

# News Notes

### **Quarterly News & Updates**

While the situation with the coronavirus (COVID-19) remains in flux, nothing is more important to the Lehigh Valley Business Coalition on Healthcare than the health and safety of our members, your employees, your families, our community, and our Country. The Coalition's operations and purchasing programs remain committed to providing full services to members.

Whether we are moving into the "new normal" or getting "back to business" our plan is to continue supporting our members, with purchasing programs that increase membership value and an ongoing commitment to providing education and networking opportunities - whether in person or virtual!

Thank you to our employer members and associate members for your ongoing engagement!

We hope you enjoy this latest e-Version of the LVBCH Quarterly News Notes!

Visit our Website

## **Welcome Message**



### Carl Seitz, President

New Year, New In-Person Opportunities!

As we move into the new year, the Coalition remains committed to offering opportunities to be in-person for our largest events in 2022.

We hope you will "save-the-dates" for the following in-person events:

- 9th Annual Healthcare Symposium
  - Tuesday, March 22
  - At Lehigh University
- 42nd Annual Conference
  - Wednesday, May 11th
  - At DeSales University

We also remain committed to the health and safety of our members, and will continue to offer live webinars to best meet your needs and interests.

We look forward to seeing you live, and in-person, in 2022!

### **Welcome New Members**

Please join us in extending a warm welcome to our new Coalition members - We encourage all members to get involved and participate in Coalition activities!

- Ak-Chin Indian Community & Farms
- Allentown Art Museum

- Clarity Benefit Solutions
- Tegra Medical LLC

View All LVBCH Members Here

## **LVBCH Updates**

### **LVBCH Board Announces New Partnership**

Clarity Benefit Solutions - Online Benefits Administration Services



Lehigh Valley Business Coalition of Healthcare has selected Clarity Benefit Solutions as the Coalition's Online Benefits Administration Partner to provide the tools, resources, and support employer members need to provide affordable, high-quality employee benefits for their respective employees. In making this selection, the LVBCH Board of Directors has endorsed Clarity Benefit Solutions as a *Preferred Partner for Online Benefits Administration Services*.

Clarity participated in an extensive review process. To earn the Coalition's Preferred Partner status, they had to demonstrate better plan performance, pricing, or enhanced service capabilities, giving employers benefits and benefit administration options that best meet their needs. Using a market-based approach, the Coalition negotiates rates that are exclusive to members and better that individual employers could obtain on their own.

Clarity's preferred pricing for LVBCH members is available immediately. To learn more please talk to your broker or benefits consultant or reach out to the teams at LVBCH and Clarity Benefit Solutions.

Read the Press Release

### **LVBCH Extends Dental Partnership**

Delivering More than \$1 Million Per Year in Savings to Members

## United Concordia Dental

Lehigh Valley Business Coalition of Healthcare announced the extended partnership with United Concordia Dental to remain the preferred dental carrier for LVBCH's Employer Members.

It is estimated that the extended partnership will save LVBCH's employer members more than \$1 million per year over the six-year contract.

Exclusive rates are available to both self-funded and fully insured employers. To learn more please talk to your broker or benefits consultant or reach out to the teams at LVBCH and United Concordia.

Read the Press Release

### **LVBCH Receives Grants**

From the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions

### **Employer Learning Modules in Oncology**

Lehigh Valley Business Coalition of Healthcare was selected as a recipient of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions (NAHPC) grant for Oncology sponsored by Genentech and Cancer Treatment Centers of America. LVBCH was one of eight coalitions selected nationally to receive this grant.

The overall goal of the oncology initiative is to provide a forum for employers to review and enhance their current cancer strategy, to share what they are doing related to oncology, and to conduct learning modules that highlight the oncology patient journey. The areas of focus for the learning modules include: prevention and preliminary diagnosis; diagnosis, treatment planning and care; and survivorship, surveillance and return to work.

As part of the grant opportunity, LVBCH employer members are invited to participate in a three-part virtual learning module on Oncology covering the patient journey.



