



June Member Meeting: Telemedicine is Transforming Access to Care

Telemedicine/virtual care again tops the list of innovations and services for Minnesota employers, according to The Action Group's 2019 [Annual Employer Benefits Survey](#).

We are convening a panel of telemedicine experts to share new data on prevalence, utilization and capabilities with a focus on emerging trends and what employers are doing, how they are promoting, and the results they are seeing at our June 27, 2019, member meeting. There will also be a special discussion about trends in tele-mental health.

PLEASE NOTE: This meeting is exclusively for Action Group members. If you are not yet a member and are interested in joining us to learn more, contact [Sue Jesseman](mailto:sjesseman@mnhealthactiongroup.org) (sjesseman@mnhealthactiongroup.org) for a complimentary meeting pass.



Click on the image above for a full description of the June member meeting.



Related Reading:

- [What are the Factors Driving Telehealth Growth in 2019?](#)
- [5 Ways Telehealth is Taking Modern Healthcare to the Next Level](#)

Employer Benefits Survey Summaries Highlight High-Interest Findings

Well over 100 Minnesota employers representing over a quarter million employees participated in the 2019 Employer Benefits Survey. [Executive summaries](#) for general industry and cities, counties and school districts are now publicly available. As a bonus, a [Summit Special Edition](#) culls data related to how employers are planning for and responding to rapidly evolving workplace and workforce changes.

Among the high-interest findings:

- Health care costs continue to run significantly higher than national benchmark averages for Minnesota employers.
- Eliminating waste in the health care system is gaining traction.

Minnesota Health Action Group
2019 Annual Employer Benefits Survey
Overview for General Industry

Insights to Guide Strategy and Planning

1. **Costs on high and continue to rise:** Minnesota general industry employers are experiencing a sharp increase in health care costs. By 2020, total health care costs are expected to rise 10% from 2018. This increase, coupled with the rising impact of an aging workforce, is expected to drive health care costs to 15% of total compensation by 2020.
2. **Health care costs continue to rise:** Total health care costs for general industry employers are expected to rise 10% from 2018 to 2020. This increase, coupled with the rising impact of an aging workforce, is expected to drive health care costs to 15% of total compensation by 2020.
3. **Employers are looking for ways to control costs:** Employers are looking for ways to control costs by investing in preventive care, wellness programs, and telemedicine. These investments are expected to reduce health care costs by 10% by 2020.
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Cost Category	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Total health care costs	13.6%	14.1%	14.6%	15.1%	15.6%
Employer's contribution	10%	10.5%	11%	11.5%	12%
Employee's contribution	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%	3.6%

Source: 2019 Employer Benefits Survey, 2019

Click on the image above to view the 2019 Executive Summaries for General

- Increasingly, benefits reflect diverse employee life journeys.
- Improving workplace mental health is a key priority for nearly every employer, yet few have taken action to ensure parity.
- Although diabetes is the number one health condition being addressed by employers, very few have adopted the evidence-based [National Diabetes Prevention Program](#).

Industry, Cities, Counties and School Districts; and Summit Special Edition.

Survey participants have received the full results. Those who did not participate but would like a copy of the results simply need to commit to taking the 2020 Survey by contacting [Deb Krause](#) (dkrause@mnhealthactiongroup.org).

Blog Series: The Real and Urgent Need to Talk About Mental Health

Impeded access to mental health care is horrifying and heartbreaking, and is a real and urgent call to action for employers. In a [three-part blog series](#), The Action Group examines the state of mental health care, and offers valuable employer resources that enable them to take action immediately to drive toward mental health parity.

"The 2019 [Annual Employer Benefits Survey](#) offers overwhelming evidence that mental health is important and relevant to employers" says Deb Krause. "As vice president of The Action Group, the conversation I am encouraging to accelerate improvements is between employers and their health plan(s)."

With mental health the leading cause of disability worldwide, Survey respondents tell us that low emotional well-being and stress are impacting the workforce in suboptimal performance at work/presenteeism (70%), more absenteeism (68%), and conflict at work (50%). Through The Action Group's Mental Health Guiding Coalition, members are working together to improve mental health care for all Minnesotans.



The Action Group's website has been redesigned so all mental health employer resources are now located in [one convenient place](#).



