



Weekly Bulletin – February 28, 2025

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: OpenNetworks: Direct Contracting Webinar- Monday, March 17 - 1:00PM – 2:00PM ET



Join us on Monday, March 17 at 1:00PM ET for an educational webinar on directing contracting. As you may recall, we are acting on our members' responses to a national survey conducted last fall that you are interested in direct contracting with providers to drive value in health care. We conducted a Florida Alliance specific survey in December and January 2025 and the results revealed interest in gaining a better understanding of the different types of direct

contracting opportunities available and to clear up any misunderstandings about how direct contracting works and the effort involved in setting it up and managing it.

Jeff Hogan, the founder of Upside Health Advisors, will be our featured speaker. He will be joined by Jay Silverstein, the Chief Imagineer at OpenNetworks. We have also invited two healthcare system leaders who work in managed care/employer solutions to provide their input into the challenges they have faced with direct contracting with employers and how those challenges can be overcome.

We hope you will join us for this important discussion! You have already received a calendar invitation to this Employer Member only webinar. If you have not received the calendar invitation yet, please contact Lisa Hain at lisa@flhealthvalue.org.

Please reach out to Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions.

Employer Member Benefit: Breastfeeding Support Demonstration Project Opportunity Webinar - Wednesday, March 19 -2:00PM – 3:00PM ET

While 80 percent of new parents intend to breastfeed, over half indicate that it is too hard for women to access expert help for breastfeeding challenges. 70% of women surveyed feel like their employer does



not provide enough support to new families on their breastfeeding journeys.

In Florida, some of the carriers do not include lactation consultants as in-network providers which prevents access to this important support for mothers and babies.

Florida Alliance Affiliate Member The Lactation Network is working with the Florida Alliance team to develop a demonstration project that would engage several of our employer members and the carriers they work with to show the positive impact in-network status of these providers would have on mothers and babies. If you are interested in learning more about this initiative, please join us on March 19!

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

NASHP Hospital Cost Tool Data Updated



The National Academy for State Health Policy (NASHP) Hospital Cost Tool (HCT) 4.1 was updated on Friday, February 7, making it easier to navigate, including new aggregate information on hospital prescription drug costs and charges, and providing cost data for more than

4,600 hospitals from 2011 to 2023. The HCT offers multiple measures to help better understand healthcare costs. In addition, you can compare across hospitals, view a single hospital, compare health systems, view a single health system, and explore by state.

The NASHP HCT dashboard focuses on providing state policymakers and researchers with analytical insights into how much hospitals spend on patient care services, and how such costs relate to the hospital charges (list prices) and actual prices paid by health plans.

To access the Hospital Cost Tool, click [HERE](#).

Please note that the Sage Transparency Tool has not yet been updated with the new NASHP data.

Please contact Ashley Tait-Dinger at ashley@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions.



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

American Benefits Council Report - 340B Drug Pricing Program

GROWTH UNCHECKED:

A Call to Action for Policymakers to Reform 340B, to Stop It from Driving Up Health Care Costs for Employers, Working Families and Taxpayers

February 2025



The Florida Alliance has been selected by the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions to educate elected officials and employers about the adverse impact the 340B drug pricing program has on Florida's employers. We may weigh in on current bill language in Florida that proposes that Medicaid be able to purchase drugs at 340B prices. We are still evaluating the draft bill and its implications.

On Friday, February 21, the American Benefits Council released a report, "Growth Unchecked: A Call to Action for Policymakers to Reform 340B to Stop It from Driving Up Health Care Costs for Employers, Working Families and Taxpayers" closely examining the 340B drug pricing program and its impact on employers, working families and taxpayers. The report encompasses the drivers behind the exponential growth of the 340B program and shows how it is increasing costs for employer-sponsored health plans by \$5.2 billion annually through the loss of

rebates, and additionally, by promoting the increased use of higher-cost therapies and fueling hospital and provider consolidation:

- **340B increases employer costs because rebates are lost on prescription drug claims**
- **340B increases employer costs by incentivizing use of more expensive medicines**
- **340B encourages hospital consolidation, which increases employer costs**

To read the report, click [HERE](#).