Module 1:

Prevention & Preliminary Diagnosis

Module 1

Prevention & Preliminary Diagnosis

Watch 9/20/2021 Module 1 recording

Watch 10/6/2021 Module 1 recording

View Module 1 Presentation Slides



Module 2:

<u>Diagnosis, Treatment Planning & Care</u>

Module 2

Diagnosis,
Treatment Planning
& Care

Watch 11/3/2021 Module 2 recording

View Module 2 Presentation Slides



Module 3:

Survivorship, Surveillance & Back to Work

Survivorship, Surveillance & Back-to-Work

Watch 12/1/2021 Module 3 recording

View Module 3 Presentation Slides

### Improving Drug Management: Employer Roundtables on Biosimilars

Lehigh Valley Business Coalition of Healthcare was selected as a recipient of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions (NAHPC) grant for Biosimilars sponsored by the Biosimilars Forum. LVBCH was one of seven coalitions selected nationally to receive this grant, and participated in the "early stage" discussions.

The overall goal of the biosimilars initiative is to define and address the current challenges to implementing biosimilars, and to discuss best practice strategies for making formulary and benefit design decisions. The areas of focus for the roundtables include: the impact of specialty drugs, site of care, and more; resolving challenges in medical and pharmacy; benefit design and formulary planning and contracting; and

As part of the grant opportunity, LVBCH facilitated an invite-only roundtable of local employer members discussing current challenges to implementing biosimilars along with the best practice strategies for making formulary and benefit design decisions. The roundtable, held virtually on October 13, 2021 included employers of various sizes and representing diverse industries. The discussion provided an opportunity for employers to share thoughts and needs. A final report from these roundtables is expected in 2022.

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Employer Only Webinars - Register Now**

The following webinars are open to all LVBCH employer members. Registration is required.

Webinar - Introducing Clarity Benefit Solutions: New Online Benefits Administration Solution for Your Company

- Tuesday, January 18, 2022
- 3:00 p.m. 4:00 p.m.

Employer Members Only - Register Now - 1/18/2022 Clarity Webinar

## Webinar - Worksite Health Clinics Part I The Landscape and Value of Worksite Health Centers

- Thursday, January 27, 2022
- 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m.

Employer Members Only - Register Now - 1/27/2022 Clinic Webinar Part I

## Webinar - Worksite Health Clinics Part II Worksite Health Centers - A Deeper Dive

- Thursday, February 24, 2022
- 12:00 noon 1:00 p.m.

Employer Members Only - Register Now - 1/24/2022 Clinic Webinar Part II

### Save-the-Dates

### **Broker Event & Continuing Education Opportunity**

- Thursday, March 3, 2022
- At Melt, Center Valley, PA

### 9th Annual Healthcare Symposium

- Tuesday, March 22, 2022
- · At Lehigh University, Bethlehem, PA

### **42nd Annual Conference**

- Wednesday, May 11, 2022
- At DeSales University, Center Valley, PA

\*\*\*More information about these events and registration information will be coming soon!\*\*\*

### **Employer Forum**



All LVBCH Employer Members are invited to participate in this ongoing peer-to-peer discussion between local employers on the topics most important to you!

Thank you to all Employer Members who have participated in these calls to date – and for sharing your organizations' experiences with COVID-19. As these session progress, they will continue to focus on issues employers are facing, including the coronavirus pandemic, as well as providing ongoing assistance and resources to help you navigate your organizations questions and concerns.

Thank you also to our Fall 2021 special guest experts:

- Loren Speziale, Gross McGinley
- Meloney Sallie-Dosunmu, City of Allentown

**Register Now:** The next employer forum is scheduled for:

- Thursday, October 28, 2021;
- 8:00 a.m. 9:00 a.m.
- Via Zoom

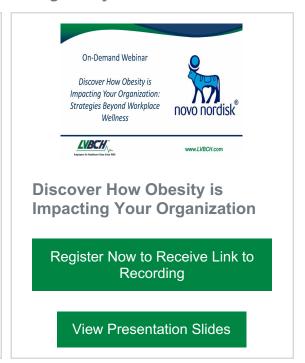
For more information please contact Donna Corsi: dmcorsi@lvbch.com.

