

# Population Health NEWS

## Delivering Quality Care for People With Diabetes

by Glen Stettin, M.D.

**C**ommercially insured people who were adherent to their oral diabetes medications experienced 235 fewer emergency room (ER) visits and 50 fewer inpatient hospitalizations per 1,000 patients. They also spent nearly \$500 less on total healthcare costs—compared to non-adherent patients—potentially avoiding more than \$210 million in healthcare spending in 2016, according to Express Scripts' *Diabetes Dilemma: U.S. Trends in Diabetes Medication Use* report.<sup>1</sup>

Diabetes is one of the most costly and concerning conditions for employers and plan sponsors. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that more than 30 million Americans have diabetes, with another 84 million having elevated blood sugar, putting them on the cusp of type 2 diabetes. All told, roughly one out of every three people in the United States has the potential to need treatment for diabetes.<sup>2</sup>

While insulin and non-insulin medications are extremely effective in controlling blood glucose for people with diabetes, they are only one component of the treatment equation. Behavior modification, diet control and exercise are also important parts of an effective diabetes control plan.

*Diabetes Dilemma: U.S. Trends in Diabetes Medication Use* examines diabetes medication use among 1.4 million commercially insured members to identify what's working and where there might be room for improvement in outcomes and in reducing costs.

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## Small Businesses Keep Pace With Nationwide Health Trends

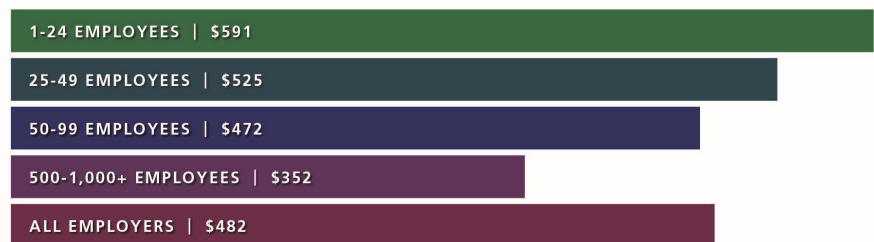
(This article and its information have been adapted from the United Benefits Advisor Health Plan Survey).

**C**onventional wisdom says small businesses in the United States don't offer competitive healthcare benefits compared to larger employers. On the contrary, employers with 500 to 1,000 or more employees may indeed offer better coverage—lower copayments; deductibles; in-network, out-of-pocket maximums; and monthly premiums—according to the United Benefit Advisors (UBA) Health Plan Survey.<sup>1</sup>

### AVERAGE SINGLE MONTHLY PREMIUM



### AVERAGE FAMILY MONTHLY PREMIUM



When compared to all employers nationwide, small businesses are keeping up with average benefits—at much lower costs—despite having a reputation for not offering health insurance benefits that are competitive with larger employers.

"While employers with 500 to 1,000 or more employees may indeed offer better coverage, small employers have a lot to offer employees when it comes to wages, purpose and flexibility," says Peter Weber, president of UBA.

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