

President's Message by Carl Seitz



The recent Northeasters, especially Tropical Storm Riley, have played havoc on our area. Ice, slush and snow, as well as fallen trees, made many familiar roads unpassable, forcing travelers to find new routes, or in some cases, leaving them stranded. Downed power lines created treacherous conditions and left many of us in the cold and dark.

The storms are a perfect metaphor for the situation we find ourselves in today. We're often unsure of which pathway to take to reach our intended destination, as familiar ways are no longer available. Not able to predict the effect of major legislation – such as the tax overhaul and revocation of the individual mandate – we often feel as though we're finding our way in the dark.

But, as you are maneuvering through these uncertain times, be assured that LVBCH will be there with you, helping you understand how these changes will affect your business and employees. For instance, this year's annual conference, "Driving Healthcare Value, Innovation and Transparency," will once again feature healthcare strategist Robert Laszewski, who will offer his "Washington insider's" view on recent and pending legislation and its likely effect. He will be joined by a slate of healthcare strategy experts so be sure to register for the May 3rd event (page 2).

Throughout the year, our affiliated national partners provide us with insights on how legislative and other actions impact employers. For example, the Leapfrog Group recently published a case study on ICU Physician Staffing featuring Doylestown Hospital in Pennsylvania (page 9). The National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions recently provided an action brief on mental illness as well as a policy update on proposed rules for Association Health Plans (page 10).

Meanwhile, the Coalition continually brings you new products to better meet your needs, such as the five products/services that were featured at the "LVBCH Associate Showcase" on March 23 (page 4-6). We work with organizations like the Leapfrog Group to encourage healthcare accountability and transparency, and *Choosing Wisely*® to discourage unnecessary, costly and sometimes harmful tests and treatments. Perhaps most importantly, we partner with you – our employer members – to provide employees affordable health benefits and programs that encourage healthy lifestyles.

It surely has been a challenging winter, but spring has finally arrived with its promise of renewed growth and brighter days.

New Members

Welcome New LVBCH Members

We extend a warm welcome to the following new members of the Coalition and encourage them to become active in Coalition activities:

- ❖ Atlantic City Linen Supply, LLC
- ❖ Fusion Health

LVBCH Annual Conference

Register Now for the LVBCH 38th Annual Conference - May 3, 2018 *“Driving Healthcare Value, Innovation and Transparency”*

- ❖ Date: Thursday, 5/3/18 Time: 8:00 am - 3:00 pm
- ❖ Location: [DeSales University, University Center Building](#)
2755 Station Ave, Center Valley, PA 18034
- ❖ This event is for all LVBCH members.
- ❖ Click links to [Get More Information](#) and [Register](#)

[Register Now!](#)

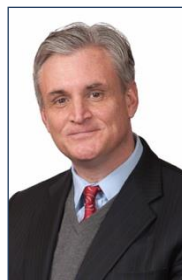
Featured Speakers



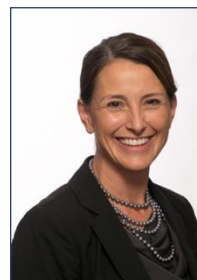
Robert Laszewski
President
Health Policy and
Strategy Associates



Marc Granson, MD
Founder
SurgeonCheck, LLC



Robert E. Andrews
CEO, Health
Transformation
Alliance



Heather Lavoie
Chief Strategy Officer
Geneia



John R. Adler
President
ELMC Rx Solutions

**You must register to attend this event. Registrations will NOT be accepted at the door.
Registration Deadline: Monday, April 9, 2018**

[Register Now!](#)

LVBCH Upcoming Events

Save the Date for the following LVBCH Events that are coming soon!