Employer Members Only - Register Now - 1/20/2022 Employer Forum

### **On Demand Webinars:**

Register to start watching at any time!









**Outcomes** Substance Abuse Register Now to Receive Link to Register Now to Receive Link to Recording Recording View Presentation Slides View Presentation Slides Read the Summary Read the Summary

### **Recent Events**

## **Employer Forum & Holiday Breakfast**

**COVID-19 Vaccination Testing Mandate & Compliance** 

### **Expert Presentation:**

- Bill Catuzzi, Clarity Benefit Solutions
- December 2, 2021
- Glasbern Inn

Read the Summary



### THANK YOU 2021 ANNUAL SPONSORS!

We would like to send a special THANK YOU to our sponsors. Without your support, this event would not be possible.

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## National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions (NAHPC) Updates



LVBCH partners with the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions to drive innovation, health, and value through the collective action of public and private purchasers. Together, both organizations seek to accelerate the nation's progress toward safe, efficient, high-quality healthcare and the improved status of the American population.

### **National Alliance Webinar: COVID-19 Townhall**

**Employer COVID-19 Response: Post Mandate** 

With only 71% of US adults vaccinated against COVID-19 and the Omicron variant detected in the US, there will be ongoing surges and workplace outbreaks. Learn more about keeping employees and their families sage - and saving lives in your workforce and communities.

This townhall will cover: implementation of OSHA standards; implications of vaccination versus testing; relative benefits of PCR, rapid molecular, and rapid antigen testing; preparing for potential workplace outbreaks; and considerations related to natural immunity.

Watch the 12/7/2021 Webinar Recording

## **National Alliance Webinar: Fiduciary Check-In**

Rights & Responsibilities Related to Service Provider Disclosure

The Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA) legislation signed at the end of last year lays out extensive rules and responsibilities that plan sponsors, as fiduciaries, must comply with. This webinar will focus on fiduciary rights and responsibilities related to services provider disclosure.

Watch the 10/21/2021 Webinar Recording

### **Annual Report (2021)**



Read the Report

PBM Report: Opportunities in Pharmacy Benefit Management (2021)



Read the Report

Aligning Interests: Accelerate Care Delivery Innovation & Value (December 2021) Health Policy in Transit: Anti-Competitive Contracting Legislation (November 22, 2021)

### **Aligning Interests**

Opportunities for Purchasers and Physicians to Accelerate Care Delivery, Innovation & Value

Purchaser and Physician Roundtables: Purpose, Goals, Objectives







2021

### November 22, 20

### Health Policy in Transit: Anti-Competitive Contracting Legislation

On November 2, 2021, Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) and Mike Braun (R-IN) introduced the Healthy Competition for Better Care Act (S. 3139), bipartisan legislation that would ban anti-competitive contracting between providers and health plans. The goal of this legislation is to make health care better for patients by ensuring that contracts between health insurance issuers, including employer plan sponsors, and health systems advance quality and affordability.

Specifically, the Healthy Competition for Better Care Act would:

- Allow discounts or incentives for enrollees who choose high-quality and low-cost providers:
- Allow insurers and employers to contract with the best hospitals and providers for their patients, without requirements to enter into additional contracts with other affiliated providers or hospitals;
- Allow purchasers to negotiate their own rates with other providers who are not party to the contract of the provider involved; and
- Allow hospitals and purchasers to freely negotiate prices, without requirements to pay higher amounts for items or services than other issuers have agreed to.

The bill includes exceptions for certain group model issuers, including health maintenance organizations, and value-based network arrangements, such as an exclusive provider network or accountable care organization.

The legislation—which has been referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) for consideration—comes amid increased scrutiny of hospital mergers and practices.