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

Employer Member Benefit: Pharmacy Benefit Questions for Self-Insured Employers to Consider

The National Alliance in collaboration with Florida Alliance Affiliate Member US-Rx Care held a “Pharmacy Benefit Management (PBM) Hub: Employer Strategies to Break the Monopolies” webinar on Thursday, January 30. The webinar addressed best practices to use to avoid or mitigate risk exposure.



US-Rx Care created a “Pharmacy Benefits Questions for Self-Insured Employers to Consider” document to help open conversation with brokers/advisors and PBMs. They also provided actions to consider if you are exploring a new PBM relationship. The document has been updated since US-Rx Care last presented it at our All Employer Member Meeting, held Thursday, August 22, 2024.

Click [HERE](#) to view the recording and resources from our meeting which was when we viewed the documentary “It’s not personal, it’s just business-healthcare” and held a panel discussion after.

The major areas of focus of the National Alliance webinar were:

- Enforcing the provisions of the Consolidated Appropriations Act
- Exposing harm and conflicts of interest in the PBM contract
- Deconflicting the PBM relationship
- Mitigating high-cost claims
- Forging a better path for the future

In addition to asking the above-referenced questions of your benefit plan, your PBM, and your benefits advisor, the following two actions are also highly recommended by the Florida Alliance team for all self-insured employers:

- Obtain an independent third-party audit of your pharmacy claims to identify outliers as well as claims or activity inconsistent with your PBM contract
- Obtain an independent third-party review of your PBM contract to identify any components that are inconsistent with or in conflict with the fiduciary obligation of your company as plan sponsor

To view the PBM Questions, click [HERE](#), and to listen to the webinar for an in-depth explanation of the document, click [HERE](#).

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

Last call to register! Florida Alliance 41st Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors – Tuesday, March 4, 2:00PM – 3:30PM ET

Our 41st Annual Meeting of the Board of Directors is coming up soon on Tuesday, March 4. This educational and informational event is free for all our members. It 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

Jessica Brooks Woods, CEO of the National Association of Benefits and Insurance Professionals, is our keynote speaker. The title of her address is “Health Equity Reimagined: Navigating the Current Landscape with Policy, Progress, and AI.” Congratulations to Jessica Brooks-Woods as she was recently awarded the “Most Influential Industry Personality Award” at the YOU Powered Symposium! The award was voted on by individuals across the industry and is a true testament to Jessica’s leadership, vision, and impact in shaping the future of health care and benefits.

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

If you have accepted the calendar invitation to the Annual Board of Directors Meeting, please make sure that you have also registered. Click [HERE](#) to register for the Annual Meeting for free, no code is needed.

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

Register Today! Florida Alliance 32nd Annual Conference – Thursday, May 1 at the Rosen Centre Hotel, Orlando

Thank you to Rosen Hotels & Resorts for their generous support of the Florida Alliance in making the Rosen Centre Hotel venue possible for us.

The Florida Alliance will be presenting the Harris Rosen “Most Engaged Employer” Award and the Dr. Jack Mahoney “Healthcare Hero” Award.



Session Spotlight:



Nicholas Abraham

Nicholas (Nick) Abrahams, MNM, President and CEO, Winter Park Health Foundation, and John Rivers, CEO, 4Rivers Smokehouse and 4Roots, will participate in a fireside chat on “Food as Medicine.”



John Rivers

John Rivers is actively promoting the concept of food as medicine through several key initiatives including operation of a culinary health institute, a food as medicine continuing medical education program, and through research conducted on the 4Roots Farm campus. Through these efforts, John is fostering a deeper understanding of the intrinsic link between food and health, advocating for a food system that supports well-being and sustainability. You will not want to miss this leading-edge conversation moderated by Nick.

Click [HERE](#) to view the full agenda and who is speaking in all of the sessions.

