



## WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK?

### Catalyst for Payment Reform Announces New Executive Director

Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR) has announced Guy D'Andrea as their new Executive Director. **Guy has been a long-time colleague of the Florida Alliance, having worked with us on a patient centered medical home project and our diabetes prevention program initiative. Guy served as the keynote speaker for our Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors in 2013. His presentation was entitled "Creating the Future of Health Care."**

A special thank you to Suzanne Delbanco who has led CPR from its inception and is now a senior advisor to the CPR team. We appreciate her leadership and support of our work and will miss working with her, but look forward to re-engaging with Guy.



*Guy D'Andrea*

The press release regarding CPR's announcement can be found [HERE](#).

### Report Finds Continued Challenges Obtaining High-Quality Behavioral Health Care

On July 18<sup>th</sup> the Bowman Family Foundation, in collaboration with the National Opinion Research Center (NORC), released their report entitled "**Equitable Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Care: An Urgent Need.**" The report highlights survey findings regarding access to mental health and substance use care and supports other reports showing the continued challenges people are having obtaining high quality behavioral health care.

Many thanks to all of you who promoted the survey. As a result, Florida had good representation in the survey, and we have been provided with our own results. The nearly 2,800 individuals who completed the survey expressed challenges obtaining any kind of behavioral health care as well as having problems finding in-network providers. Forty percent of the respondents had to contact a minimum of four in-network providers before being able to successfully schedule



an appointment. Of individuals in employer-sponsored plans who used at least one out-of-network behavioral health specialist, 80% indicated they obtained care through an out-of-network provider “all the time,” and about 50% of respondents received 3 or more denials from their carrier for behavioral health services. This challenge underscores the problem covered members experience trying to identify in-network providers. The majority of those individuals who received behavioral health care from their primary care provider indicated they needed additional help.

**The findings, when broken out by those who resided in Florida, shared similar sentiments.** Half of those queried had to contact at least four in-network providers before scheduling an appointment. Seventy-five percent of respondents who received care from an out-of-network provider did so each and every time, reflecting the ongoing provider inadequacies experienced by covered members. Nearly half of the respondents stated they needed additional behavioral health care after discussing their mental health with their primary care provider. Both the overall findings and Florida-specific findings reflected the desire to utilize audio-only and audio-video services.

The recommendations from the report echo many of those the Florida Alliance has been addressing through our Mental Health and Substance Use Employer Learning Collaborative, where we support the expansion of the provider network, the integration of behavioral care with primary care, compliance with federal mental health parity laws, and full reimbursement of audio-only and audio-video behavioral health services.

To read the report and its timely recommendations, click [HERE](#).



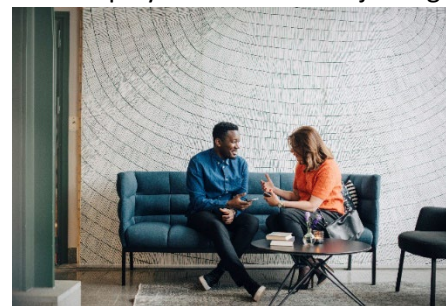
## **Employer Member Educational Programs, Reports, Resources, And Employer Learning Collaboratives (ELC)**

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### **Mental Health/Substance Use Employer Learning Collaborative – Thursday, August 3, 1:00PM – 2:00PM ET**

This ELC meeting will only be held for our employer members and a few employers interested in joining the Florida Alliance as a way to give them a feel for our work.

The agenda will include a more detailed presentation of the national and Florida findings in the Bowman Family Foundation Report “Equitable Access to Mental Health and Substance Use Care: A Urgent Need” described above. We will also talk about the Mental Health and Health Equity initiative underway with the National Alliance and five of our employer members.



We will also hear an update from Jessica Mason at the City of Orlando on their Notice.Talk.Act®@Work program.