Date & Time	Location	Event/Topic	Audience	Other Information
April 12, 2018 Thursday 11:30 am - 2:00 pm	Melt Restaurant 2880 Center Valley Pkwy Center Valley, PA 18034	LVBCH PBM Broker Event <i>"Understanding and Controlling Pharmacy Benefit Costs - What You Can Do for Your Self-funded Clients"</i>	BROKERS Only	Get More Information Register You MUST register to attend. Registrations will NOT be accepted at the door! Registration deadline: 4/6/18
May 3, 2018 Thursday 8:00 am - 3:00 pm	DeSales University, University Center Building 2755 Station Ave Center Valley, PA 18034	LVBCH Annual Conference <i>"Driving Healthcare Value, Innovation and Transparency"</i>	All LVBCH Members	Get More Information Register You MUST register to attend. Registration deadline: 4/9/18
May 24, 2018 Thursday 1:30 - 5:30 pm Followed by a one-hour networking reception: 5:30 – 6:30 pm	Lehigh University Mountaintop Campus Iacocca Hall Wood Dining Room	5th Annual Healthcare Systems Engineering Symposium <i>"Telehealth: Federal Initiatives, State Policy, and Current Implementations"</i>	All LVBCH Members	Additional information and registration link coming soon. You MUST register to attend. Registration deadline: TBD
June 6, 2018 Wednesday 8:00 – 10:30 am	PBS39 TV Studios 830 E. First Street Bethlehem, PA 18015 Parking Instructions	LVBCH Employer Forum Sponsored by Univest Insurance <i>"The Role of the EAP in the Opioid Crisis and Emerging Trends in Benefits"</i>	LVBCH EMPLOYER Members Only Qualifies for 1.25 Continuing Education Credits	Additional information and registration link coming soon. You MUST register to attend. Registration deadline: 5/23/18
July 17, 2018 Tuesday 11:30 am - 1:30 pm	LVBCH Headquarters Conference Room 2 nd Floor	LVBCH Broker Event sponsored by Integrated Behavioral Health (IBH) <i>"Mental Health, Substance Abuse and Stress – Impacts, Costs and Solutions"</i>	BROKERS Only	Additional information and registration link coming soon. You MUST register to attend. Registration deadline: TBD

LVBCH Recent Events

LVBCH Associate Showcase Introduces Employers to New Products

On Friday, March 23, 2018, LVBCH employers and brokers attended the Coalition's first "**Associate Showcase**" designed to introduce five different LVBCH associate member organizations and the products/services they offer to help LVBCH members control their healthcare costs. Each of the five presentations included a testimonial from an existing client of the Associate so attendees could hear first-hand how their employees are benefiting from the Associate's product/service. The event was held at DeSales University located in Center Valley, PA.

AblePay Helps Employees Manage High Premiums and Deductibles

Rising healthcare costs, which now average \$26,000 for a family of four, are driving the increase in the employee's share of out-of-pocket expenditures. Today, one in three employees is enrolled in a High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) and that percentage grew 50 percent in 2016, said **John Fistner**, President and Chief Executive Officer of [AblePay Health](#), which provides discounts and flexible payment terms for employee medical expenses.

While HDHPs might be a good solution for the employer, they create a hardship for the average employee who does not have excess cash on hand. In fact, 69 percent have less than \$1,000 in savings and 63 percent have to go into debt to pay a \$500 premium. Meanwhile, unpaid medical bills are the number one reason for bankruptcy in the United States.

With AblePay, employees enroll in the plan. Then, when they receive a healthcare bill, AblePay pays the bill upfront and then the employee has up to a year to make payments to AblePay. Should the employee pay off the balance earlier, they can receive discounts, Fistner explained. There is no cost to the employee or the employer. AblePay is able to offer this service because it has negotiated discounted rates with health care providers, including St. Luke's University Health Network and Lehigh Valley Health Network. [View AblePay Health Presentation](#) & [Video](#)



**John Fistner, President,
AblePay Health**

Benefitfocus Helps Employers Offer Benefits Most Valued by Employees



**William Umbehauer
Account Executive
Benefitfocus**

[Benefitfocus](#) builds on an excellent communication platform to enable employers to develop a benefit program that best meets the needs and preferences of their employees, said presenters, **Bill Umbehauer** and **Amy Yantosh**, Benefitfocus Account Executives.

"Personalization makes perfection," said Amy. "Every employer has a different demographic." Employers must find what is most attractive to the employees they want to hire and retain. Benefitfocus provides a leading cloud-based benefits management platform that simplifies how organizations and individuals shop for, enroll in, manage and exchange benefits.



**Amy Yantosh
Account Executive
Benefitfocus**

Today, most large employers offers three different plans, an HDHP, a traditional plan and a hybrid of the two, Bill said. To make it easier for employees to make the best selection for their unique circumstances, Benefitfocus uses a data-driven system that simplifies complex benefit options through consolidated systems and automated processes that integrate technology and services. The system is so advanced that Benefitfocus can draw upon an individual employee's personal claim data, taking into account prescriptions and services received. With this information, the system suggests which option provides the best coverage for the lowest cost for that individual employee, Amy added. [View Benefitfocus Presentation](#)

ConsumerMedical Guides Employees to the Best Course of Care

Offering incentives to encourage employees to seek expert guidance on health care decisions can significantly increase engagement and ultimately lower health plan costs, said **Dave Lucarelli**, Vice President of Employer Solutions. [ConsumerMedical](#) is a medical ally that empowers employees to make better health care decisions by offering evidence-based, expert-guided, clinically relevant information for all conditions from simple procedures to complex cancer care.