Details of the conference:

- **Date:** Thursday, May 1, 2025
- **Registration:** 8:00AM – 9:00AM ET
- **Program Time:** 9:00AM – 5:00PM ET
- **Location:** Rosen Centre Hotel, 9840 International Dr., Orlando, FL 32819
- **Your Member Promo Code:** 2025EMPLOYERAC (Please do not share this code outside your organization. If you have a colleague at an organization that is not a member of the Florida Alliance, please reach out to Karen@flhealthvalue.org for a guest code that you can share with them.)
- **Register** [HERE](#)

The Florida Alliance has secured a block of rooms at the Rosen Centre Hotel at a discounted rate of \$163.00 + tax/room. Discounted rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis until **March 31, 2025**, or until the block has sold out, whichever comes first.

Please contact Lisa Hain at lisa@flhealthvalue.org if you have any questions about logistics and registration. If you have any questions about the sessions or speakers, please reach out to Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org.



HEALTH POLICY

Capitol Hill: Testifying on Pharmacy Benefit Management Legislation

Shawn Gremminger, CEO and President of the National Alliance, testified Wednesday, February 26 before the House Energy and Commerce Subcommittee on Health. Shawn explained why the National Alliance believes that consolidation, opacity, and market distortions in the Pharmacy Benefit Management (PBM) ecosystem are among the most significant drivers of high and rising costs for employers, purchasers, and working families. Shawn's testimony focused on the strong provisions in the original Continuing Resolution introduced in December to fund the government.



*Shawn Gremminger,
CEO and President
of the National
Alliance*

Key supported provisions:

- **Sec. 901. Oversight of PBM Services.** This section:
 - Promotes price transparency for prescription drugs purchased by employer health plans by ensuring PBMs provide group health plans and issuers with detailed data on prescription drug spending at least semi-annually
 - Required data includes gross and net drug spending, drug rebates, spread pricing arrangements, formulary placement rationale, and information about benefit designs that encourage the use of pharmacies affiliated with PBMs
 - Requires PBMs to provide plan sponsors and individuals a summary document regarding information about the plan's prescription drug spending
- **Sec. 902. Full Rebate Pass Through to Plan, Exception or Innocent Plan Fiduciaries.** This section:
 - Requires that PBMs fully pass through 100 percent of drug rebates and discounts, excluding bona fide service fees, to the employer or health plan regulated under ERISA for new contracts, extensions, or renewals entered into for plan years beginning 30 months after the date of enactment
 - Clarifies the meaning of "covered service provider" under ERISA

These provisions were dropped due to concerns about the size and scope of the bill, but the National Alliance and bipartisan leaders on the Committee are hoping to revitalize those provisions for the next government funding bill, which will be debated and hopefully passed next month.

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

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



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

All-Employer Member Meeting Recap



The Florida Alliance held an All-Employer Member Meeting on Wednesday, February 19. During the first portion of the meeting Jake Olson, Director, Account Manager of Managed Care Digest, and Miranda Walden, Pharmaceutical Regional Account Director, US Market Access of Sanofi shared insights into the data provided in the Florida Diabetes Report, and how the findings impact 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.

To find the report, slides, and recording of the presentation, click [HERE](#).

A Board of Directors election was held following the report presentation. **After a unanimous vote, we would like to welcome Dawn Hunt from MarineMax as our newest Board Member!** Dawn has been at MarineMax since 2001 and previously worked at Gulfwind Marine at Palm Island and Sun Honda. She is a highly qualified and engaged leader from our Employer Member community and will be an asset to our Board of Directors.

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



HEALTHCARE ADVISORY COUNCIL MEMBER CORNER

Cleveland Clinic: Trial Finds Heart Implant May Be Effective Alternative to Blood Thinners for Those with Atrial Fibrillation

Healthcare Advisory Council Member Cleveland Clinic led a clinical trial that found a minimally-invasive procedure – left atrial appendage closure (LAAC) – resulted in significantly less bleeding in patients undergoing a catheter ablation to treat atrial fibrillation, compared to blood thinners, while preserving low rates of stroke, blood clots and death. LAAC results showed success in 99% of patients and rates of any bleeding were significantly lower with LAAC than anticoagulation (8.5% versus 18.1%).

