



NEWS RELEASE

Media Contacts:

The Write Source for BHCG

Michael or Mary Rode

info@thewritesoucegroup.com

262-646-4242

Business Health Care Group Marks Two Decades of Improving Health Care Value in Wisconsin

Milwaukee, WI, April 19, 2023 – In 2003 CEOs of 11 of Wisconsin’s largest employers came together to discuss an alarming report from a 2003 study that found health care costs in southeast Wisconsin were 39 percent above the Midwest average. Concerned about Wisconsin’s ability to thrive economically and maintain jobs, they formed the [Business Health Care Group](#) (BHCG). Their objective was to work together to tackle the problem of unsustainable health care costs, and two decades later, BHCG member employers have seen the success of those efforts with their [health care cost trend](#) materially below regional and national averages.

“As major local health care purchasers, we understood the power of our collective influence to highlight the value of health care and move the market toward a more sustainable health care system for the benefit of all,” says Steven Smith, former Journal Communications chairman & CEO.

Rather than living with what was once a serious disadvantage to doing business in the state, BHCG-led efforts have instead pointed the way toward dramatic improvements in health care delivery that can be emulated across the US.

Over the past two decades, BHCG’s committed member employers have demonstrated responsible corporate citizenship through the remarkable progress they’ve made in using data-driven strategies to improve the value of health care in the state– both quality and cost. Their efforts have benefited employers, employees and their families and the community.

As a powerful employer alliance, BHCG has worked effectively with health care providers, health plans and other strategic partners to address issues such as:

- Differences in cost-effectiveness not linked to measurable differences in quality
- The misalignment of incentives in provider payment models
- Medical homelessness and improved consumer health care decision-making.

Says Mary Ellen Stanek, president of Baird Funds and co-chief investment officer of Baird Advisors, “The success of BHCG’s efforts is a real positive for the business community. We’re driving better health care decisions and patient management by encouraging effective relationships between patients and their primary care providers, resulting in better care and significantly lower health care costs for our member employers and their health plan members.”

Creating value

Armed with data from BHCG-commissioned studies, the organization and its strategic partners have identified how and where the best care is delivered. The information has been used successfully to facilitate dialogue with health systems and provider groups about adopting more effective practice patterns and utilizing value-based pricing. It has also served as the basis for development of a high-performance health plan solution.

“BHCG membership puts WI employers at the forefront of strategies that make a real difference – such as utilizing advanced data analytics to collaborate with health systems to increase health care value,” explains Ted Balistreri, co-owner of Sendik's Food Market.

BHCG member employers have access to an ever-growing portfolio of employer solutions from BHCG’s best in class strategic partners that offer members preferred rates, performance guarantees and exclusive product offerings. Current strategic partners provide solutions in the areas of benefits delivery and claims administration, pharmacy benefit management, data analytics and patient advocacy and support.

BHCG also sponsors opportunities for its member employers to network and share best practices through educational forums, seminars and workshops where they get in-depth information to drive continuous improvement. Members collaborate with BHCG best in class strategic partners in user groups designed to enhance programs and advocate for additional resources and education.

BHCG-Centivo high-performance health plan – health care reimaged

The 2022 launch of Wisconsin’s first high-performance primary care-centered health plan solution in partnership with Centivo was the culmination of BHCG’s efforts over the past two decades. The high-performance plan represents a more cost-effective, employer and provider-aligned health plan than what existed in the marketplace.

The primary care-centered plan establishes effective patient-provider relationships by directing patients to high value providers. It facilitates coordinated care by incentivizing health plan members to access care through a clinically guided process. High value primary care providers are responsible for getting patients the right treatment at the right time in the right setting.

The BHCG-Centivo high performance health plan creates a far more clinically appropriate and sustainable cost picture through direct partnership with providers, as evidenced by the plan's [2022 results](#).

Says BHCG Executive Director Jeffrey Kluever, “We are especially grateful for our working relationships with regional health care providers and our best in class strategic partners who have been with us on this journey. Certainly, there is more work to be done, but as BHCG celebrates its 20th anniversary, it has clearly demonstrated the power of alliance to improve health care value for all.”

About Business Health Care Group

The Business Health Care Group (BHCG) leverages member employer purchasing power and knowledge to lead change. The organization creates value through innovative, shared strategies to improve health care quality and cost efficiency for employers, employees, and the community. BHCG membership includes employers throughout Wisconsin and nationwide through standalone memberships for employers accessing BHCG best in class strategic partners. Visit BHCGWI.org to learn more.