



Weekly Bulletin – September 6, 2024



WHAT'S NEW THIS WEEK?

Welcome Hannah McChesney, New Florida Alliance Team Member



Hannah McChesney is the new Program and Project Coordinator at the Florida Alliance. Hannah holds a Master's degree in Business Administration. She has more than ten years of experience in the education and retail industries which includes a variety of administrative and human resources job functions.

Hannah will be providing support for our research and education programs and will be leading up the development of the Weekly Bulletin. Please join us in welcoming Hannah to the team! Hannah's email address is hannah@flhealthvalue.org

ACTION ITEM: 2024 "Pulse of the Purchaser" Employer Survey: Please complete by Friday, September 16

The National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions is conducting its 2024 "Pulse of the Purchaser" survey to learn employers' current directions in the areas listed below. Over the past several years, this survey has highlighted employer key trends in healthcare delivery and payment reform. The survey will take no more than 15 minutes to complete – all responses will remain confidential. We will share the results with you. If we have several of our members respond to the survey, we will receive a Florida report.



Key areas of the survey:

- Workforce environment
- Health strategies (including women's health, obesity management, mental health)
- Pharmaceutical drug strategies
- Hospital price strategies
- High-cost claim strategies
- Fiduciary strategies
- Potential health reforms

The survey also includes questions about the resources developed by the National Alliance that we always share with our Employer Members through our Weekly Bulletins.

To view the full question set, click [HERE](#). Click [HERE](#) to complete the survey. If you need more information, please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org

EMPLOYER MEMBER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, REPORTS, RESOURCES, AND EMPLOYER LEARNING COLLABORATIVES (ELC)

DON'T FORGET! Employer Member Benefit: Webinar – *Reclaiming Your Power: How to Access Your Claims Data and Hold Carriers Accountable* – September 12, 1:00PM – 2:30PM ET

This webinar is a joint Florida Alliance/Midwest Business Group on Health event. During the webinar, you will learn how to protect your fiduciary responsibilities:

- Ways to access your de-identified claims data
- How variations in contract language can change the game
- Practical steps to hold carriers, TPAs, and providers accountable



Karen van Caulil, Florida Alliance President and CEO, has been asked to present a Florida Alliance project on price transparency that some of our Employer Members participated in. Also speaking on this webinar are Alex Jung, who has presented to us on several occasions, and Julia Posacki from Affiliate Member SmartLight Analytics.

Additional details and registration can be accessed via the calendar invitation you should have received, or you can click [HERE](#). **PLEASE NOTE, you must register for this event to attend!**

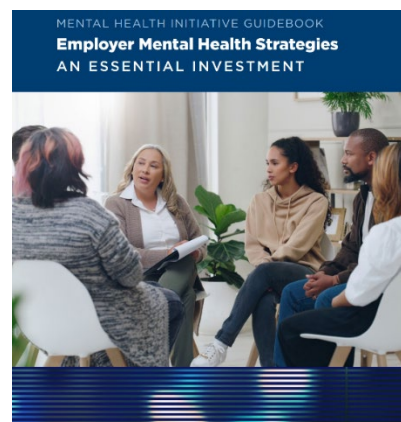
For more information, please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org

Wrap Up – Mental Health Initiative Workshop

Thank you to our Employer Members who participated in the July 18 in-person workshop, part of a National Alliance Mental Health Initiative. The Initiative wrapped up on Wednesday, September 4. A recording of the session will be available soon.

