



Weekly Bulletin – May 23, 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?

National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions: *Health Policy in Transit*

The National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions released a *Health Policy in Transit* newsletter this morning. The newsletter addresses the following topics:

Executive Order on Prescription Drugs:

- President Trump issued an Executive Order (EO), "Delivering Most-Favored-Nation (MFN) Prescription Drug Pricing to American Patients," aimed at reducing the price of prescription drugs for Americans. The EO seeks to implement an MFN policy, meaning Americans would pay prices equal to or lower than those charged in other industrialized nations.
- The 340B Drug Program was not directly addressed in the EO but could be impacted. National Alliance CEO Shawn Gremminger wrote a recent LinkedIn post on the topic, which is included in today's *Health Policy In Transit* newsletter. Additional information on the 340B program is included later in this Bulletin.



The House Passed the "Big, Beautiful Bill" Which Includes Health Savings Account (HSA) Expansion:

- Passed on Thursday, the reconciliation bill includes expansions of HSAs. These changes will make services more affordable for both employers and their employees. The bill notably does not include any changes to the tax-exempt status of the employer-sponsored health plans. Please see the *Health Policy in Transit* newsletter for more details.

Mental Health Parity Compliance Update - Information on this topic is covered in the next section of this Bulletin.

To read the full *Health Policy in Transit* newsletter, click [HERE](#).

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

Employer Member Benefit: Clarification on Mental Health Parity and Substance Abuse Compliance Following Recent Federal Guidance – Florida Alliance Webinar - Tuesday, June 3, 2:00PM – 3:00PM

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 ensure 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

- 1. 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 noncompliant in the area of Non-Quantitative Treatment Limits (NQTLs)
 - Do you know how to comply?
- 2. Mental Health Parity Requirements**
 - Three main areas:
 - Financial Requirements (FRs) – e.g., coinsurance, deductibles...
 - Quantitative Treatment Limits (QTLs) – e.g., # days or visits...
 - NQTLs – e.g., prior authorization, network restrictions, reimbursement rates, exclusions...
 - NQTLs are the most complex to analyze and compare. The Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Toolkit contains tools for documenting comparative analysis for the most common NQTLs.
- 3. Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Action Checklist**
 - Acquire your TPA/service providers to complete the *2024 Model Step Comparison Section* (not yet embedded within templates) specific to your plan information.
 - Document communications with TPA/service providers when requesting 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 analysis 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 Rowman Family Foundation.

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There has been confusion and misinformation shared about recent correspondence from the federal government regarding compliance with mental health parity law. We will be hosting a webinar to update you on new developments and respond to your questions.

Join us on Tuesday, June 3, from 2:00PM–3:00 PM EDT for an important webinar on Mental Health Parity Compliance. This

session will provide critical updates and guidance following a recent federal statement impacting mental health and substance use disorder coverage. Florida Alliance President and CEO Karen van Caulil along with Dr. Henry Harbin and Beth Ann Middlebrook, J.D. will explain where things stand with Mental Health Parity compliance and what organizations need to know to stay aligned with federal expectations. Do not miss this opportunity to gain expert insight into evolving compliance requirements.

As mentioned in the *Health Policy in Transit* newsletter, all existing statutory requirements under the Mental Health Parity and Addiction Equity Act (MHPAEA), as amended by the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) of 2021, remain fully in effect. This means that plans and issuers are still required to comply with MHPAEA as outlined in earlier rules and guidance.

The Department of Labor continues to enforce MHPAEA in accordance with the 2013 Final Rule, the CAA amendments, and existing federal guidance that predates the 2024 Final Rule.

The Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Mental Health Parity Toolkit that we developed with the National Alliance was intentionally designed to exclude reliance on any new provisions introduced in the 2024 Final Rule, in consideration of ongoing litigation (e.g., the ERISA Research Industry Committee lawsuit) and the possibility of a stay or rollback. As such, the Toolkit remains a valid and reliable resource for compliance and enforcement purposes.

Additionally, we are sharing the Settlement Agreement between the Department of Labor, Employee Benefits Security Administration (EBSA) and a large employer that was found non-compliant with network adequacy requirements. This agreement was executed under regulations in place prior to the 2024 Final Rule. Please take note of the extensive quantitative data metrics outlined in the agreement which EBSA is currently enforcing for both the employer and its TPA, Cigna. Notably, the agreement includes metrics such as out-of-network utilization and actual provider participation (i.e., in-network providers actively submitting claims), among several others.

To read the Settlement Agreement and Release, click [HERE](#).

You can find the Toolkit and other resources on our Mental Health Parity Compliance webpage, click [HERE](#).

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

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



EMPLOYER MEMBER EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS, REPORTS, RESOURCES AND EMPLOYER LEARNING COLLABORATIVES

CPR: Episode 140: Shawn Gremminger on the Hidden Costs of the 340B Drug Pricing Program



Shawn Gremminger

In Episode 140 of *Listening In (With Permission)*, Shawn Gremminger, President and CEO of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions (National Alliance), joined Andréa Caballero of Catalyst for Payment Reform (CPR) to unpack the unintended consequences of the 340B Drug Pricing Program.

