

Midwest Business Group on Health Hosts 2026 Employer Benefits Conference Focused on Action, Accountability, and Transparency

*From fiduciary duty to market disruption, employers will convene May 5-6 in Chicago
to address rising costs and demand value*

CHICAGO – April 6, 2026 – The Midwest Business Group on Health (MBGH) announced details for its [46th annual employer benefits conference](#), taking place May 5-6 at the JW Marriott Chicago. This year's theme, *Employer Blueprint for Action – Unite. Demand. Disrupt. Repeat.*, calls on employers to take a more active, accountable role in reshaping the health care and benefits marketplace.

As employers continue to face rising health care costs, increased regulatory complexity, and growing fiduciary responsibilities, the conference will deliver timely insights, real-world strategies, and proven solutions to help employers use their influence to demand transparency, accountability, and measurable value from health care and benefit partners.

“Health care represents one of the largest investments employers make beyond payroll, and the expectation must be value, accountability, and integrity,” said Cheryl Larson, president and CEO of MBGH. “At our annual conference, employers will move beyond rhetoric to better understand where value is being lost, how fiduciary responsibilities apply, and what actions are necessary to demand better performance from vendors and intermediaries.”

The event will convene employer benefit leaders, health care purchasers, and industry experts for candid discussions and practical guidance on how employers can reclaim their influence and reset expectations across the health care system. Through keynote sessions, peer-to-peer learning, and actionable case studies, participants will explore how to move beyond short-term cost cutting toward sustainable strategies that improve workforce health and better manage long-term costs.

The 2026 conference will feature benefit and HR leaders from some of the nation's most influential employers, including 3M, Advance Auto Parts, The Boeing Company, Caterpillar Inc., Fortune Brands, HP Inc., Merck & Co., U.S. Venture, United Airlines, and US Foods. Representing organizations that support millions of employees nationwide, these leaders will share candid, peer-driven perspectives on what is working, where challenges remain, and how employers are using their purchasing power to push for greater transparency, accountability, and measurable value. Their participation reinforces the conference's employer-led focus and its emphasis on practical strategies shaped by real experience.

Key focus areas include:

- Translating fiduciary responsibilities under ERISA and recent transparency requirements into practical employer action
- Holding benefit partners accountable, including carriers, third party administrators, consultants, brokers, pharmacy benefit managers, and other intermediaries
- Leveraging data and transparency tools to identify where value is being lost – and how to recover it
- Rethinking traditional vendor relationships to enable more productive, employer-aligned partnerships

- Using collective employer influence to disrupt the status quo and drive meaningful system-wide change

MBGH's annual conference is recognized as one of the nation's most influential gatherings of employer health care purchasers, offering an employer-only perspective and an environment designed to foster honest dialogue and collaboration.

"Employers have the leverage to demand better, but only if they are willing to act," Larson added. "This event is about uniting employers, demanding accountability, and continuing to disrupt what no longer works, again and again, until we achieve a more transparent, equitable, and effective system."

Additional details, including agenda highlights and registration information, are available at www.mbg.org/46-annual-conference. MBGH thanks its 2026 conference sponsors for supporting this vital employer-driven educational event.

About the Midwest Business Group on Health

Midwest Business Group on Health (MBGH) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit supporting employers seeking solutions to better manage the high cost of health care and the health and productivity of their covered populations. Founded in 1980, MBGH offers members leading educational programs, employer-directed research projects, purchasing opportunities, and community-based activities that increase the value of health care services and the health benefits they offer to members. MBGH serves over 170 companies that provide benefits to over 4 million lives, with employer members spending more than \$15 billion on health care each year. For additional details visit MBGH.org and follow us on [LinkedIn](#).

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