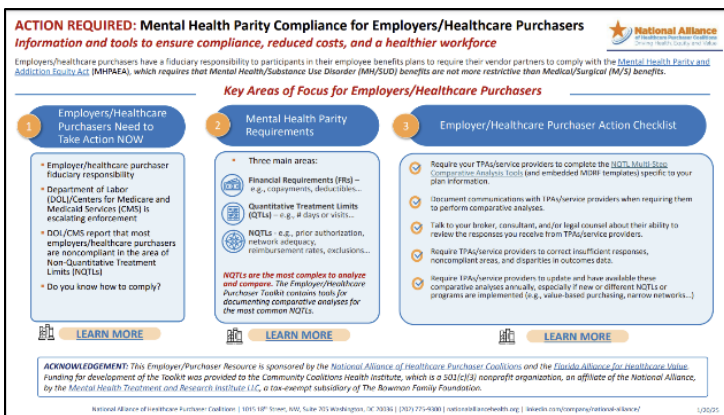


This Weekly Bulletin is a benefit of your organization’s Employer Membership in the Florida Alliance and is meant to **ONLY** be shared within Employer Member organizations unless approval has been given by the Florida Alliance CEO.



WHAT’S NEW THIS WEEK?

Employer Member Benefit: Mental Health Parity Compliance Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Toolkit



ACTION REQUIRED: Mental Health Parity Compliance for Employers/Healthcare Purchasers
Information and tools to ensure compliance, reduced costs, and a healthier workforce

Employers/healthcare purchasers have a fiduciary responsibility to participants in their employee benefits plans to require their vendor partners to comply with the **Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA)**, which requires that **Mental Health/Substance Use Disorder (MH/SUD) benefits are not more restrictive than Medical/Surgical (M/S) benefits.**

Key Areas of Focus for Employers/Healthcare Purchasers

- Employers/Healthcare Purchasers Need to Take Action NOW**
 - Employers/healthcare purchaser fiduciary responsibility
 - Department of Labor (DOL)/Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is escalating enforcement
 - DOL/CMS report that most employers/healthcare purchasers are non-compliant in the area of Non-Quantitative Treatment Limits (NQTLs)
 - Do you know how to comply?
- Mental Health Parity Requirements**
 - Three main areas:
 - Financial Requirements (FR) – e.g., copayments, deductibles...
 - Quantitative Treatment Limits (QTLs) – e.g., # days or visits...
 - NQTLs – e.g., prior authorization, network adequacy, reimbursement rates, exclusions...
 - NQTLs are the most complex to analyze and compare. The Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Toolkit contains tools for documenting comparative analyses for the most common NQTLs.
- Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Action Checklist**
 - Require your TPA/service providers to complete the **NQTL Multi-Step Comparative Analysis Tool** (and embedded MHPA templates) specific to your plan information.
 - Document communications with TPA/service providers when requiring them to perform comparative analyses.
 - Talk to your broker, consultant, and/or legal counsel about their ability to review the responses you receive from TPA/service providers.
 - Require TPA/service providers to correct insufficient responses, noncompliant areas, and disparities in outcomes data.
 - Require TPA/service providers to update and have available their comparative analyses annually, especially if new or different NQTLs or programs are implemented (e.g., value-based purchasing, narrow networks...)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT: This Employer/Purchaser Resource is sponsored by the **National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions** and the **Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value**. Funding for development of the Toolkit was provided to the **Community Coalitions Health Institute**, which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, an affiliate of the **National Alliance**, by the **Mental Health Treatment and Research Institute LLC**, a tax-exempt subsidiary of **The Bowman Family Foundation**.

The Florida Alliance hosted a webinar Wednesday, January 29 to review and disseminate the final Mental Health Parity Compliance Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Toolkit that we developed in partnership with the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions.

This much-needed initiative was funded by Orange County Government and the Bowman Family Foundation.

