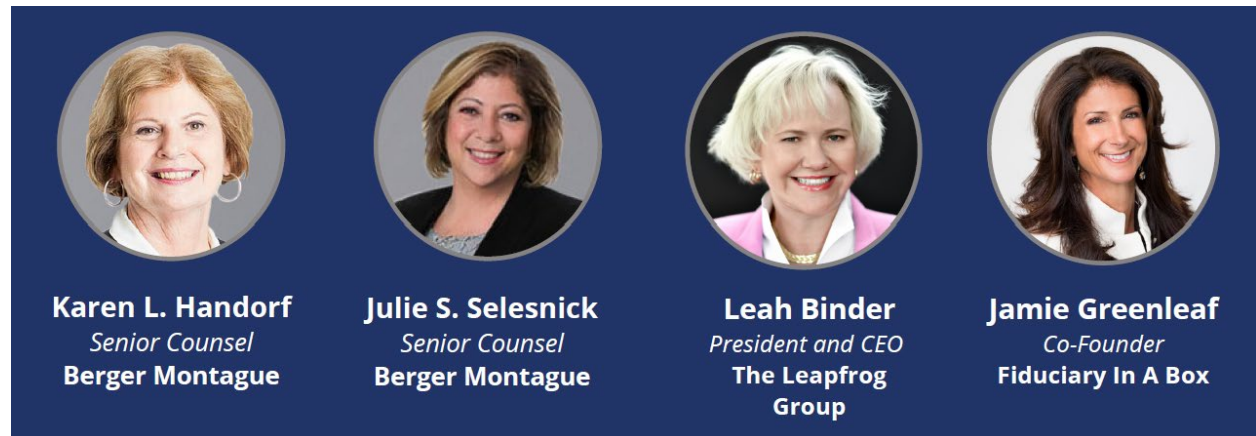
If you would like more detailed information on the points above, please review pages 2 – 4 from the playbook and email Ashley Tait-Dinger at ashley@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions.




Click [HERE](#) to go to the playbook.

Employer Member Complimentary Webinar - ERISA Law and Health Care Quality: Top Labor Attorneys Alert to Key Issues Ahead for Plan Sponsors – July 19, 1:00PM – 2:00PM ET

Join the country’s top labor attorneys and ERISA experts, Leapfrog’s CEO, and a fiduciary expert for an early access webinar on Leapfrog’s new white paper “The CAA and Health Care Quality: The New Transparency Imperative.” The experts will dissect new requirements and provide guidance on how ERISA employers can comply to drive quality health care.

Speakers



 <p>Karen L. Handorf <i>Senior Counsel</i> Berger Montague</p>	 <p>Julie S. Selesnick <i>Senior Counsel</i> Berger Montague</p>	 <p>Leah Binder <i>President and CEO</i> The Leapfrog Group</p>	 <p>Jamie Greenleaf <i>Co-Founder</i> Fiduciary In A Box</p>
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Click [HERE](#) to register.



MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Thank You to Our Renewing Members!

Employer Members - **Miami-Dade County Public Schools, City of Orlando,
and Orange County Government**



Healthcare Advisory Council Member – **Orlando Health**



Affiliate Members – **Sanofi and Grooms Benefits**



Welcome to our new Affiliate Members – MedWorks Consulting and Visana Health

Founded in 2002 by seasoned leaders in health care, [MedWorks Consulting](#) has broad experience in all significant areas of healthcare services. Their comprehensive understanding of the healthcare



marketplace with the ongoing forces for change, along with their strategic sales and marketing support, allow them to look ahead of the curve and prepare for the changes in the health industry. Whether their efforts focus on differentiated business planning, evolutionary benefit plan designs, qualitative marketplace assessments, or administrative cost reductions, they help their clients develop and implement effective marketplace strategies and solutions that significantly improve their bottom line by growing revenues or lowering costs with thoughtful, customized solutions.

For more information, contact Arthur T. Taft, Managing Director, ataft@medworksusa.com

[Visana Health](#) is a virtual women's health clinic that provides personalized, whole-person clinical care for the widest range of women's health conditions. They go beyond the narrow focus on maternity to offer the most comprehensive care for all phases of a women's life. Visana's full-service virtual women's health clinic partners with employees from diagnosis to symptom relief by connecting women to high-value, in-network providers for seamless end-to-end care and holistic support for women.

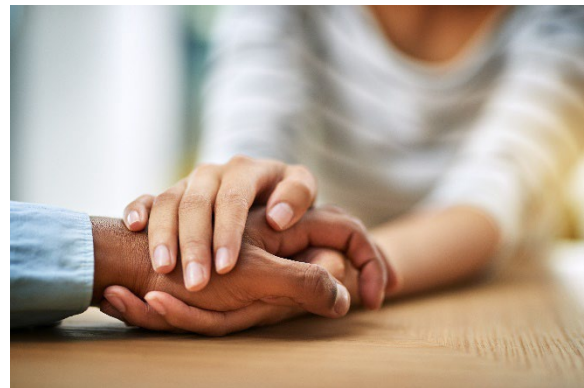
To learn more contact Matt Hodes, Vice President of Sales, matt@visanahealth.com



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

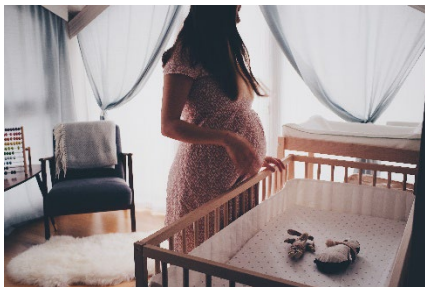
Lack of Access to Health Care Has Contributed to Increase of Cancer Among Hispanics

Axios recently summarized an article published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) discussing deaths from certain cancers among the Hispanic population. Although overall cancer-related deaths among Hispanics dropped between 1999 and 2020, the article identified several that had seen an increase, among them liver cancer for both men and woman, colorectal and testicular cancer for men, and pancreatic and uterine cancer for women. The article summary stresses the importance of improving access to health care to help address these concerning outcomes. To read the summary, click [HERE](#).



U.S. Maternal Deaths Keep Rising. Here's Who is Most at Risk

NPR recently reported on a *Journal of the American Medical Association* (JAMA) study regarding mortality rates among pregnant women. The study, focusing on mortality rates on a state-by-state basis between 2009 and 2016, saw a rise among all racial and ethnic groups. Outcomes were particularly bad for Native American, Alaska Native, and Black women. For Black women, it has continued to worsen, as mortality rates have more than doubled during that time span. **The study found differences across all racial and ethnic groups depending on the state or region, seeing some improvements, but overall seeing deaths continue to rise while other wealthy nations continue to see decreases.** The summary points to the belief that the majority of these deaths are preventable. One way to address this crisis is to



continue to promote all pregnancy-related care, including screening for physical and behavioral health issues and regular checkups. To read the NPR article, click [HERE](#).

11 Million Affected by HCA Healthcare Data Breach

The *Tampa Bay Times* reported that data from 11 million HCA patients, including an unspecified number in Florida, had been posted in an online forum. **HCA published a [statement](#) saying the compromised data included patient names, cities, states, ZIP codes, dates of birth, telephone numbers and email addresses.** HCA stated no other personal or sensitive data was posted. The article provides recommendations to individuals to safeguard themselves as well as a phone number to contact (844-608-1803). The *Tampa Bay Times* article can be accessed [HERE](#).

