



Business Health Care Group

Driving Meaningful Change

Business Health Care Group 2015 Annual Meeting at the Italian Community Center September 30, 2015

Presentations by:

- Keynote: Dr. Roger Merrill, former chief medical officer of Perdue Farms
 - Geoffrey Schick, executive director, Business Health Care Group
 - John Elliott, vice president of client development, UnitedHealthcare

Executive Summary

With members, providers, brokers/consultants, sponsoring organizations and strategic partners in attendance, the Business Health Care Group (BHCG) conducted its fourth public annual meeting at the Italian Community Center on September 30. The meeting, entitled “*The **Future** is in the **Balance**,*” was highlighted by a keynote address from Dr. Roger Merrill, former chief medical officer at Perdue Farms, and presently a principal at Merrill Health Strategies.

The fourth *Driving Meaningful Change Award* was presented as well as an award to the sponsoring organization that brought the most employer groups into BHCG in 2014. Geoffrey Schick, BHCG’s executive director, reported on BHCG initiatives and accomplishments over the past year and BHCG’s vision and strategy going forward with the selection of UnitedHealthcare as its administrative partner beginning January 1, 2016. John Elliott, UnitedHealthcare’s vice president of client development shared remarks about his company’s new partnership with the BHCG.

Keynote Address by Dr. Roger Merrill – Health Delivery at an Enlightened Employer – It CAN be the Best of Times

Dr. Merrill's keynote address targeted three main areas:

- The value proposition: population health conveyed per dollar spent
- One employer's experience – Perdue Farms
- What can employers of any size can do to create health value

In the United States – Status of health and health care delivery

Dr. Merrill cited several statistics to make the point that that the United States has the most expensive and one of the least effective health care system in the world. Specifically, he cited the following:

- Estimates puts U. S. health care spending somewhere around \$2.3 to \$2.6 trillion per year, or \$11,000 per employee – most expensive in the world
- U. S. life expectancy and infant mortality measures place us in the same range as third world countries
- We under treat: prenatal care, high blood pressure, diabetes risk control; and over treat with: arthroscopic knee surgery, overuse of antibiotics, angioplasty

As a country we spend significant sums of money on health care services that do little to improve health, and in some cases actually lower health status, creating little value for the dollars spent.

Improving health and health care delivery – One Employer's Experience

A large national employer has driven improvement in health and the delivery of health care, utilizing three initiatives:

- **Onsite clinics** – called Wellness Centers – that serve as medical homes with minimal payroll deducted co-pays, visits on the clock while operating during all production shifts. The Wellness Centers serve as a tool to create adherence to evidence-based medicine and drive utilization of generic drugs and an effective disease management program.
- **A Health Improvement Plan (HIP)**, a rigorous, science-based wellness program that focuses on primary prevention, utilizing a health risk appraisal that measures several simple things – blood pressure, lipids, A1c, nicotine and BMI. Perdue achieved a 92 percent participation rate without the use of financial incentives. The entered data creates a health score for each individual, each plant and for the company as a whole. Health coaches then work with each individual to create a personal plan for health.
- **Value-based plan design** which steers individuals to science-proven interventions for certain treatable diseases that improve health and lower costs and steers people away from interventions that don't work by paying for them at a lower level than for treatments and interventions deemed effective. Perdue does not pay for “Never” events – events that should not happen when care is delivered – and actively promotes [Choosing Wisely®](#), an initiative of the American Board of Internal Medicine

Foundation, designed to assist patients in making informed decisions about seeking care for a wide variety of conditions.

Implementation of the three initiatives has resulted in:

- Onsite clinic cost that is one-third of retail cost per intervention
- A company-wide HIP score that has risen 10 of the last 11 years, even though their workforce is aging
- Turnover among employees participating in the HIP at one-third of those not participating
- Forty-five percent fewer of the procedures deemed to be no-value interventions performed/1,000 compared to other plan offerings
- Substantially better control of employees with diabetes and high blood pressure compared to national averages
- Health care costs at less than half the national average, with little year over year cost inflation

What You Can Do?