Many of the provisions in the legislation target tactics used by dominant health systems and Senators Baldwin and Braun pointed to Sutter Health as an example. The Northern Californiabased healthcare system reached a \$575 million settlement over price-gouging allegations, including that it required insurers and payers to sign "all-or-onthing" contracts that required payers to include in its network all its affiliated providers or none of them. This bill would eliminate those types of practices by health systems.

www.nationalalliancehealth.org

The National Alliance, together with its sister organizations, is strongly supportive of this legislation. Advocating against harmful contracting practices is a core component of the Fair Health Costs Project and we are working to raise awareness of the negative effects of anticompetitive contracting.

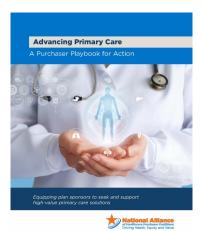
lational Alliance

We are following this legislation closely and will provide updates as the bill reaches important milestones.

Read the Report

Read the Report

Advancing Primary Care: A Purchaser Playbook for Action (October 2021)



Read the Report

Myths & Facts: Revealing Hospital Price Transparency Truths (October 2021)



SNational Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions. May be copie
 and distributed with attribution to the National Alliance.



Read the Report

## **Leapfrog Updates**



LVBCH continues to develop its relationship with the Leapfrog Group, serving as a Regional Leader. In this role, LVBCH invites and encourages hospitals across Pennsylvania to complete the annual Hospital Survey that assesses hospital safety, quality, and efficiency based on national performance measures.

### 2021 Top Hospital Recipients Recognized

149 Hospitals Receive Award, 10 Hospitals Recognized in Pennsylvania

The Leapfrog Group announced the 2021 recipients of its annual Top Hospital Award, the nation's most competitive recognition for excellence in hospital safety and quality. Hospital selection was based on excellence in upholding quality standards across several areas of patient care, including medication safety, survey outcomes, and infection rates, among many other patient priorities.

This year, 149 hospitals from across the country received the Top Hospital Award. Pennsylvania was among the five states with the most Top Hospitals. The Top Hospitals are recognized in four categories: Top General Hospitals (46 recipients), Top Rural Hospitals (23 recipients), Top Teaching Hospitals (72 recipients), and Top Children's Hospitals (8 recipients).

In Pennsylvania, the following Top General Hospitals were recognized:

- Butler Memorial Hospital
- · Geisinger St. Luke's Hospital
- Paoli Hospital

In Pennsylvania, the following Top Teaching Hospitals were recognized:

- Jefferson Bucks
- Lancaster General Hospital
- St. Luke's Easton Hospital
- St. Luke's Hospital Allentown Campus
- St. Luke's Hospital Bethlehem Campus
- Temple University Hospital Main Campus
- Wellspan Waynesboro Hospital

Read the Press Release

### Pennsylvania's Fall 2021 Hospital Safety Grades

135 Hospitals Graded; 62 Hospitals Earn "A" Grade

The Leapfrog Group, a national nonprofit representing hundreds of the nation's most influential employers and purchasers of health care, driven in Pennsylvania by LVBCH, announced the Fall 2021 Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades.

The independent grading system assigns an "A," "B," "C," "D," or "F" grade to general hospitals across the country based on over thirty national measures of preventable errors, injuries, accidents, and infections. The Fall 2021 Hospital Safety Grade represents the largest set of hospitals ever graded, with grades assigned to 2,901 facilities across the country.

In Pennsylvania, 135 hospitals were graded, and 62 earned an "A," 35 earned a "B," 31 earned a "C," 7 earned a "D," and none earned an "F." Only one Pennsylvania hospital - St. Clair Hospital located in Pittsburg - has received 'Straight As" since 2013.