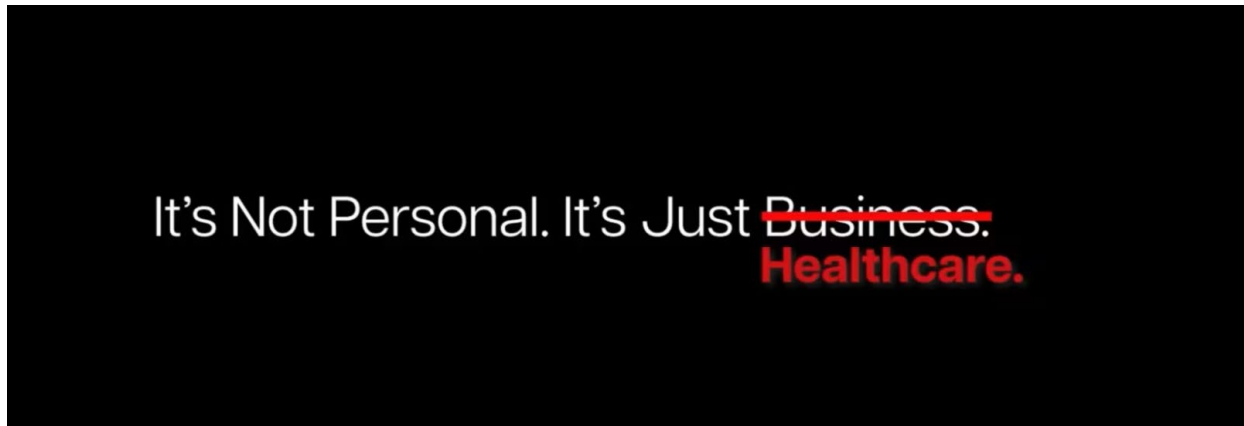
The initiative culminated in a new guidebook for employers, *Employer Mental Health Strategies, An Essential Investment*. This guidebook discusses each recommended step to develop or refine your approach to mental health strategy and offers practices and ideas for implementation. It is intended to be a resource that employers can use to deploy and evaluate approaches now and in the future. Click [HERE](#) to view the guidebook.

For more information, please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org



Additional Follow-up: FL Alliance Member Benefit - FREE - Viewing of New Documentary, followed by Discussion and Resources

We received several requests for an abbreviated version of the documentary *It's Not Personal. It's Just Business Healthcare* that we viewed at the All Employer Member Meeting last month. Two of the producers – Chelsea and Donovan Ryckis of Ethos Benefits were able to create a shortened version of the film that retains all the essential information and is about 25 minutes in length. To view, click [HERE](#).

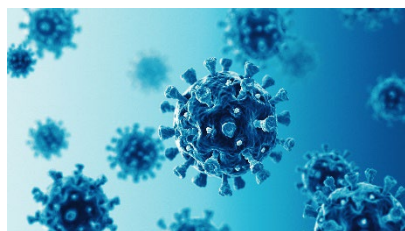


As mentioned in last week's Bulletin, we feel this is a MUST-SEE film. If you were unable to attend and would like to view the full-length film, please click [HERE](#) where you will also find a recording of the reactor panel and accompanying materials provided by Chris Deacon and Renzo Luzzatti who were featured in the documentary.

If you need more information, or have any questions, please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org

Employer Member Benefit: Resources on COVID-19

Since the pandemic began, we have seen COVID-19–associated hospitalizations rise and fall, but COVID-19 has never gone away. In fact, as COVID-19 continues to be a cause of severe illness and



hospitalization, protection from previous COVID-19 vaccination wanes over time, and new variants continue to emerge. Updated COVID-19 vaccines have been designed to help protect against circulating variants.

One of the best preventive strategies against COVID-19 is getting all eligible people up to date with their recommended vaccinations. In addition to protecting against serious illness, COVID-19 vaccination can help prevent productivity loss due to “Long COVID” or missed work while caring for a sick family member.

Florida Alliance Affiliate Member Pfizer has provided some important new resources on COVID-19 that we hope you will share with your employees. The [2023 Employer Select Respiratory Disease Playbook](#) – this playbook contains education and resources on two critical respiratory illnesses that can be managed if vaccination schedules and treatment protocols are followed -- COVID-19 and pneumococcal disease.



Other resources available from Pfizer:

- [What is Long COVID and What Should You Know?](#) Infographic (*English version*)
- [What is Long COVID and What Should You Know?](#) Infographic (*Spanish version*)
- [COVID vs Flu](#) Infographic (*English version*)
- [COVID vs Flu](#) Infographic (*Spanish version*)
- [COVID-19: The importance of helping to keep employees informed](#) flyer
- [Respiratory Vaccination Clinic Guide](#)

If you need more information, please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org



FL Alliance Team and Employer Member News

Congratulations to Stephanie Koch – 2024 Excellence in Benefits Winner

The Employee Benefit News (EBN) team has welcomed their newest class of outstanding HR and benefits leaders. EBN is honoring those who excel in the areas of HR leadership, technology innovation, and benefits brokerage and advising with their Excellence in Benefits Awards. The winners are leaders who excel in their efforts with compassion, innovation, and equality.



