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WHN / UPDATES

Business Health Care Group looks to build on physician study

The Business Health Care Group hopes to build on its [study](#) showing employers in the state could save hundreds of millions of dollars by steering consumers toward high-quality, low-cost doctors and developing higher-value providers.

The group [presented](#) the study, performed by Massachusetts-based GNS Healthcare and funded by the Business Health Care Group and the Greater Milwaukee Business Foundation on Health, in December.

Using 2017 claims data from the Wisconsin Health Information Organization, the study analyzed the performance of 3,760 primary care physicians throughout Wisconsin, finding a total cost of \$1.4 billion among the 26 diseases it evaluated.

If the doctors performing in the bottom half of the distribution moved to the top half, costs would be about \$394.5 million less.

Jeffrey Kluever, executive director of the Business Health Care Group, said at the group's annual forum last week that they and the Greater Milwaukee Business Foundation on Health are committed to replicating the study at the end of the second quarter of this year.

Asvin Srinivasan, senior director at GNS Healthcare, said they hope to have three years of data, rather than the one-year snapshot.

That'll increase the number of doctors that they can study because their confidence interval will be better, he said. It'll also allow them to do a longitudinal look to see how trends change over time.

"That's incredible," he said.

Dr. Paul Mueller, regional vice president - southwest Wisconsin at Mayo Clinic Health System, said the study could help assess physician performance on value and complement currently used performance data.

Mueller noted that the state faces a shortage of physicians, which makes it difficult to steer patients toward high-performing doctors. He suggested efforts should focus on improving doctor's performance.

Janet Lucas-Taylor, senior director of employee benefits at Northwestern Mutual, said that the data and the continued research on it could help inform consumers about high-value care and how to get it.

She said they're hoping to work with their partners to steer consumers toward high-value healthcare providers and continue the dialogue with them.