LVBCH would like to recognize our local hospital systems and their hospitals that earned an "A" including: Geisinger's Geisinger Medical Center, Bloomsburg, and Lewistown hospitals; Lehigh Valley Health Network's Hazleton and Pocono hospitals; and St. Luke's University Health Network's Allentown, Anderson, Bethlehem, Easton, Lehighton, Miners, Monroe, Sacred Health, Upper Bucks, and Warren (NJ) Hospitals.

St. Luke's University Health Network has earned the national distinction of being one of two systems with 10 or more graded hospitals to earn all A safety grades.

Read the Press Release

### Leapfrog Webinar: Employer CCA Compliance

Fiduciary Responsibility: 4 Things Employers Must do by January 1

Compliance is not only required - it will save money and help employees

The new Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA), signed into federal las on December 27, 2020, will remove the gag clauses and provide a great deal of valuable information for plan sponsors. At the same time, plan sponsors are on the hook for ensuring health benefits are cost effective and high quality, similar to the fiduciary responsibility associated with pension and 401(k) plans.

Watch the 12/14/2021 Webinar Recording

## Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council (PHC4) Updates

### **Hospital Performance Report - 2020 Data**

PHC4 Annual Report of Hospital Performance Continues to Show Improvement in Mortality and Readmission Rales (December 16, 2021)

A performance report of Pennsylvania hospitals shows significant statewide decreases in in-hospital mortality and readmission rates - a trend that mirrors previous performance reports. The annual *Hospital Performance Report*, includes hospital-specific mortality and readmission ratings as well as volume of cases and hospital charges for patients discharged from Pennsylvania's general acute care hospitals from October 1, 2019 through September 30, 2020. Statewide trends are also examined.

Read the Press Release

### **About the Report**

### About the Report

## Hospital Performance Report for Pennsylvania

### What is the purpose of this report?

The Pennsylvania Health Care Cost Containment Council's (PHC4) Hospital Performance Report (HPR) displays volume and outcome information about a variety of medical conditions and surgical procedures for Pennsylvania general acute care hospitals. The HPRC an assist consumers and purchasers in making more informed health care decisions. The report can also serve as an aid to providers in highlighting additional opportunities for quality improvement and cost containment. It should not be used in emergency situations.

### About this report

- This report includes hospital-specific outcomes for 14 different medical conditions and surgical procedures, as defined by ICD-10-CM/PCS (International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision, Clinical Modification/Procedure Coding System) codes and Medicare Severity — Diagnosis-Related Groups (MS-DRGs). Technical Notes relevant to this report provide additional detail. They are posted to PHC4's website at www.phc4.org.
- This report covers adult (18 years and older) inpatient hospital discharges, regardless of payer, during the period October 2019 through September 2020.
- Cases with a diagnosis of COVID-19 were not included in this report.
- All Pennsylvania general acute care and several specialty general acute care hospitals are included. Children's hospitals and some specialty hospitals are not reported because they typically treaf few cases relevant to the conditions and procedures included in his report. Hospitals that closed or merged with other facilities are not reported, nor are hospitals that recently opened since the data available does not represent the full time frame of the report.
- Hospital names have been shortened in many cases for formatting purposes. Hospital names may be different today than they were during the period covered in this report due to mergers and name changes.

PHC4 • Hospital Performance Report • Oct 2019 through Sep 2020 Data • About the Report • 1

### **Key Findings**

### **Key Findings and Statewide Statistics**

### Special Note Regarding COVID-19 Cases

The Federal Fiscal Year 2020 Hospital Performance Report covers an unprecedented time in recent Pennsylvania health care history. The COVID-19 pandemic began to affect Pennsylvania residents in March 2020, and since that time, Pennsylvania hospitals have faced extraordinary challenges in care delivery, particularly for patients with COVID-19. While this report includes inpatient discharge data from the pandemic period, cases with a COVID-19 will explose have been excluded from the analysis ince these hospitalizations are clinically complex, and measuring hospital outcomes related to these atypical cases is not the intent of this report. For each of the medical conditions and surgical procedures reported, the table below shows the rates of mortality and readmission as well as average charges for patients with a diagnosis of COVID-19 compared to patients who did not have that diagnosis. These results contributed to the rationale for excluding all cases with a COVID-19 diagnosis from this report.