No other coalition has done this important work, and you are the first employers to receive this toolkit!

President and CEO Karen van Caulil along with Dr. Henry Harbin and Beth Ann Middlebrook, J.D. explained that the Mental Health Parity Compliance Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Toolkit will greatly assist employers with how to work with their TPAs (and carve out mental health providers, if applicable) on ensuring appropriate analysis of their mental health/substance use disorder data as it compares to their medical/surgical health data.

We also discussed the recent complaint filed by the ERISA Research Industry Committee against the Mental Health Parity final rules published in September 2024 and its implications. **SPOILER ALERT: You still need to continue your work on comprehensively assessing your compliance with the federal laws that have been in place for many years despite this complaint!**

Click [HERE](#) to access the webinar recordings and slides from the first two Mental Health Parity Compliance sessions. This week’s webinar recording will be posted on the webpage soon. You can also view the Department of Labor’s *Self-Compliance Tool for Mental Health Parity* that was discussed during our webinars on this link. As a reminder, this is the tool you should be using to assess the financial requirements and the quantitative treatment limits.

To view the **Mental Health Parity Compliance and Action Required Toolkit**, click [HERE](#).

We recommend that you review all the materials and send the Non-Quantitative Treatment Limit (NQTL) Tools to your TPA/carrier/service provider as explained in the toolkit as soon as possible. The analyses the TPAs/carriers/service providers have done to date have not met the expectations of the Department of Labor, who is stepping up enforcement of the law. Please note that **both self-funded and fully insured employers have a fiduciary duty to ensure compliance** as described in the toolkit and in the webinars.

Please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions and please consider keeping her posted on your progress.



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

Employer Member Benefit: The Importance of Advanced Primary Care



Florida Alliance Healthcare Advisory Council Member Cleveland Clinic's Employer Solutions group released an article addressing the importance of advanced primary care (APC), **focusing on APC being a valuable investment for employers who are committed to supporting their workforce's health and well-being.** Investing in APC can produce multiple benefits for both the employer and employees such as improved employee health, reduced healthcare costs, increased productivity, enhanced employee satisfaction, and lower turnover. Employers can provide APC by partnering with APC providers, offer comprehensive health plans, incorporate telehealth services, educate employees on APC, promote preventative care, support mental health services, provide on-site or near-site clinics, leverage data and analytics, and foster a culture of health.

Click [HERE](#) to read the article.

Two of our Affiliate Members provide advanced primary care in their clinics/health centers – PeopleOne Health and WeCare tlc. Their contact information can be found on our website. Click [HERE](#) to go to the Affiliate Member webpage.

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

Podcast: Managing Populations of Whole, Actual People Who Are Not the Sum of a Bunch of Different Body Parts

Relentless Health Value released a podcast on January 30, featuring Dr. Scott Conard, Co-Founder and Partner of Converging Health, to talk about the evolution of his life's work in helping plan members who have high-risk, high-cost claimants and are not receiving the proper advanced primary care to help address concerns early that become costly down the road. Dr. Conard breaks down "Stepwise Best Practices for Population Health Management," stressing the importance of advanced primary care.

Dr. Conard chairs the Medical Director Advisory Council for the National Alliance, where he provides support to all the coalitions on medical issues.



Dr. Scott Conard, Co-Founder and Partner of Converging Health

You may have heard Dr. Conard speak at our 25th Annual Conference held April 10, 2018, on “Interprofessional Collaboration: A Series on Teams and Leadership for Value-Based Care” and at the 30th Annual Conference held on April 19, 2023, as our keynote speaker. He spoke about his book, *Which Door? A Parable for Corporations to Solve the Costs of Health Care in the U.S.*

To listen to the Podcast, click [HERE](#).