Encouraging employees to consider their options before surgery can reduce the number of unnecessary surgeries or procedures by up to 43 percent, he said. This can result in significant savings given that the average cost of these procedures is \$26,125.



Dave Lucarelli
VP Employer Solutions
Consumer Medical

When the employers offer incentives, employees are more likely to contact ConsumerMedical to discuss treatment options and seek second opinions. For example, when employers offered a \$400 gift card, employee engagement increased 2.4 times. Instituting penalties for failing to seek information proved to be even more effective, Dave said. Employers who penalized employees \$1,000 when they did not talk with ConsumerMedical before having elective surgery saw engagement increase nine times.

ConsumerMedical integrates across its clients' health benefits ecosystems, enabling benefits coordination, maximizing cross - referrals and leveraging of rewards and wellness programs to their fullest. ConsumerMedical delivers high engagement and satisfaction, improved quality and outcomes, real savings and behavioral change. [View ConsumerMedical Presentation](#)

Health Advocate Leads Employees to Needed Services



Suzanne Starker
Sr. VP, Business Dev &
Account Management
Health Advocate

[Health Advocate](#) provide a valuable service for the employee by navigating the medical system and helping them maximize eligible insurance benefits, said **Suzanne Starker**, Sr. Vice President of Business Development & Account Management.

Healthcare benefits are confusing and fragmented. With Health Advocate, employees can make one call and be connected with a health advocate who can address their concerns. Combining people and technology to simplify and personalize the experience, Health Advocate can help to engage employees in their own health and well-being, reduce medical costs, improve quality of care, provide support and streamline administration.

Health Advocate's solutions leverage a unique combination of personalized, compassionate support from health care experts with a powerful predictive data analytics and technology platform. This includes mobile solutions to provide clinical support and engage members in their health and well-being. Members enjoy a best in class, personalized concierge service that addresses nearly every clinical, administrative, wellness or behavioral health need. [View Health Advocate Presentation](#)

TRIVIDIA Health Helps Employees with Diabetes Manage Their Condition

By offering employees affordable diabetes monitoring equipment and supplies, employers can help them to better manage the disease, said **Rhonda Lemmo**, BS, RN, CNOR, Sr. Director, Clinical Marketing for [Trividia Health](#).

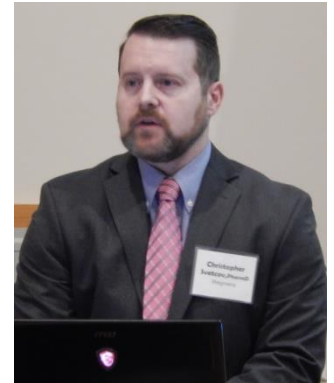


Rhonda Lemmo
Sr. Director, Clinical Marketing
Trividia Health

Speaking on behalf of Wegmans grocery chain, **Christopher Svetcov, PharmD, RPh**, Pharmacy Area Manager – PA Division described the importance of their employees having access to high quality, affordable Glucose monitors and strips.

Trividia Health, formerly Nipro Diagnostics, Inc. offers more than 30 years of experiences in the blood glucose monitoring market, Rhonda said. Marketed under the name TRUE METRIX, Trividia Health is committed to improved patient adherence, awareness and compliance with proper blood glucose monitoring to help employees enjoy better overall health.

[View Trividia Health Presentation](#)



Christopher Svetcov
Pharmacy Area Manager -
PA Division, Wegmans



Pictured above (L-R) seated in the front row: Amy Yantosh (Benefitfocus), Eileen Zielinski (PPL), Stefanie Weber (City of Easton) and Suzanne Starker (Health Advocate). Standing (L-R): Christopher Svetcov, PharmD (Wegmans), Gail Amato (Trividia Health), Rhonda Lemmo, RN (Trividia Health), Dave Lucarelli (Consumer Medical), John Fistner (AblePay Health) and Carl Seitz (LVBCH). Not pictured: William Umbehauer (Benefitfocus).

NVA Broker Event: "Vision Care in the Evolving Health Benefits Landscape"

The Glasbern Inn was the setting for the February 14th broker event hosted by our vision partner **National Vision Administrators (NVA)**. The 17 brokers in attendance not only learned about vision care, but also earned two continuing education (CE) credits for attending the meeting.



