



**September 2023**

**NAWHC NOW!** provides information on surveys, activities, programs and resources offered by the National Association of Worksite Health Centers, as well as from other industry partners and sources related to onsite, near-site, mobile and virtual worksite clinics. Visit [www.nawhc.org](http://www.nawhc.org) for details and membership information.

## **EDUCATION & NETWORKING**

### **Obesity Management and Medications in Worksite Health Centers – Webinar: Oct. 13, 2023, 10 AM PT.**

This webinar will provide deeper insight into options for treating obesity at a worksite health center and will include a comprehensive landscape of the GLP-1 medication class. Learn about how to incorporate a worksite clinic obesity care management program.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

### **2023 Onsite Employee Health Clinics Congress – Oct. 26-27, 2023, Diplomat Beach Resort, Hollywood, Florida.**

Learn from employers and national experts on key topics and challenges related to onsite and near-site employee health clinics. This program is managed by BRI Network. NAWHC members get a \$250 discount with code *NAWHC250*.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

### **2024 Onsite Employee Health Clinics Summit – Feb. 1-2, 2024, Hilton Scottsdale Resort, Scottsdale, Arizona**

At this program you will learn what it takes to build and streamline facilities that meet innovative visions for healthcare and wellness. You will also learn the benefits associated with expanding current onsite health facilities. This program is managed by World Conference Forum (WCF). NAWHC members get a \$250 discount with code *NAWHC250*.

[REGISTER HERE](#)

### **2023 NAWHC Annual Forum Recordings Now Available for Attendees**

Those who registered to attend the Sept. 6-7, 2023, NAWHC Annual Forum can now receive recordings of the sessions. A link has been sent to all attendees. The recordings will be available to the entire NAWHC membership in the Resources and Research section later this year.

## **BENCHMARKING**

### **Wait Times at Worksite Health Centers**

A preliminary report of the findings of the NAWHC-Mercer 2023 Survey of Worksite Clinics was presented at the NAWHC Annual Forum. One area examined was wait times. It found:

**Wait times to get an appointment to see a center provider:**

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- 63% could get an appointment in less than 1 day
- 35% took 2-3 days
- 1% took 4-5 days
- 1% took over 5 days

**Wait times to see a provider once in the center:**

- 67% waited less than 5 minutes
- 17% waited 5-10 minutes
- 3% waited 11-15 minutes
- 1% waited more than 15 minutes
- 12% don't track wait times

**2024 Large Employer Health Strategies**

The [Business Group on Health](#) released its report on health care strategies of large employers. The following were the areas of top priority:

- **Onsite Clinics Strategies are Changing:** A factor impacting on-site clinic strategies is to what degree some employers have migrated to a hybrid or remote work environment, reducing the need for health services at the workplace. Employers are, however, adjusting what is offered on-site to be reflective of their other care delivery priorities. This could reflect employers' goal to widen access to care (to include primary care and mental health) to serve the needs of employees and offer access to select subspecialties and specialty drug administration.
- **Views on Virtual Care Changing:** Views on virtual care are due to concerns regarding whether or not all forms of virtual health result in positive impacts on outcomes, quality, cost, experience and integration. Employers are also concerned that there are too many virtual solutions, leading to market saturation, and too many choices for employees. This concern relates is also shown in that they will be assessing their vendor partnerships and seeking to streamline and consolidate them in the coming years.
- **Mental Health:** In recent years, employers saw an increase in mental health needs, such as depression, anxiety and substance use disorder, and this year, that trend accelerated. Whereas last year, 44% of employers saw an increase in mental health concerns, this year, 77% of employers reported an increase, with another 16% anticipating such an increase in the future. To address this in 2024, employers are highly focused on access to mental health services. Key ways employers are increasing access to mental health services include providing more options for support and lowering cost barriers to care.
- **Pharmacy Costs:** Ninety-two percent of employers are concerned or very concerned about high-cost drugs in the pipeline, and 91% are concerned or very concerned about pharmacy cost trend overall. Employers experienced an increase in the median percentage of health care dollars spent on pharmacy, from 21% in 2021 to 24% in 2022. Various pharmacy management strategies, such as implementing a transparent pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) and plan design changes to address costly medications and treatments, are planned by for 2024.