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

Employer Member Benefit: Fiduciary Workshop Webinar Recording Available – The Importance of Having a Fiduciary Committee



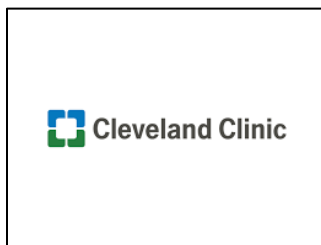
The National Alliance held a webinar on January 21, on “The Importance of Having a Fiduciary Committee.” This webinar was a follow up to a special session held at the National Alliance’s Annual Forum in November 2024. Florida Alliance President and CEO Karen van Caulil and Florida Alliance Board Chair and Administrative Benefits Director for Miami-Dade County Public Schools Rosa Novo attended this session. **Jamie Greenleaf, Co-Founder of Greenleaf**

Advisor, explained how employers should build their fiduciary committee and their plan. Employers should look for Executive Officers and/or Management, HR and/or Benefit Managers, Board of Directors, Owners, Partners, and Employee Representatives to serve on the committee. Jamie explained the fiduciary process on how to “Engage, Explore, Envision, Execute, and Examine,” making sure to stay in compliance with ERISA.

Click [HERE](#) to listen to the recording, enter code **FID2025!**

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

Employer Member Benefit: Podcast: Synergistic Care with Cleveland Clinic Florida Neurological Institute



Florida Alliance Healthcare Advisory Council Member Cleveland Clinic in partnership with the *South Florida Business Journal* released a podcast featuring Amre Nouh, MD, Regional Chairman of Neurology at Cleveland Clinic Florida. He described their medical interventions and the array of specialists conducting them at the Neurological Institute. **Dr. Nouh described the multidisciplinary teams and including Neuromuscular, Dementia, Movement Disorders and Parkinson’s Disease, and their Brain**

Tumor and Pituitary Surgical Program for acute and post-acute needs. The Institute is looking towards the future of neuroscience leveraging artificial intelligence to discover new pathways for treatment and different ways to approach concerns.

To listen to the Podcast, click [HERE](#).

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

Podcast: Dr. Matthew Resnick on the State of Quality Measurement



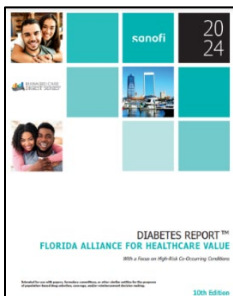
Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR) hosted a podcast featuring **Dr. Matthew Resnick, Chief Medical Officer of Embold Health, where he highlighted the need for integrating quality and cost considerations to drive progress in the healthcare system. He spoke to addressing disparities in access to high-quality care, suggesting short-term and long-term solutions to address the challenges, considering cost to drive meaningful improvements in patient outcomes and reduce unnecessary care.**

Embold Health is an Affiliate Member of the Florida Alliance. Our employer members may recall that Daniel Stein, MD, the CEO of Embold Health, participated on a respondent panel regarding “Advancing Payment Reform in Florida: Recommendations from the Tampa-Orlando Market Assessment” at our 2-Day virtual event held April 13, 2021, and April 20, 2021. Also, Mark Weinstein, CEO of Independent Colleges and Universities Benefits Association, Inc. (ICUBA) and Alex Nathaniel, Total Rewards Manager at St. Leo University (both Florida Alliance Healthcare Purchaser/Employer Member organizations), and Dr. Stein were on a panel together at our “Best of the Best” event one year ago in a session called “Quality First and All the Rest Will Follow: How Individual Provider Performance Impacts the Employer and Employee Bottom Line.”

To listen to the Podcast, click [HERE](#).

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

Employer Member Benefit: All Employer Member Meeting – Wednesday, February 19, 11:00AM – 12:00PM ET



The Florida Alliance, in conjunction with Affiliate Member Sanofi has released the 10th Edition of *The Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value Diabetes Report* for 2024. **Jake Olson, Director, Account Manager of Managed Care Digest, and Miranda Walden, Pharmaceutical Regional Account Director, US Market Access of Sanofi will share insights into the data provided in the report, and how it may impact your employees and your organization.** The Diabetes Report focuses on pertinent demographic, laboratory, charge, and pharmacotherapy measures for Type 1 and Type 2 diabetes patients in Florida.