We are proud to announce that **Stephanie Koch, Director of Human Resources at Hendry Marine Industries, and Florida Alliance Board Vice Chair** is one of the recipients of this award!

Stephanie and the other 24 honorees will be celebrated at the Benefits at Work conference taking place later this month in San Diego. Congratulations to Stephanie!

Please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions.



HEALTH OBSERVANCES

September is Sepsis Awareness Month!

Our High-Cost Claims Workshop held on June 3 identified sepsis as a significant factor driving high-cost claims among our Employer Members. During the workshop we learned from facilitator Dr. Christine Hale that some of the sepsis is brought into the hospital by a patient who already has an infection when they are admitted while some of the sepsis is hospital acquired. Attendees at the workshop agreed that

the signs and symptoms of sepsis are not common knowledge, and more information is needed to educate employees.

What is Sepsis?

Sepsis is a life-threatening emergency that happens when your body's response to an infection damages vital organs and often causes death. Like strokes or heart attacks, sepsis is a medical emergency that requires rapid diagnosis and treatment. It is important to look for a combination of warning signs of sepsis. Spotting these symptoms early could prevent the body from entering septic shock and could save a life.

**When it comes to sepsis, remember
IT'S ABOUT TIME™. Watch for:**

T	I	M	E ™
TEMPERATURE higher or lower than normal	INFECTION may have signs and symptoms of an infection	MENTAL DECLINE confused, sleepy, difficult to rouse	EXTREMELY ILL severe pain, discomfort, shortness of breath

If you experience a combination of these symptoms: seek urgent medical care, call 911, or go to the hospital with an advocate. Ask: "Could it be sepsis?"

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September is Sepsis Awareness Month so now is the time to gather information and resources on this costly and potentially deadly condition. We encourage you to visit www.sepsis.org for information and resources you can use to educate your employees.

One section on the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade is for infections. PSI 13: Sepsis Infections After Surgery is one of the measures reported. From the latest release (Spring 2024), the range was 2.17 to 13.49 with the average being 5.33. **The range is stated using standard infection ratios (SIR), meaning for the low range, 2 out of 1,000 patients who had a surgery developed sepsis.** Visit the Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade website to see how hospitals your employees use are performing on sepsis rates.

Link: <https://www.hospitalsafetygrade.org>

If you have any questions, please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org or Ashley Tait-Dinger at ashley@flhealthvalue.org

December National Observances: Preventing Acute Illness

We are providing December's content to you this week, so that you may consider sharing the information in your future employee communications.

National Influenza Vaccination Week

December 6-12 serves as a reminder that everyone six months and older is advised to get vaccinated against the flu. Vaccination is particularly important for people who are at higher risk of developing serious flu complications. [Free CDC](#) resources include multi-lingual fact sheets, videos, social media posts, posters, and more.



National Handwashing Awareness Week

Handwashing is one of the easiest ways to help prevent illness and the spread of germs. That is why December 5-11 has been designated to remind people that keeping hands clean is one of the most important steps we can take to avoid getting sick and spreading germs to others.

PROTECTING EMPLOYEE HEALTH IN THE WORKPLACE
 Clearing up confusion about respiratory virus prevention recommendations Fall 2023

Proven Workplace Strategies to Improve Vaccination Rates and Lessen the Spread of Viruses

- Provide Simple, Frequent Communications**
 - Optimize all channels
 - Include leader messages ("I want you to enjoy a healthy holiday season," "my vaccine took only 5 minutes...")
 - Share reality and ethically choose employee stories ("I trust my community's doctors/elders/leaders who recommend vaccines.")
- Stay Ahead of the Curve**
 - Know when to increase communications and safety reminders by staying abreast of emerging risks, outbreaks, trends, and recommendations through CDC data trackers
 - COVID-19
 - Influenza
 - RSV
 - Remind employees to stay ahead with simple practices (e.g., hand hygiene, not coughing/sneezing into their hands, COVID-19 testing, staying home when ill...)
- Offer No-Cost Immunisation Clinics On- or Near-Site**
 - Integrate with health fairs and related events
 - Include everyone across all work sites, regardless of benefits eligibility
 - Set and report on vaccination goals with creative visuals (e.g., thermometer rising, year-to-year comparisons...)
 - Partner with local public health departments to learn more about hosting vaccine update clinics
- Remove Vaccine Barriers**
 - Remove copayment/consumable
 - Offer vouchers to those who are not benefit eligible
 - Publicize vaccination site address
 - Vaccines.gov 1-800-232-0233 Text ZIP code to 438826
- Pump Up Preventive Care Engagement**
 - Help employees connect with a primary care doctor — and your prevention and condition management benefits — to guide them in sickness and in health
 - Use the National Alliance toolkit, [Getting Back to Basics to Share CDC Immunization Schedules for Adults and Children](#)
 - Offer sick leave so employees can afford to stay home when they are ill