While the program was originally designed to help safety-net providers serve vulnerable populations, its rapid expansion into a \$65 billion system has raised concerns. Shawn Gremminger highlighted how large hospital systems, and their pharmacy partners often profit from the program without necessarily passing savings on to patients. As a result, employers and employees in the commercial market are shouldering higher pharmacy costs, prompting calls for greater oversight and reform.

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

Florida has been identified as a high priority state for 340B program legislation. Therefore, the National Alliance selected the Florida Alliance to participate in a 340B initiative. An output of this initiative was a one-page summary that shows how flaws in the 340B program may be contributing to a rise healthcare costs for employers and working families. Click [HERE](#) to see the document along with the National Alliance dedicated webpage on the 340B program and its impact on employers. To reach this website, click [HERE](#).

Last year we shared a two-part *Relentless Health Value* podcast that National Alliance CEO Shawn Gremminger participated in. If you have not yet listened to it, it is an excellent “primer” on the program and its negative impact on employers. You can find the podcasts by clicking [HERE](#) to listen to Part 1 and click [HERE](#) to listen to Part 2.

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

SAVE THE DATE! Florida Alliance 30th Annual “Best of the Best” event – Thursday, December 11, 9:00AM – 1:30PM

We are excited to announce that the Winter Park Health Foundation will host our 30th Annual *Best of the Best* event at their Center for Health and Wellbeing in Winter Park. This event highlights high-value healthcare programs pioneered by forward-thinking employers across the country. Each year, we welcome innovative organizations that are reshaping benefits design and contracting to share their successful strategies. Registration will be opening soon. **All Florida Alliance Employer Members receive complimentary registration.**



We are also thrilled to announce that **Cora Opsahl, Director of the 32BJ Health Fund**, will be one of our featured speakers at this year’s event. Cora has led innovative, data-driven reforms to improve healthcare quality and reduce costs for over 200,000 union members. She secured full access to vendor data, saving over \$35 million annually through strategic provider changes, improved pharmacy contracts, and expanded Centers of Excellence. These savings funded new benefits, like fertility coverage. Cora also introduced a unique Request For Proposal process to strengthen vendor accountability and advocated for transparency in healthcare ownership before the U.S. Senate. Her leadership has set a national example for smart, member-focused health plan management.

Thank You to Our Early Sponsors



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

★★★ PATIENT QUALITY AND SAFETY (Leapfrog)

An Exclusive Conversation with Leapfrog’s President and CEO—Leah Binder – Webinar – Monday, June 2, 1:00PM – 2:00PM



The Leapfrog Group is hosting ***An Exclusive Conversation Webinar*** featuring Leah Binder, President and CEO, recognized as one of *Modern Healthcare’s* 100 Most Influential People of 2024, and Josh Berlin, a leading expert in health policy.

This session will provide a strategic overview of Leapfrog’s perspective on the priorities of the new administration, key developments in healthcare transparency and patient safety, and the influential role of the Partners Advisory Committee in shaping meaningful industry progress.

Attendees will also have the opportunity to engage directly with Leah Binder and Josh Berlin during an open Q&A session, an excellent forum for sharing insights and posing questions to two of the field's most respected voices.

To register for the webinar, click [HERE](#).

A reminder that the Florida Alliance serves as The Leapfrog Group's Regional Leader for Florida.

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



AFFILIATE CORNER

Color's Virtual Cancer Clinic

Florida Alliance Affiliate Member Color offers the nation's first comprehensive, nationwide cancer screening, treatment, and survivorship clinic. Through a dedicated team of physicians, nurses, high-risk specialists, and oncologists, Color delivers consistent, expert care across the entire cancer journey.

Color's innovative, guidelines-driven model ensures accessible, supportive cancer care, improving survival rates and reducing costs through earlier detection and timely intervention. By enabling faster diagnosis and oncologist-led treatment, Color helps patients return to health with stronger, more coordinated transitions.

Color brings expertise to every phase of the cancer care continuum, from prevention and early detection to diagnosis, treatment planning, active care, survivorship, and returning to work.

Through proactive education and engagement campaigns, Color increases awareness around cancer prevention and the critical importance of regular screening. Their clinical team manages follow-ups for abnormal results directly, ensuring timely next steps and reducing delays in care. Patients have 24/7 access to Color's dedicated care team, receiving personalized support throughout their journey. Color also offers counseling on workplace accommodations and assists in securing the necessary clinical documentation for HR and disability teams, helping patients navigate their return to work with confidence and support.

To view their *Virtual Cancer Clinic* Flyer, click [HERE](#).

To view their *Expertise in Every Phase of Cancer Care* Flyer, click [HERE](#).

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



Please note that we will not be sending out a Bulletin on Friday, May 30 due to the short work week. We will resume the Bulletin the following week with a new delivery schedule, moving to Thursdays beginning June 5. This change accommodates the summer schedules of many Employer Members, who are closed or operate on reduced hours on Fridays.

Wishing you a safe and meaningful Memorial Day Weekend!



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