The Florida Alliance will also be holding a brief All-Employer Member meeting directly after the presentation of the Diabetes Report providing updates on upcoming projects and programs and holding an election for Board members.

Calendar invitations have been sent out. If you did not receive the calendar invitation or need to have it re-sent, please contact Lisa Hain at lisa@flhealthvalue.org.

Click [HERE](#) to read the 10th Edition of the Florida Alliance Diabetes Report.

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

Register Today! Florida Alliance 41st Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors – Tuesday, March 4, 2:00PM – 3:30PM ET



The Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value's Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors is a free event for all our members and offers the opportunity to learn about the important work the Florida Alliance is undertaking to improve the quality and value of health care in Florida, including new opportunities to engage in our research and educational activities.



Jessica Brooks Woods

The Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value 2024 Annual Report will be presented at this meeting as well as our 2025 Plan of Work. We will also introduce our 2025-2026 Board of Directors and Officers.

Our keynote speaker is Jessica Brooks Woods, CEO of the National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals. Jessica previously served as the President and CEO of the Pittsburgh Business Group on Health for 10 years, where she orchestrated initiatives that revolutionized healthcare value, access, equity, and quality for employers. She introduced the Health Desk, an innovative service redefining patient care standards. She launched a book in 2023 called "Race Forward: An Employer's Guide to Health Equity." Jessica has spoken at numerous national conferences with a special emphasis on health equity.

Click [HERE](#) to register for the Annual Meeting.

Please contact Lisa Hain at lisa@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

The “Dr. Jack Mahoney Healthcare Hero” Award – Nominations Requested



The Florida Alliance is seeking nominations for our Annual “Dr. Jack Mahoney Healthcare Hero” Award” which will be presented at our Annual Conference in May. Past awardees include Dr. Jack Mahoney for whom the award was named, Harris Rosen from Rosen Hotels & Resorts, Dr. Debra Pace from the School District of Osceola County, Dr. William Sappenfield of the Florida Perinatal Quality Collaborative, Linda Sutherland of the Healthy Start Coalition of Orange County, Tommy Inzina from BayCare, and Mayor Jerry Demings of Orange County. This award is presented to someone whose passion and leadership in driving healthcare quality and value has vastly improved the health of Floridians.

Please email Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org if you would like to nominate someone for consideration or have any questions.

Employer Member Question – Pharmacy Benefits Management and Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme

An Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Member of the Florida Alliance has asked us to collect a response to the following question:



Have any of our Employer Members worked with or have information on the following disruptor PBM/PBAs that they would be willing to share?

- Capital Rx
- Navitus
- Rightway
- Slate Rx
- WellDyne
- Affirmed Rx
- ProCare Rx
- US-Rx Care

Please respond directly to Ashley Tait-Dinger at ashley@flhealthvalue.org.

Employer Member Question – Steerage to High-Quality Healthcare Providers

An Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Member of the Florida Alliance has asked us to collect a response to the following questions which we have updated from last week:



Do you work with a carrier that has allowed you to modify your plan design to steer your members to high-quality healthcare providers based on cost and quality? Which carrier is it? Do you have any service level agreements, cost reduction targets, and/or hospital-based utilization targets for this population?

If the answer is “yes,” please respond directly to Ashley Tait-Dinger at ashley@flhealthvalue.org.

Do you have a question you would like to ask of our Employer Members? Please let Karen know if so, and we will include it in a future Bulletin.

The Central Florida Health Care Coalition, Incorporated d/b/a Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value is providing this information to our employer members solely in our capacity as a 501c3 nonprofit education organization and not as advice in any capacity. The information that is not in the public domain is private and confidential.