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Getting Employees to Use Preventive Care Benefits Still a Challenge for Employers

New toolkit helps employers address gaps in employee knowledge and encourages use of free preventive screenings and services

CHICAGO – May 5, 2016 – A recent survey by the [Midwest Business Group on Health](http://www.mbg.org) (MBGH) found that employers continue to face challenges in getting employees to understand and use the free preventive care benefits available to them as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). One of the nation’s leading non-profit business groups of large, self-insured public and private employers, MBGH found that only 10% of large employers are aware of all of the required preventive services to be covered at no patient cost per the law mandate.

The survey also revealed that larger employers (who typically offer participation incentives), saw higher use of preventive services (approximately 60%) compared to small- to mid-sized employers (less than 50%) who usually don’t have resources to offer incentives. In addition, outside of the flu vaccination, survey respondents indicated they are not promoting important adult vaccinations, and for those that do, employee use is low.

According to a Kaiser Family Foundation study, despite the ACA mandate, consumer awareness and use remains low with costs serving as a perceived barrier.

“Employers are the primary purchasers of health care for employees and families, so it’s important that these benefits are effectively understood and appropriately used,” said Larry Boress, MBGH president and CEO. “Otherwise consumer engagement levels suffer resulting in millions of benefit dollars being wasted each year. Many employers don’t know where to start or how to effectively communicate available preventive care benefits to their covered population. That’s why we’re launching an employer toolkit to help employers do a more effective job.”

Promoting Preventive Health Benefits is an online resource available at no cost to coalitions and employers across the country. The toolkit contains important information and best practices for increasing employee use of preventive services from leading industry sources. Key elements include helping employers understand the value of prevention, gain quick access to the ACA requirements, and identify ways to eliminate cost and access barriers through benefit design and promotional materials for use with covered populations. The toolkit can be accessed at <http://www.mbg.org/resources/employertoolkits/ptk>.

The MBGH member survey was conducted online in late 2015 and is meant to be a directional survey on the views, perceptions and strategies of employers on workplace preventive benefits, but places important emphasis on the ongoing gaps in consumer understanding.

About the Midwest Business Group on Health

With more than 130 member organizations, the [Midwest Business Group on Health](#) is one of the nation's leading non-profit business groups of large, self-insured public and private employers serving as a source for leading health benefit professionals and a catalyst for community initiatives to improve the quality, safety and cost-effectiveness of the health care delivery system. MBGH is a founding member of the National Business Coalition on Health. Follow on Twitter: @MidwestBGH

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