

**VOLUME 17 | ISSUE 2 | SUMMER 2021**

## RECENT EVENTS

### **LVBCH 41<sup>ST</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE: INNOVATIONS IN BENEFITS PANEL**

The COVID-19 pandemic greatly accelerated the use and acceptance of digital platforms to deliver health services and engage benefit recipients, according to a panel of employee benefit experts at LVBCH's 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference panel discussion, *Innovations in Benefits* on May 5.

Kevin Davis, VP and Senior Benefits Consultant, Univest Insurance, LLC, moderated the discussion. Participating in the panel discussion were:

- Brian Boose, Regional Vice President, EyeMed Vision Care
- Kendra Carey, Health Education and Strategic Wellness Consultant, BeneFit Corporate Wellness
- Donna Hunter, Vice President, Strategic Business Development, United Concordia
- Heather Lavoie, President and CEO, Geneia

Lavoie said changes precipitated by the pandemic broke log jams in restrictions, such as technology payment modalities and physicians treating patients over state lines. Moving forward, data will drive who might have an onset or exasperation of a disease. Data will enable the provider and patient to consider barriers to care, such as transportation, health literacy, and social isolation to determine the right location of care.

Carey said BeneFit has been forced to use a completely digital platform to support its clients' employees, including those who had been furloughed. BeneFit consultants developed innovative ways to not only assess their needs, but also develop services to meet them. This includes an app that offered live on-line classes, on-demand classes and one-on-one personal training. Mostly though, they listened as employees wanted someone to talk to as they navigated through difficult times.

Hunter said dentist offices in Pennsylvania were closed at the start of the pandemic. Fortunately, however, virtual services such as tele-dentistry enabled dentists to remotely see what was happening within their patients' mouths. The pandemic moved tele-dentistry forward even though in most cases, patients still need to come into the office for personalized treatment,

Boose said the vision industry is experimenting with new ways to conduct vision exams virtually. In addition, on-line selection and purchase of contacts and eye glasses increased. With five vendors to choose from, on-line utilization doubled from 5 to 10% of purchases in just the past 12 months.

Throughout the healthcare industry, providers are employing technology to improve patient engagement. Call centers today are looking at quality measures. Rather than focusing on call resolution and hold times, they're measuring the rate of preventative care, whether the client has a primary care physician, appropriate use of the

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emergency room, and enrollment in care management programs. Also, they're sharing data across disciplines. For example, an eye doctor collects and reports on 250 ICD-10 diagnostic codes to identify early signs of conditions like diabetes or hypertension and shares his findings with the patient and other health care providers.

Achieving engagement is the holy grail of health care, Lavoie said. It's incredibly difficult to make happen but incredibly important to driving behavior.

[ABOUT THE PANELISTS: CLICK HERE FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE BIOS](#)