- Embrace evidence-based benefit plan design
- Be aggressive in not paying for “never” events
- Incorporate Choosing Wisely® in communications about being an informed health care purchaser and in the pre-authorization process
- Adopt a rigorous, measured, proactive wellness program

Slides from the presentation by Dr. Merrill are available [here](#).

BHCG Initiatives

Geoffrey Schick shared highlights of activities and the impact achieved by the BHCG over the past year including:

- A **strategic planning process** that was finalized in 2014 yielding the following outcomes:
 - A **balanced approach** designed to strengthen both consumer and provider accountability
 - The **selection of UnitedHealthcare** as the BHCG’s administrative partner effective 1/1/16
 - A strategic direction **fully compatible** with employers’ push to create **onsite and near-site clinics** to deliver primary and some specialty care

- The selection of UnitedHealthcare will bring numerous unique services and programs to BHCG members, some of which will be exclusive to members in southeast Wisconsin. Services include:
 - UnitedHealth Premium® Designation Tier I Plan for
 - Physicians
 - Freestanding facilities
 - Advocate4Me™ customer service team in Green Bay
 - Virtual Health Plan data analyses
 - Superior price and performance transparency tools
 - Broad, nationwide provider network
 - Health4Me App™
- Encouragement for the provider community to consistently screen for behavioral issues and alcohol and drug abuse through a **Behavioral Screening & Intervention (BSI)** process. The BHCG supported a grant from the Greater Milwaukee Business Foundation on Health to promote BSI as a standard of care in the health care delivery system.
- Several provider organizations, insurers, coalitions (including the BHCG and The Alliance) and other stakeholders supported the submission of a grant designed to improve the delivery of cardiac care. The grant application was chosen for funding in May 2014 by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) Innovation Center for three years for a total of \$15.8 million. Called **SMARTCare**, or Smarter Management and Resource Use for Today's Complex Cardiac Care, the initiative will treat an estimated 35,000 patients with potential or known coronary heart disease over the course of the three-year project in five pilot sites in Florida and another five in Wisconsin (including two in southeast Wisconsin).

Schick also shared health care cost results, membership information and results from the group's informed decision making vendor. Highlights included:

- Over the past nine years, BHCG **self-funded employers have averaged annual increases of 2.5 percent for their health care costs** (calculated prior to benefit application to eliminate the impact of benefit design changes) compared to annual increases of between 6 and 10 percent for southeast Wisconsin for the same time period.
- BHCG self-funded **employers have saved over \$1.17 billion** in the past nine years compared to market trend.
- As of December 31, 2014, enrollment in the BHCG stood at **107,607 covered lives with 1,108 employer members**.
- Results from 2014 for BHCG's **informed decision making vendor, Best Doctors**, whose services assist employees or their dependents facing difficult health care

decisions. Results showed a substantial clinical impact of the program and significant cost savings, including:

- Diagnosis Change/Clarification in 30 percent of the cases
- Treatment Change/Clarification in 64 percent of the cases
- Cost savings of nearly \$1.5 million, with ROI of 1.85:1

Award Presentations

The **Greater Milwaukee Business Foundation on Health (GMBFH)** was the recipient of the BHCG's fourth *Driving Meaningful Change* Award. The award was given to GMBFH for its commitment to research on the cost, efficiency and quality of health care in southeast Wisconsin. Ron Dix, executive director of GMBFH, and R. Craig Reynolds, its board chair, accepted the award on behalf of their organization and shared information about the history of their organization, the organizations they have supported financially and the studies they have commissioned examining the health care market in southeast Wisconsin.

The BHCG also presented an award to the sponsoring organization delivering the most groups to the BHCG in 2014. Accepting the award on behalf of the **Regional Chamber Coalition** was Carol White, president of the Greater Brookfield Chamber of Commerce.

Slides from the Geoffrey Schick's presentation are available [here](#). Photographs from the event can be found in the [Photo Gallery](#).