

the FRONTPAGE

Clarity for an Evolving Industry

October 2019 Edition

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TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

The miBenefits Provider Portal Is a Success!

In June, EBMS rolled out a new extension of the miBenefits portal, designed to support healthcare providers and their office staff – and we're happy to report the provider portal has been a runaway success!

During the first week the provider portal was live, nearly 1,000 providers registered and created accounts. Each week, we saw the number of new accounts grow steadily. By week nine, we had well over 6,000 providers logging into and using the portal.

Julie Vaskey, EBMS director of configuration, is pleased with the portal's instant popularity. "It really supports providers and allows them to offer a higher level of customer service to their patients," she says. "We're giving providers a simpler way to get eligibility and claims information, which is now enhancing our members' overall experience."

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New features in the provider portal include pre-authorizations and claim appeals, with data appearing in near real time. This reflects the EBMS conviction that better data drives stronger payer-provider collaboration.

With real-time data, providers and their staff can track claims easily on a visual timeline. They can respond quickly to a pending denial and quickly upload whatever documentation is needed to support the claim.

Our plan members reap the benefits as well. They are more likely to receive timely care and less likely to face delays while waiting for coverage to be verified, or for a pre-authorization to come through.



"The provider portal is making a positive impact on our members' healthcare journey," Vaskey says.

The miBenefits portal was at the heart of the EBMS technology upgrade last year. It is a versatile tool that serves up personalized data to all of our stakeholders, according to their different roles. Plan sponsors, members, brokers, and now providers all use our portal for a more streamlined, efficient benefit journey.

The provider portal is especially flexible. It has functions that support all types of providers, from family practitioners to medical specialists and dental health providers. It is used by front-office staff who interact with patients, as well as back-office staff and billing agencies that submit claims.

TRENDS

For the second year in a row, the analysts at Deloitte have identified telemedicine as a current trend that is shaping the future of healthcare. Also known as virtual visits, telemedicine is a method of providing clinical care from a distance, through the use of telecommunications and information technologies.

Deloitte's recently released report, *2019 Global Health Care Outlook: Shaping the Future*, talked about the imperative to use new care delivery models in ways that improve access to and affordability of care. Telemedicine does just that. It offers the industry a means toward sustainability under value-based care models, by providing the right level of care at the right time.

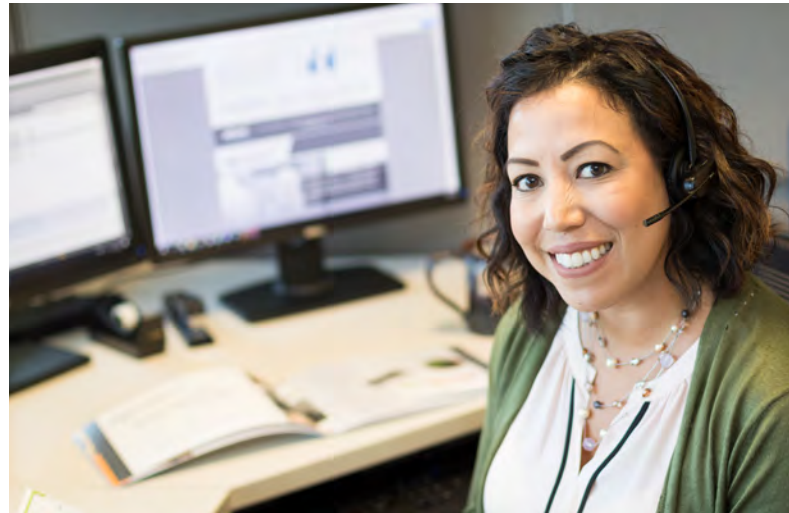
A Deloitte survey found that both healthcare consumers and physicians agree on the benefits of virtual care.

- From the provider's perspective, 66 percent said the top benefit is improved patient access.
- The majority of consumers (64 percent) rated convenience and access as top reasons for using telemedicine.
- Over half (57 percent) of the consumers who had never used telemedicine said they were willing to try it in the future.

At EBMS, we'd like to add our own voice to this important discussion. As a third-party administrator of self-funded plans, the need to develop new care delivery models is not only clear to us, it is part of our mission. That's why we've partnered with WellVia to offer a dynamic telehealth solution.

"Our members are extremely satisfied with WellVia," says Dr. Andrew Murray, chief medical officer at EBMS. "And our plan sponsors find it boosts plan performance in several important ways – like reducing unnecessary ER visits, and supporting members who are self-managing a chronic condition."

Telemedicine Bridges the Gap for Patients and Providers



Our WellVia Success Story

In 2018, our employer groups had fantastic results with our WellVia solution! The average response time for a member to speak with a doctor was less than 10 minutes. And the savings realized by plan sponsors and members was over \$80,000.

Even better, we're on track to exceed those results in 2019. With a growing number of members using our telehealth solution, we project that savings will pass the \$1million mark by year's end. We constantly solicit feedback on our solutions, and WellVia has a customer satisfaction rating of over 96 percent.