### Comparing Cases with and without a COVID-19 Diagnosis, FFY 2020 Date

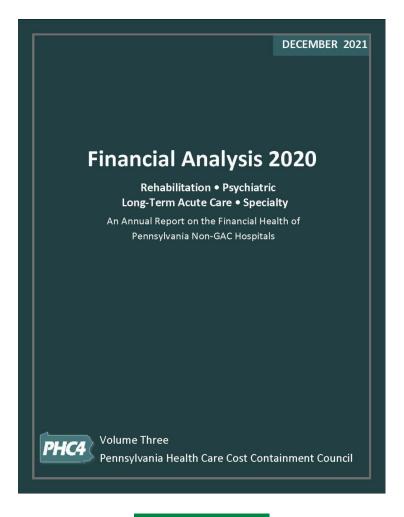
	Mortality Rate		Readmission Rate		Average Charges	
	Cases without COVID-19	Cases with COVID-19	Cases without COVID-19	Cases with COVID-19	Cases without COVID-19	Cases with COVID-1
Total Hospitalizations in the Hospital Performance Report	4.0%	24.6%	17.0%	6.0%	\$53,578	\$104,17
Abnormal Heartbeat	0.9%	1.1%	12.4%	9.2%	\$54,223	\$62,79
Blood Clot in Lung	2.6%	3.0%	11.3%	5.1%	\$43,779	\$55,98
Chest Pain	NR	NR	12.8%	0.0%	\$27,854	\$33,40
Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)	0.8%	0.0%	20.1%	23.5%	\$38,749	\$44,056
Diabetes – Medical Management	0.7%	2.0%	19.0%	12.2%	\$36,131	\$58,72
Heart Attack – Angioplasty/Stent	1.7%	11.1%	8.7%	10.0%	\$102,513	\$124,59
Heart Attack – Medical Management	7.1%	15.4%	17.2%	10.0%	\$47,770	\$55,08
Heart Failure	2.4%	5.5%	22.4%	17.1%	\$49,305	\$66,51
Intestinal Obstruction	1.2%	3.4%	13.3%	17.4%	\$31,358	\$51,67
Kidney and Urinary Tract Infections	0.5%	2.2%	14.0%	7.9%	\$31,873	\$44,03
Kidney Failure – Acute	2.6%	6.3%	18.8%	9.6%	\$38,436	\$51,43
Respiratory Failure	9.3%	11.8%	22.7%	14.8%	\$71,818	\$87,10
Sepsis	9.6%	27.9%	17.6%	4.7%	\$67,170	\$111,33
Stroke	2.9%	13.6%	11.1%	5.8%	\$55,532	\$73,80

PHC4 • Hospital Performance Report • Oct 2019 through Sep 2020 Data • Key Findings • 1

Read the Report

Read the Report

Financial Analysis 2020 - Volume 3 (December 2021)



Read the Report

## **Guest Articles from Purchasing Partners**



Capital Blue Cross Unveils New Health and Wellness Center in Allentown



### Ever onward. Ever upward. Together.



The holiday season is here and, for many of us, it's a time to celebrate together with family and friends. We are sharing this 30-second video with you because it reminds us that the best things are the ones we do together. In that spirit, we're making a contribution to the Y, an organization dedicated to improving the health of all people and communities.

From all your friends at Express Scripts, happy holidays and a healthy new year.

### EVERNORTH.





Biosimilar vs. Generics Challenge: Understanding the Different



PBMs Targeted by Government to Lower Drug Prices

Protect Your Mouth from the Cold

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Surprisingly Germy Surfaces

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As the Workforce Ages, Vision Benefits Become Even More Important





Engagement Through Benefits Technology

Open Enrollment 2022: A Guide to Smooth Transitions



Why We All Need a Health Coach - Especially Now

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Our affiliation with these national organizations is a value-added benefit for our members.