Chris Maus,
Sales Director, NVA

The session was conducted by **Chris Maus, Sales Director** from National Vision Administrators. Maus' presentation included information on vision and medical conditions, preventing vision benefit fraud waste and abuse, PPACA's impact on vision benefits and advances in vision care.



Pictured above from NVA (L-R): Gary Calaman Carl Seitz (LVBCH President), Millie Monaco, Lou Anne Cuppo, Chris Maus and Kevin Filippelli.

The Coalition and NVA are dedicated to keeping the broker community fully informed as they work with their clients to provide the best in vision benefits.



Other Coalition Happenings

2017 LVBCH Annual Report Available

In January 2018, LVBCH published and distributed its [2017 Annual Report](#). The report outlined the significant activities and achievements of the past year. To access the 2017 Annual Report, click on the image of the report to the right or [click this link](#).

Printed copies may be obtained by calling the LVBCH office at 610-317-0130 or by sending an email to LVBCH@LVBCH.com. You can access LVBCH Annual Reports from prior years on our website. Simply go to www.LVBCH.com.



Geneia Partners with LVBCH to Address Diabetes



Pat Ingerick, Senior Director,
Transformation, Geneia

Geneia continues to participate in the Diabetes Learning Collaborative, which was highlighted in LVBCH's National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalition's Annual Conference, Using Data Analytics to Drive Employer, Payer and Provider Collaboration & Convergence. Patricia Ingerick, Geneia's senior director of transformation, is chairing the Collaborative's subgroup charged with finding ways to implement the Center for Disease Control and Prevention's [National Diabetes Prevention Program](#) in a virtual manner.

In the fall, Ingerick used data in the Theon® platform to share insights into the Coalition's diabetic population. For example, the analytic insights revealed that nearly three-quarters of those with a diabetes diagnosis also have hypertension and more than half are overweight or obese. Nearly 1,800 of diagnosed diabetics have three or more comorbidities.



In March, Ingerick will present an updated analysis of the diabetic population at the quarterly Geneia/LVBCH advisory meeting.

LVBCH's Wellness Partner Receives National Award

[BeneFIT Corporate Wellness](#), the workplace health and wellness arm of Populytics, has been selected by the National Commission for Health Education Credentialing (NCHEC) to receive the 2017 Outstanding Service & Leadership Award in the organizational/employer category. BeneFIT is one of only two companies to receive the 2017 award. The award recognizes commitment to health education and promotion, and support of staff members who hold NCHEC's CHES® and MCHES® certifications.

BeneFIT has always made health education the foundation of its corporate wellness services, administered through its six staff CHES and MCHES specialists. Sound evidence-based components are a cornerstone of the company, which offers a variety of services including health coaching, speaker presentations, smoking cessation, and others.

LVBCH congratulates BeneFIT Corporate Wellness on this prestigious award and for their outstanding service and leadership in providing corporate wellness services to our members.



BeneFIT Corporate Wellness team educators pose with their NCHEC certificate. From left: **Erin Postel**, MPH, CHES®, Strategic Wellness Consultant; **Amanda Greene**, RN, BSN, MCHES®, Strategic Wellness Consultant; **Sarah Engler**, MCHES®, Manager, Health Education and Wellness; **Carol Michaels**, MPH, MCHES®, Administrator, Care Coordination; **Leah Posivak-Khouly**, MPH, CHES®, Strategic Wellness Consultant. Not pictured: Kristin Behler, MPH, MCHES®, Director, Health Promotion and Wellness.

Leapfrog Update

New Case Study: ICU Physician Staffing



The Leapfrog Group recently published a new case study on their website featuring Doylestown Hospital in Pennsylvania showing how they implemented Leapfrog's ICU Physician Staffing Standard. Here's a [link to the interview](#) with their President and CEO Jim Brexler and here's a [link to the full case study](#).



Jim Brexler
President and CEO
Doylestown Hospital

When [Doylestown Hospital](#) – part of a nonprofit health care network that has delivered care to the Doylestown, Pennsylvania community for more than 90 years – received a “C” on the Spring 2016 [Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grade](#), hospital President and CEO Jim Brexler led a campaign to dramatically improve patient safety throughout the hospital, ultimately increasing its Safety Grade to an “A” in Fall 2016. One key area of improvement was adapting its staffing model to meet Leapfrog's [ICU Physician Staffing \(ICU\) Standard](#).