Helpful Resources to Protect Workplace and Workforce Health (click on images and links to learn more)

Public Health Agency for the Americas PLAN FOR HOLIDAYS

Watch the Recorded Webinar: "Employee Prevention Strategies to Improve Quality, Safety & Wellbeing"

National Alliance Resources:

- Getting Back to Basics: Common Sense & Evidence-Based Workplace Health and Wellbeing
- Workplace and Public Health Care
- COVID-19 Workplace Health and Wellbeing Toolkit
- COVID-19 Workplace Health and Wellbeing Toolkit
- 2023 Webinar

Additional Resources:

- CDC: [Guidance on Respiratory Illnesses](#)
- CDC: [Employee Health and Safety: COVID-19 Immunization Schedule](#)
- CDC: [How to Host a Vaccination Clinic, On-Site](#)
- CDC: [Get the Latest on COVID-19, Flu, and RSV](#)
- Healthcare Workforce: [Employee Health and Safety: COVID-19 Immunization Schedule](#)
- Healthcare Workforce: [Employee Health and Safety: COVID-19 Immunization Schedule](#)
- Healthcare Workforce: [Employee Health and Safety: COVID-19 Immunization Schedule](#)

See Common Questions & Key Messages

Getting Back to Basics to Support Employee Health and Wellbeing
 BASIC REMINDERS FOR EMPLOYEES AND THEIR FAMILIES

- 1. Prevent the spread of illness**
 - Stay home when you are sick
 - Wash hands often with soap and hot water and/or use sanitizer
 - Social distance
 - Cover coughs and sneezes
 - Disinfect workspaces
- 2. Have a primary care doctor of choice**
 - Contact your primary care clinic first with health questions
 - Check to see that your clinic can serve as the source for all your medical records
 - Ask if preventive care reminders will be sent to you
 - Ask for help coordinating care with your other
 - Ask about free and low-cost community resources to support health, food, housing and other basic needs, if needed
- 3. Use mental health/substance use resources**
 - Talk to your primary care doctor about all mental health concerns (e.g., serious mental illness, depression, anxiety, substance use disorder...)
 - Don't wait for a crisis to access care
 - Know that our organization is a safe "no judgment zone" for mental health issues
 - Review mental health benefits to learn how to get care and what is covered
 - Access clinic and community resources available at low or no cost
- 4. Prevent and care for chronic conditions**
 - Stay up-to-date with checkups and screenings
 - Stay current with all immunizations (including flu and COVID-19)
 - Follow care and medication guidelines if you have a chronic condition such as diabetes or heart disease
 - Eat healthy foods
 - Exercise at least 150 minutes a week
 - Get 7-9 hours of sleep each night
 - See preventive care guidelines at [healthcare.gov](#)
- 5. Use emergency care carefully**
 - Know the signs of serious conditions like strokes, heart attack, or suicide risk
 - Call 9-1-1 for health emergency
 - Call the 9-8-8 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline for mental health emergency
 - Use a clinic or urgent care center, not the hospital emergency department, for things like ear infections, sore throats, or low back pain

SHARE WITH EMPLOYEES!
 This infographic is available as a flyer and poster in English and Spanish HERE

DID YOU KNOW?
 The average cost of treating 10 common primary care treatable conditions at a hospital emergency department is 12 times higher than at a doctor's office. Get the care you need in the right setting at the right cost.

Condition	Emergency Dept. Cost	Primary Care Cost
Average Cost for Primary Care Treatable Conditions, 2018	\$2,032	\$167

Actionable ideas for employers on side 2 ▶

Images above are clickable

More Noteworthy December Health Observances...

- [World AIDS Day](#) (December 1)
- [International Day of Persons with Disabilities](#) (December 3)

