

Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare Q1 2022 Employer Meeting

Thank you to all who attended the Coalition's Employer Group meeting on March 8. This recap includes some important takeaways from the meeting. Please reach out to your Capital Blue Cross account executive if you have any questions or would like a copy of the meeting presentation.

COVID-19 Update

A review of key metrics, providers, and claims related to COVID-19 from August 2021 through January 2022 shows:

- Public data suggests the Omicron variant produced roughly three times as many cases as the Fall 2020 wave. This surge fueled an increase in our utilization during this timeframe compared to the prior reporting period.
- While claims volume elevated towards the end of 2021, however, it was not at a level seen in prior waves and costs (severity) did not rise drastically.
- Hospital admissions, ICU cases, and deaths did not rise at a rate comparable to the case rate.
- Public health officials are suggesting an additional booster vaccination might be recommended in the fall for certain populations, primarily the elderly.

Population Health Management Update

As part of its expanded approach to help fight diabetes, Capital has become the first health insurer in Pennsylvania to offer its members an innovative app (Virta) that can help reverse Type 2 diabetes. Capital also offers an app (Omada) that helps users better manage diabetes and prevent prediabetes from progressing to Type 2. Outcomes include:

- 60% of Virta participants succeed in some level of diabetes reversal, with 59% elimination of diabetes medication.
- For diabetes prevention, Omada users saw 4.7% average weight reduction within 12 months and 58% achieved a normal A1c within 12 months.
- For diabetes maintenance, Omada users saw an average 11% increase in medication adherence and an A1c drop of 0.8%.

Other population health management highlights:

- A forthcoming digital maternity management tool (Ovia Health) that provides personalized health and wellness features, from planning and conception, through pregnancy and childbirth.
- An improved Healthy Blue Rewards wellness program that offers an enhanced health assessment, a new mobile app to improve engagement, more personal wellness challenges, and an expanded library of self-guided, digital coaching programs.

Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) Update

The CAA is a \$2.3 trillion spending package that includes some of the most significant new private health plan provisions since the Affordable Care Act. There are 14 key health provisions, including surprise billing, ID card requirements, advanced EOBs, continuity of care, mental health parity, drug cost reporting, price comparison tools, and more.

The CAA impacts both fully insured and ASO groups. Some of the act's provisions had a 1/1/2022 implementation date, but still require additional regulatory guidance from federal officials.

Capital is working diligently to comply with all CAA requirements. We have established multiple workgroups and are engaging with the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and outside consultants to understand and implement those requirements. The latest updates and information can be found at [CapitalBlueCross.com](https://www.CapitalBlueCross.com).

Leapfrog

Capital claims data was examined for the Coalitions book of business – as well as one Coalition/Capital employer specifically – and a comparison was done between utilization at specific hospitals vs. benchmark data. This information was analyzed to identify risk/"lives lost" to medical errors tied to facilities with certain Leapfrog safety ratings. (The Leapfrog Group collects, analyzes, and publishes data on safety and quality in the healthcare industry.)

Here are the key takeaways:

- We have strong provider partners in the region, and employers/Coalition/Capital should continue educating employees that where they choose to receive care matters and has very real impacts on cost and outcomes, as evidenced by correlation of Leapfrog scores and "lives lost" calculations.
- There need to be continued efforts to identify and use safe hospitals, assess factors contributing to that safety, and develop communications to drive use of those facilities.

Save the Date!

The next Capital/Coalition quarterly employer meeting will be Wednesday, June 8, from 9-11 a.m.

For more information on any of these topics or programs, please contact your Capital Blue Cross account executive.