Current guidelines are continuation of blood-thinner medication following atrial fibrillation ablation in patients at high risk for stroke. This approach often results in the patient having to take medication for the rest of their lives. However, it has been reported that 19-29% of atrial fibrillation patients stop taking oral anticoagulants after two years, for patients who undergo atrial fibrillation ablation and are high risk of stroke. Studies have found that beyond three months, oral anticoagulant discontinuation is associated with increased stroke in high-risk patients.



To read the article, click [HERE](#).

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



AFFILIATE MEMBER CORNER

Cardio Diagnostics: The Role of Precision Medicine in Managing Heart Disease and Reducing Costs



With heart disease rates and healthcare costs rising, employers face growing pressure to improve employee health while managing expenses. Cardiovascular disease (CVD) remains the leading cause of death in the U.S., responsible for 1 in 3 deaths and over \$320 billion annually in medical costs and lost productivity. **Employers**

bear a significant burden, as employees with heart disease cost 2-4 times more in healthcare expenses. Addressing this challenge requires innovative, cost-effective solutions that deliver measurable value.

Cardio Diagnostics is transforming cardiovascular medicine by leveraging epigenetics, genetics, and AI to enable earlier, more accurate heart disease detection. Unlike traditional risk assessments that rely on proxy factors like cholesterol and blood pressure, our precision-driven solutions identify at-risk individuals sooner, allowing for proactive intervention. By integrating these scalable, data-driven solutions, employers can implement targeted cardiovascular health programs that improve outcomes and lower costs.

To address these challenges, Cardio Diagnostics offers two innovative blood tests. Epi+Gen CHD™ predicts the three-year risk for a heart attack, without requiring fasting or radiation exposure. It is designed for individuals aged 35 to 75 who have not been diagnosed with CHD or undergone cardiac procedures. PrecisionCHD™ aids in detecting and managing undiagnosed coronary heart disease, the leading cause of heart attacks. Suitable for individuals aged 35 to 80, it provides actionable insights to refine care plans. Studies show that both tests are more sensitive than traditional methods.

Recognizing the diverse needs of employers and employees, Cardio Diagnostics offers flexible implementation options to maximize accessibility, scalability, and utilization. These include on-site heart disease fairs, remote self-collection kits, and integration with on-site clinics. By adapting to each employer's specific requirements, we ensure minimal implementation effort while delivering maximum value in as little as 30 days from testing. This streamlined approach allows employers to proactively address cardiovascular risk without disrupting workplace operations.

Beyond testing, Cardio Diagnostics provides robust care navigation services at no cost to ensure employees understand their results and receive guidance on next steps. Employees gain access to one-on-one chronic illness management resources, access to wellness programs, navigating referrals to specialists, and educational materials. This ensures individuals receive not just an assessment, but also the support needed to take meaningful action, leading to higher engagement, better adherence to treatment, and improved long-term health outcomes.

For employers, HeartRisk™ is an innovative cloud-based platform that aggregates cardiovascular risk data and their drivers in a HIPAA-compliant and anonymized manner. By benchmarking this data against industry and geographic standards, it provides actionable insights that help organizations make data-driven decisions, strategically invest in targeted programs, and mitigate CVD's impact on productivity and healthcare costs. Employers can segment risks by location, demographics, and trends to optimize benefits strategies and improve workforce health.

Cardio Diagnostics empowers employers to stay ahead of risks and costs associated with heart disease. By turning data into action, our scalable programs drive better health outcomes, lower costs, and improve workforce well-being. With a commitment to proactive, personalized care, Cardio Diagnostics is redefining how cardiovascular disease is managed in the workplace, delivering lasting impact for employers and employees.

To view the Cardio Diagnostics Overview for Employers, click [HERE](#).

Please contact Elizabeth Steiff at elizabeth.steiff@cardiodiagnosticsinc.com if you have any questions.

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.