



Weekly Bulletin – August 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.



ACTION ITEMS

LAST CALL: Please complete this very brief Mental Health Parity Compliance Analysis Progress Survey if you have not done so already!

First, thank you to those of you who have responded to the survey. Even if you have not been able to address this compliance issue at all yet, please take 2-3 minutes to complete our [Mental Health Parity Compliance Analysis Progress Survey](#).

Your feedback will guide us in identifying where our Employer Members need targeted education, resources, and support to complete this federally mandated process. Responses are anonymous and your input is essential.

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

- 1 Employers/Healthcare Purchasers Need to Take Action NOW**
 - Employer/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?

LEARN MORE
- 2 Mental Health Parity Requirements**
 - Three main areas:
 - Financial Requirements (FRs) – 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.*

LEARN MORE
- 3 Employer/Healthcare Purchaser Action Checklist**
 - Require your TPAs/service providers to complete the [NQTL Multi-Step Comparative Analysis Tools](#) (and embedded MDRF templates) specific to your plan information.
 - Document communications with TPAs/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 TPAs/service providers.
 - Require TPAs/service providers to correct insufficient responses, noncompliant areas, and disparities in outcomes data.
 - Require TPAs/service providers to update and have available these comparative analyses annually, especially if new or different NQTLs or programs are implemented (e.g., value-based purchasing, narrow networks...)

LEARN MORE

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.

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To take the **MH Parity Compliance Analysis Progress Survey**, click [HERE](#).

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

Employer Speaker Needed for Upcoming Webinar on Biosimilars

The Florida Alliance has been asked by the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions if any of our Employer Members have had success with biosimilar uptake and would be willing to share their experience in a panel discussion.

The National Alliance has scheduled a webinar for Thursday, October 2, 2:00PM – 3:00PM ET, *Biosimilars: What's in Your Toolkit?* and the National Alliance is looking for an employer to highlight their strategies and outcomes.

The webinar will focus on new trends in the biosimilar space, benefit design considerations, and practical steps employers can take to drive adoption of low-cost biosimilars. So far, the panel includes Denise Giambalvo, Executive Director of the Washington Health Alliance (moderator), Jonathan Kimball, Vice President Global Public Affairs at Sandoz, and Michael Shannon, MD, Medical Director at Ventegra.

If your organization has a success story to share, please let us know. It would be great to feature one of our employer voices in this important discussion.

Please contact Karen van Caulil at karen@flhealthvalue.org if you are interested.



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

Employer Member Benefit: National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions: Annual Forum: November 10-12, 2025 – Free Registration for 10 of our Employer Members – First Come, First Served!



The 2025 National Alliance Annual Forum, November 10–12 in Arlington, VA, offers employer leaders a unique opportunity to engage with over 400 professionals nationwide.

As members of the National Alliance, we receive **ten complimentary registrations** for our Employer Members to attend this event. Please note that all travel expenses are your responsibility. To register, use the code **PURCHASERPASS25**. **Availability is limited, once all ten codes are used, no additional complimentary passes will be provided.**

This event brings together employers, coalition leaders, and healthcare stakeholders to explore innovative strategies in healthcare delivery, benefits management, and policy reform. Attendees will gain insights from more than 80 expert speakers, participate in dynamic sessions, and forge valuable

connections aimed at transforming healthcare to deliver better outcomes, greater equity, and real value for America’s working families.

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

Please let Karen van Caulil know if you are attending and have registered or if you have any questions. Please email her at karen@flhealthvalue.org.



VALUE-BASED PURCHASING OF HEALTHCARE COURSE

Value-Based Purchasing of Healthcare Course – Wednesday, January 21, 2026 – Wednesday, April 1, 2026



The virtual Value-Based Purchasing of Healthcare course offered earlier this year has been updated and will be offered again starting in January 2026. Developed by the Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value, the Greater Philadelphia Business Coalition on Health, and HealthcareTN and presented by the University of Central Florida

Continuing Education Office, the course equips benefits staff and human resources professionals with tools to design health benefit strategies that improve outcomes, promote equity, and control costs.

Through eight interactive sessions, participants explore topics such as transparency, primary care, payment reform, pharmaceutical management, and population health.

Upon completion, students earn a digital certificate, digital badge, and 4.0 CEUs for SHRM recertification, demonstrating advanced expertise in value-based purchasing. This course might be a great opportunity for someone on your team looking to move to the next level or to earn SHRM credit. This course is not limited to Florida Alliance members.

To view the *course Flyer*, click [HERE](#).