Please click [HERE](#) to view past sessions of the **MH/SU ELC**. If you did not receive a calendar invitation for this session or need the invitation to be re-sent, please contact Lisa Hain, [lisa@flhealthvalue.org](mailto:lisa@flhealthvalue.org)

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

We are continuing our review of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchasers Coalitions "*A Playbook for Employers: Addressing Pharmacy Benefit Management Misalignment*." **The playbook is full of valuable information but is very long. This week we have reviewed pages 5 – 9.**



"PBM Value Chain" is a misnomer. Notice the number of players and touchpoints on page 5. All these players and all these transactions are why the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) has started an investigation into the PBM industry.

The 3 large PBM's are beholden to their shareholders. Employers, related to their medical benefits, are beholden to their employees and plan members. Thus, a dichotomy is created. An example of this is the utilization of a Pharmacy & Therapeutic (P&T) Committee. Their recommendations DO NOT drive adjustments to the PBM formulary. The recommendations should be used to contract with

the manufacturer or distributor, determine drug placements, and protocols for administration (like utilization of prior authorizations or step therapy) but it does not. **As self-funded employers, you should demand control of your formulary.**

Now, let's talk about price, cost, and rebates. Starting with cost, when speaking about hospital transactions, employers have access to their prices paid via claims. They can get a good idea about hospital costs via different, independent tools from RAND and the National Academy of State Health Policy Hospital Cost Tool. There is nothing to validate costs on the PBM side.

Now to price and rebates. Ask yourself why would someone offer you a 45% discount PLUS rebate and not a set price? The points above drive home the dilemma of "how did we get here?" One way is by the vendor selection process and giving the traditional PBM's the purchasing power to create this situation. As mentioned, there are inherent conflicts between employers and traditional PBM goals. For the PBM, they are listed on page 7.

If you would like more detailed information on the points above, please review pages 5-9 from the playbook and email Ashley Tait-Dinger at [ashley@flhealthvalue.org](mailto:ashley@flhealthvalue.org) if you have any questions.

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

**Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR) is Looking for your Input! ACTION ITEM**



CPR is conducting research into the barriers purchasers face when strategizing and implementing disruptive healthcare purchasing strategies as well as factors that enable them to overcome obstacles in doing so. The survey they have developed is designed to gauge which barriers can be more problematic relative to others.

**CPR will publish aggregate findings in a research report geared at educating purchasers about the hurdles and enabling factors. The survey is anticipated to take less than 10 minutes to complete.**

To preview the survey, click [HERE](#).

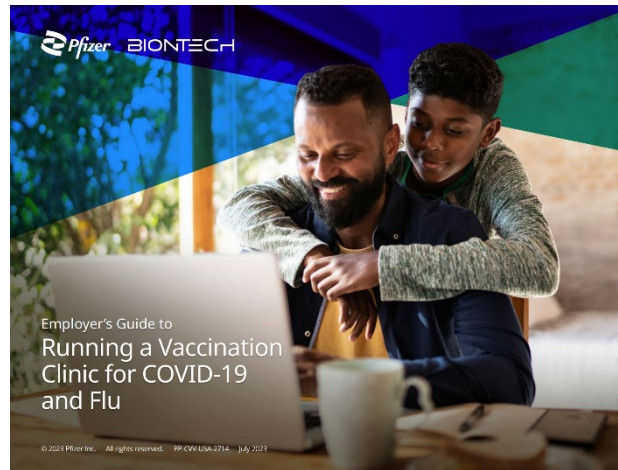
Click [HERE](#) to complete the survey.

**Employer Member Benefit – Resource: *Employer’s Guide to Running a Vaccination Clinic for COVID-19 and Flu***

As the fall/winter flu season approaches, it is important to stay vigilant and help employees stay up to date on recommended vaccinations.

Florida Alliance Affiliate Member Pfizer has prepared a **guide for employers illustrating an important role they can play in their employees’ health by providing flu and COVID vaccines.**

Click [HERE](#) to learn the benefits and best practices of setting up COVID-19 and flu vaccination clinics.



**IN CASE YOU MISSED IT**

**Public Release of Long-Awaited Mental Health Parity Regulations is Imminent**

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has received the Department of Labor’s (DOL) long awaited regulations regarding Mental Health Parity guidance enacted in the 2021 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

This step is the final hurdle before the guidance is publicly revealed. We will keep you posted!

To read more, click [HERE](#).