- **Holding Vendors Accountable:** There is a growing focus on holding vendors accountable to deliver greater transparency of results, pricing and contractual terms. Nearly half of employers will require vendors to report on health equity measures to enable evaluation of progress in this area.
- **Cancer is a Top Priority:** 41% of employers are anticipating more late-stage cancers in their population due to delayed screenings. Employers are taking steps to address this by focusing on advanced screening measures and maintaining 100% coverage for recommended prevention and screening services. Employers are also keeping an eye on clinical advancements in oncology, including biomarker testing and immunotherapies, and are focused on guiding members to high-quality care, in hopes of improving health outcomes for patients affected by cancer. Fifty-three percent of employers will offer a cancer-focused center of excellence approach in 2024, with an additional 23% considering this approach by 2026.
- **Transparency Key to Containing Costs:** Employers are prioritizing greater transparency of cost and quality data so they and their employees can make informed decisions about their health care (87%). Employers are supportive of engagement platforms as a tool for employees to find needed information to identify the best solutions for their health care needs. In addition, 73% of employers see requirements for more transparency in PBM pricing and contracting as a priority, and 58% would like to see additional reporting and better provider quality measurement standards.
- **Costs Could Rise by Over 6%:** Concerns abound regarding plan and patient affordability, underscoring the unrelenting demand for delivery system and payment transformation. Employers are focusing on outcomes improvement, lowering the total cost of care, reduction in unnecessary services and prioritization of prevention and primary care.
- **Health Equity Approaches Evolving:** Employers (86%) will collaborate with employee resource groups (ERGs) to promote benefits and well-being initiatives to targeted groups, and 61% will require health plan and navigation partners to maintain directories of health care and mental health providers. To facilitate measurement, nearly half of employers will require vendors to report on health equity measures. Eighty-five percent of employers will implement at least one strategy to support the health and well-being needs of their LGBTQ+ employees; some are expanding fertility and family-forming benefits, while others are offering health plans with lower cost sharing to address affordability concerns. In total, 95% of employers will implement at least one strategy to address health inequities by 2024.

### **Employers Use of Weight Loss Drugs**

According to new study by Found, a weight management platform, weight loss drugs like Ozempic and other GLP-1s exploded in popularity this year, resulting in drug shortages and increasing costs for payers and employers. In the survey, A majority of employers are experiencing rising costs for weight loss drugs, and about a quarter plan to offer coverage for them in the next year,

## **MARKET DEVELOPMENTS**

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### ***Marathon Health Completes Acquisition of Cerner Workforce Health Solutions***

[Healthcare Innovation](#) reported Marathon Health, which provides direct primary care for employers, has purchased Cerner Workforce Health Solutions (WHS), a group of dedicated onsite and near-site health clinics. The acquisition will add approximately 300 “ambassadors,” 21 clients, 35 health centers and 300,000 members to the Marathon Health organization. It will expand Marathon’s footprint in 15 states, including a significant expansion in Chicago; Kansas City, Kan.; and St. Louis, Mo.

## **RESEARCH AND RESOURCES**

### ***AHRQ Offers Guidance on Selecting Mental Health Apps***

According to a story in [mHealth Intelligence](#), to assist in the process of selecting resources, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) issued [a brief called “Evaluation of Mental Health Mobile Applications”](#) to help healthcare experts pick out mental health mHealth apps. Through the new brief, AHRQ aims to aid providers, patients, and payers in selecting mental health mobile applications and seeking the best fit based on various features. The report covers three areas: risk and mitigation strategies, functions, and mental health app features.

Please visit our website at [www.nawhc.org](http://www.nawhc.org) and be sure to check in and sign-up at the [NAWHC LinkedIn Group](#) to stay abreast of developments *in NAWHC and in worksite health and wellness*.