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

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





FLORIDA ALLIANCE MEMBER AND STAFF EXTERNAL INVOLVEMENT

HR Florida 47th Annual Conference and Expo 2025: Taking Control of Employer Healthcare Plans



Stephanie Koch

At this week’s Human Resources (HR) Florida Conference, Stephanie Koch, Vice Chair of the Florida Alliance for Healthcare Value and Director of Human Resources at Hendry Marine Industries, Inc., shared her expertise in transforming employer-sponsored health care. With more than 30 years of experience as an HR practitioner and over a decade working in the self-insured space, Stephanie has helped organizations like Hendry Marine and DOW Technologies achieve significant savings and improved outcomes through innovative cost-containment strategies.

Her session, *How Your Company Can Gain Control of Your Healthcare Plan*, highlighted the realities of escalating costs in traditional health plans and the opportunities available when employers move beyond the “off-the-shelf” approach. She detailed Hendry Marine’s journey from a fully-funded model with rising costs and shrinking benefits to a self-funded strategy that has produced multimillion-dollar surpluses while expanding employee access to care.

Stephanie emphasized the importance of HR professionals embracing their fiduciary responsibilities under the Consolidated Appropriations Act and Employee Retirement Income Security Act, urging leaders to demand transparency, re-evaluate broker relationships, and adopt long-term strategies. By leveraging tools like reference-based pricing, transparent Pharmacy Benefit Managers, telemedicine, and whole-person health programs, she demonstrated how employers can reduce costs while offering richer, more sustainable benefits.

Her message to HR professionals was clear: stop hitting the “easy button,” hold vendors accountable, and take an active role in reshaping healthcare strategies. With the right knowledge and partnerships, HR leaders can become heroes in their organizations, improving both employee well-being and the company’s bottom line.

Thank you to Stephanie for her leadership and for the shout-out to the conference attendees about the Florida Alliance!

Please contact Stephanie Koch at skoch@hendrymarine.com to learn more about her presentation.



IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

Business Group on Health Survey: 9% Health Care Cost Increase for 2026

According to the Business Group on Health's 2026 *Employer Healthcare Strategy Survey*, employers are anticipating a median 9% increase in healthcare costs next year, this could be reduced to 7.6% with strategic plan design alterations. This marks the largest annual expected increase in over a decade.

Major contributors to the increase include rising utilization and unit costs of GLP-1 medications for obesity, an uptick in cancer diagnoses, and growing demand for mental health services.

Pharmacy expenses now account for 24% of total employer spending and are expected to climb another 11–12% in 2026, necessitating deeper vendor scrutiny and alternative models of payment.

As a response, many employers are re-evaluating vendor partnerships, with 41% launching Request for Proposals for Pharmacy Benefit Managers and 51% doing the same for health and well-being providers. Employers are also promoting high-value care, preventive screenings, and better primary care access in their workforce population.

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

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



CVS Holds Off Adding Gilead's New HIV Prevention Shot to Drug Coverage Lists ~ *NBC News Article*



Gilead's new human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) prevention shot, Yeztugo (lenacapavir), was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in June 2025 as the first and only twice-yearly injectable option for preventing HIV, with clinical trials showing near-total effectiveness. The World Health Organization has already recommended it globally, highlighting its potential to improve adherence compared to daily oral PrEP pills. **However, CVS Health, the nation's largest pharmacy benefit manager, announced it**

will not add Yeztugo to its coverage lists for commercial or Affordable Care Act (ACA) plans. CVS cited the drug's high price, over \$28,000 per year and the availability of cheaper alternatives, noting that because the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force has not yet endorsed it, insurers are not required to cover it.

Despite this setback, Gilead projects that 75 percent of insurers will cover Yeztugo within six months and as many as 90 percent within a year. A recent Supreme Court ruling affirming the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force's authority to mandate preventive coverage under the ACA is also expected to support broader access in the future. Yeztugo represents a major scientific breakthrough in HIV prevention, but its high cost and limited insurance coverage are key hurdles to widespread adoption in the U.S.

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

The Florida Alliance and several of our Employer Members have been participating in an HIV Benefits Strategy Workshop hosted by the National Alliance. A playbook for employers will be developed using feedback from the workshop and disseminated to us at a later date.

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

Due to the short week for the Labor Day holiday, we will not be sending a Bulletin out next week.

The Weekly Bulletin will resume in two weeks with a new delivery schedule, returning to Fridays starting September 12.

**Enjoy the holiday weekend
and hopefully cooler temperatures will come soon!**

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.