In an interview, Brexler explains how Doylestown Hospital made this change and offers advice for other hospitals seeking to increase intensivist coverage.

To learn more about the steps Doylestown took to address this challenge, [click here](#) to read the case study.

Read the full case study.

[Click Here](#)

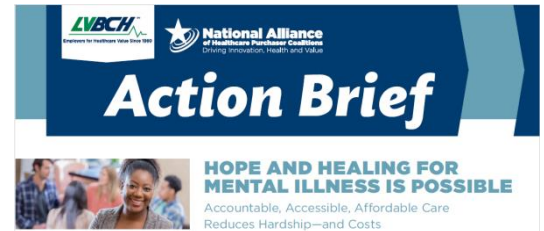
National Alliance Update

Action Brief: Hope and Health for Mental Illness is Possible

The barriers to achieving the mental health system we need are many, but they are surmountable when payers and purchasers work together to drive long-overdue change.

This Action Brief offers key insights on how employers and coalitions need to work with their health plans and employees in five critical areas. The Action Brief also offers easy resource links to other resources that could be valuable to purchasers.

The National Alliance has recently launched a mental health module of eValue8 consistent with the strategies outlined in this Action Brief.



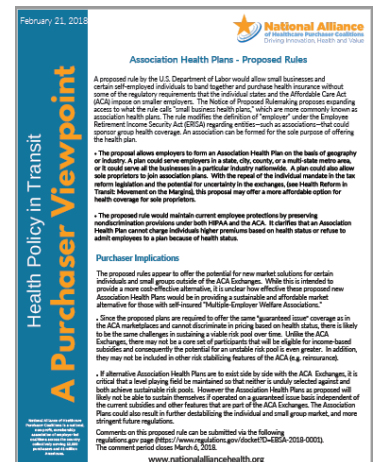
[Read the Action Brief](#)

Policy Update: Association Health Plans - Proposed Rules

A proposed rule by the U.S. Department of Labor would allow small businesses and certain self-employed individuals to band together and purchase health insurance without some of the regulatory requirements that the individual states and the Affordable Care Act (ACA) impose on smaller employers.

For more information about this proposed rule, read a one-page summary by clicking on the image to the right or on the green button below.

[Read about the Proposed Rules](#)



Our thanks to the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions for making both of these pieces of information available to our members.



Choosing Wisely® Update

Low-Cost Healthcare Services Account for Most of Unnecessary Health Spending

When attempting to reduce unnecessary healthcare spending, the first targets are often expensive services of questionable value. An example of this is doing a MRI scan early in the course of treatment of a patient with an acute lower back strain. However, a recent article in Health Affairs (October, 2017) is an important reminder that we need to focus on the overuse of low-cost services.



An initiative of the ABIM Foundation

An analysis of services in the Virginia all-payer claims database revealed more than \$586 million in low value, unnecessary costs for 2014. Sixty-five percent of these low-value services were from low cost (\$100-\$538) or very low cost (under \$100) services that were performed frequently. Examples of low-cost, low-value, but high-volume services include: baseline lab tests for low risk patients prior to low-risk surgeries, cardiac stress testing and annual electrocardiogram testing for asymptomatic patients, routine x-rays for uncomplicated sinusitis, and screening for vitamin D deficiency.




St. Luke's Care Network has multiple initiatives across the continuum of care to reduce low-cost, low-value services especially unnecessary tests. Many of these initiatives align with discussions that are part of Choosing Wisely™. Examples of St. Luke's initiatives to reduce low-cost, low-value testing include: vitamin D screening, early back x-rays for uncomplicated back strain, appropriate use of rapid flu tests and rapid strep throat testing in the office, and appropriate use of other common blood tests such as calcium levels.



Choosing Wisely® Materials Are Just a Click Away

Informed patients make smarter healthcare choices

Choosing Wisely® is an initiative of the American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM) Foundation that seeks to advance a national dialogue on avoiding unnecessary medical tests, treatments and procedures. It is designed to educate employers and their employees about the dangers and issues associated with the overuse of health care services. The campaign helps employers encourage their employees to get involved in their health care so they can have informed conversations with their physicians. To access more than 100 guides (including videos) to getting better, safer, more cost-effective care, simply click on the following link: <http://www.choosingwisely.org/>

 <i>An initiative of the ABIM Foundation</i>	 FOUNDATION  STRONGERTOGETHER
Vitamin D tests When you need them—and when you don't	