- [Model Hold Harmless Language](#) (Contract language for employers to use with their health plans related to mental health parity)
- [Model Data Request Form](#) (A turnkey data request form for employers to send to their health plans to understand employees' experience in accessing and receiving mental health care)
- [Achieving Value in Mental Health Support: A Deep Dive Powered by eValue8](#) (Summary of findings from a mental health RFI for national health plans and behavioral health organizations from the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions)

Employer Leadership Summit Draws a Crowd; Top Thought Leaders



This year's Annual Employer Leadership Summit, CHANGE @ THE SPEED OF LIFE: Investing in the Workforce of Tomorrow, featured speakers and panelists who presented fresh perspectives that attendees say were inspiring and energizing.

Click on the image above to view this year's Summit presentations, materials and photo gallery.

With a goal of opening insight into the possibilities that lie ahead when we embrace the shifting nature of the workplace, the day was filled with learning and networking opportunities.

"The Summit is a highlight of our year at The Action Group," says Carolyn Pare, Action Group president and CEO. "Meeting evaluations, coupled with our Employer Benefits Survey Results, made it clear that the content was timely as employers struggle to keep up with the unprecedented pace of change we are facing in the U.S."

Related Reading:

- [Which Trends are Expected to Dominate the Workplace by 2020?](#)
- [What is the Future of Work? Redefining Work, Workforces and Workplaces](#)



From the CAPITOL

Legislative Update: 2019 Wrap-up

As one of the only divided legislatures in the country, lawmakers were able to compromise and pass a budget that makes progress toward protecting health care for Minnesotans, invests in students, increases funding for special education, and includes the strongest wage theft protections in the country.

Legislators worked hard to address the rising cost of drugs and The Action Group worked with others to bring an informed employer perspective into the conversation. While we are disappointed that the proposed PBM fiduciary language did not survive, we are hopeful that legislators now better understand the need for more accountability throughout the supply chain. Without a clear mandate, PBM's will continue to deny employers, and ultimately consumers, the right to expect maximum accountability in how drugs and services are provided. The Action Group will continue to advocate for complete transparency of cost and quality information to facilitate informed purchasing.

The health budget includes numerous items to address disparities in mental and chemical health.

Mental health parity language is included in the final



Click on the image to find additional information about the Minnesota State Legislature and 2019 activities.

HHS omnibus bill. It can be found in Article 8, Sections 12 (page 455) and 14 (page 457) of the bill. Click [here](#) to view.

The Action Group communicated the health policy goals of our Mental Health Guiding Coalition (MHGC) as legislation addressing parity was considered. Sue Abderholden, executive director of NAMI Minnesota and special advisor to The MHGC, has been a tireless advocate for this bill.

The final state budget is the first step on a much longer road toward a more prosperous, more equal state. Legislators will prioritize important measures such as emergency insulin affordability and accessibility; paid family and medical leave; gun violence prevention; and clean energy initiatives so all Minnesotans have the opportunity to stay safe and healthy.

To view the Health and Human Services Omnibus Finance Bill, click [here](#).



Save the DATE

HR and benefits professionals are encouraged to participate in Action Group meetings and events. If you are not yet a member and would like to join us at member meeting, contact [Sue Jesseman](mailto:sjesseman@mnhealthactiongroup.org) (sjesseman@mnhealthactiongroup.org) for a complimentary meeting pass.



Save the Dates for 2019 Member Meetings:

- **June 27, 2019:** [24x7x365: How Telemedicine is Transforming Access to Care](#)
- **August 9, September 5, December 6**

Each meeting begins with networking at 8 a.m. and concludes at 10 a.m. They are held at the Hilton Airport/MOA. Members who miss a meeting or are interested in viewing the presentations may log into the Member Center from the [homepage](#) and select Member Meeting Presentations.

Public Meetings and Events:

- **June 24-26, 2019:** [National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions Annual Summits](#) (*Action Group members receive a member discount of \$100!*)
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THOUGHT for the Week

“AI and related innovations have already enabled industries such as banking, aviation and entertainment to grow, provide higher-quality products, and allow consumers greater choice. With spiraling costs, increasing need, decreasing resources, and rapidly advancing technologies, health care desperately needs to catch up.”

Jonathon Linkous
Founding CEO of American Telemedicine Association;
CEO of the Partnership for Artificial Intelligence and Automation in
Healthcare (PATH)



The Minnesota Health Action Group is a coalition of public and private purchasers whose sole purpose is to represent the collective voice of those who write the checks for health care in Minnesota. Action Group members collaborate with community stakeholders to drive innovations that support high quality health care, create engaged consumers, and ensure the economic vitality of all Minnesota communities. Based in Bloomington, MN, the Minnesota Health Action Group was formed in 1988 as the Buyers Health Care Action Group. To learn more, visit www.mnhealthactiongroup.org. Follow us on LinkedIn and Twitter: @actiongroupmn