Is WellVia Right for You?

If you are self-funding an employee benefit plan, there is very little downside to offering telehealth services. The key is to educate your members about how and when they might benefit from a virtual visit – so they actually use the service.

However, we suggest using the data analytics and reporting capabilities within our miInsights solution to support decision-making. These tools will give you a clear picture of your member population and plan performance, and allow you to compare your statistics to national benchmarks. Once you identify trends, you may be able to improve care quality and better contain costs by adding WellVia to your plan. Get started by talking to your account manager today!

NEWS & NOTES

We scored a huge success with our school-supply drive and backpack giveaway!

Our EBMS culture has always included giving back to our community – and our latest community initiative is one of the most rewarding yet!

Thanks to the generosity of our donors and a commitment from EBMS volunteers, many Montana students received a colorful backpack full of new school supplies. The Public Education Health Trust in Alaska also received stuffed backpacks. And we didn't forget about the teachers, either! Educators got boxes of supplies to use in their classrooms as they kicked off the new school year.

The idea for the backpack drive came from EBMS CEO James Vertino, who led similar corporate-sponsored drives at other companies prior to joining EBMS. A group of EBMS employees banded together as The Backpack Leaders to set up teams within various departments. The teams coordinated donation and fundraising activities, put up posters and met weekly to brainstorm new ways to get the word out and inspire others to donate.



Throughout the six-week campaign, staff motivation remained high, boosted by internal emails and social media messages. A small mountain of school supplies grew steadily within our EBMS corporate office in West Billings. Some of our partners and vendors also participated in collecting supplies – including Kinetic Marketing & Creative and Entre Technology Services, both in Billings; and Healthx, in Indianapolis.

And the results speak for themselves! At the end of the drive, backpacks and supplies were delivered to school district leaders for distribution. An early thank-you note from a school administrator in Alaska read: Please express our gratitude and appreciation to EBMS. The backpacks are beautiful and the supplies will be well used. I can't wait to let our students pick out their new backpacks!

Will we do this again? Absolutely! After all, we're in the business of improving lives – and education is one of the social determinants of health. Supporting our local schools and students is a terrific way to help build healthy communities. We hope to continue this drive for many years to come.

“ When I was growing up, the youngest of eight kids, the start of the school year was always an exciting time. I watched my mother organize and shop every year, and then went through it myself, along with my wife, for our own two boys. I know firsthand that preparing for back-to-school is both costly and a bit nerve-wracking! I'm proud that EBMS can support students and parents through our school-supply drive. ”

-James Vertino, EBMS

NEWS & NOTES

In case you missed it: Our 26th Annual Health & Business Symposium, recapped



We laughed, we networked and we had some fun in the Montana sun! Our 2019 Health & Business Symposium took place July 23-25, which seems like such a long time ago, now that the leaves are changing colors and fall is here. But whether you were in attendance, or whether you missed it, here's a quick recap of what took place.

This year's plan for speakers was to have one from within EBMS, one from inside the healthcare industry and one from outside the healthcare industry. This dynamic mix included these presentations:

- **Cutting the Gordian Knot: Finding True Balance in Self-Funding**

Presented by Dr. Andrew Murray, chief medical officer for EBMS and president of its miCare and miRx healthcare solutions.

Dr. Murray held the audience's attention with his vision for a better healthcare system, and why those improvements can – and should – start with self-funded plans.

- **Uses of Geography in Business: Creepy and Cool**

Presented by Bill Lazarus, CEO of Seer Analytics

Bill spoke on a topic that's close to our heart at EBMS: innovative ways to apply advanced data analytics. In this case, his focus was on the use of geospatial tools to reach targeted audiences in respectful, HIPAA-compliant ways.

- **Creative Pharmacy Benefits Can Bring Solutions**

Presented by Danny Toth, pharmacist, former pharmacy benefit manager CEO, and past president of the Georgia Pharmaceutical Association.

Danny presented four solid strategies for saving money on pharmacy benefits, reminding the audience that we have options.

- **Work, Laugh, Repeat**

Presented by Greg Schwem, best-selling author and nationally syndicated humor columnist for the Chicago Tribune.

Greg gave us a comedic take on the workplace, today's technology and the struggle to find work/life balance.

As always, the Symposium allowed us all to renew old relationships with industry colleagues and make new networking connections. We mingled and chatted at the opening reception at the Moss Mansion and dinner at the Petroleum Club. And we spent some time in the great outdoors – this is Montana, after all! – through the annual golf tournament and a whitewater rafting adventure.

If you went home from Symposium feeling refreshed and renewed, perhaps take a moment to remember what inspired you and find a way to recapture that feeling. And of course, we'll do it again next summer – see you then!



2075 Overland Ave. | Billings, MT 59102
Phone (406) 245-3575 | Toll Free 800-777-3575 | Fax (406) 652-5380

ebms.com