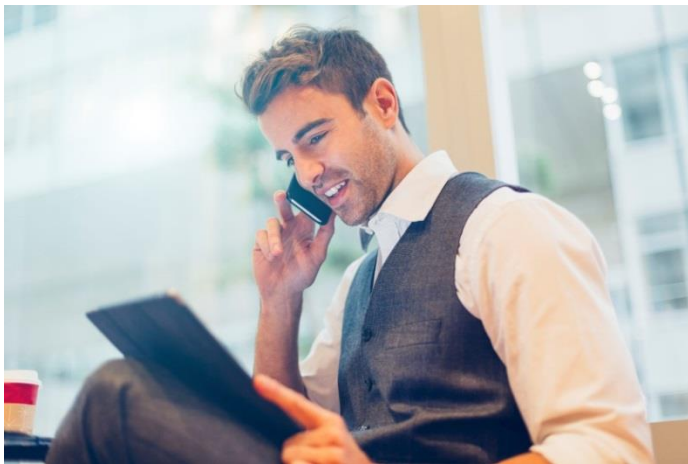
Guest Articles

Invest in Quality Health Coaching for Your Employees. It Makes a Difference.

Prioritizing a healthy workplace is a win-win for employees and employers alike. Across industries where many are being asked to do more with less, employers see the effects of an unhealthy population via increased health plan costs, absences, and decreased productivity. With company-sponsored health plans paying more than 60 percent of family medical costs, (1) investing to improve employee health is a wise strategy.

One impactful way to start is to make health coaching available. Picking an effective program is important. The experts at BeneFIT Corporate Wellness® recommend employers look for these signatures of quality:

- Board-certified health coaches guided by evidence-based research
- Programs that are easily integrated into an employee's busy day
- Non-prescriptive coaching that offers guided support, not pre-set directives
- Individualized options, not a one-size-fits-all approach



This kind of coaching has produced tangible outcomes. At one local eastern Pennsylvania manufacturer, 15 percent of participants shifted into a healthy blood pressure range in the second year of the program. At another, employees who participated in health coaching for two consecutive years lost a combined total of 1,300 pounds. (2)

To read more about one participant's experience, visit <https://www.populytics.com/blog/health-coaching-didnt-expect-personal-approach/>

For more information on health coaching options from BeneFIT Corporate Wellness, contact Eileen Fallis at 484-862-4070 or eileen.fallis@lvhn.org.

(1) Bureau of Labor Statistics. Share of premiums paid by employer and employee for family coverage, <https://www.bls.gov/news.release/ebs2.t04.htm>

(2) BeneFIT Corporate Wellness data



Join BeneFIT Corporate Wellness for a free, 30-minute webinar on Thursday, April 5 at 1 p.m.

"What is Health Coaching ... Really?"

Register Now!

Dealing with Two Common Dental Emergencies during Vacation



UNITED CONCORDIA®
DENTAL

Protecting More Than Just Your Smile™

Dental emergencies can happen anywhere. Be prepared and ready for anything with these tips:

When you shouldn't wait:

Most medical facilities are unequipped to treat dental issues. However, delaying treatment can cause serious complications, so you may need to find a dentist with emergency hours. If you experience any of the following symptoms, call 911 or get to the nearest ER:

- Trouble breathing, even if due to swelling
- Heavy bleeding
- Severe pain
- High fever that medicine doesn't reduce

Emergency #1: Damaged tooth

- Rinse with warm water. Use a cold compress to reduce swelling. Take over-the-counter pain medication, if your personal health conditions allow.
- Chipped tooth? Find the chip, if possible. Put it in a plastic bag with a few drops of water or wrap it in wet gauze. See a dentist immediately.
- Cracked tooth? Avoid chewing on anything hard or sticky and visit your dentist ASAP.



Emergency #2: Painful toothache

- Rinse your mouth with warm water. Use floss to gently remove debris that may be stuck between your teeth. Never use anything sharp and do not place aspirin directly on the painful area.
- If the pain continues or gets worse, go to a dentist or urgent care center – this could be a sign of a serious infection.

If you do need to see a dentist during vacation, visit www.unitedconcordia.com/find-a-dentist/ to find an in-network provider nearby. You may need to call the location for emergency hours.

To get more information about the LVBCB dental program, contact Greg Fisher, Director of Sales, United Concordia Dental via email at Gregory.Fisher@ucci.com or via phone at 610-276-2108.

Disclaimer: This information is not intended to provide clinical advice specific to your individual situation. Always consult a licensed dentist/physician for diagnosis and treatment of any specific dental/medical issues.

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

