



A Message from the President of the National Business Group on Health

The National Business Group on Health is pleased to announce the publication of *Investing in Maternal and Child Health: An Employer's Toolkit*. Developed by Business Group members and national experts in pediatrics and primary care, *Investing in Maternal and Child Health* provides concrete recommendations on employer-sponsored health benefits and related programs for children, adolescents, and pregnant women.

Every child born is not only precious to his or her family, but is also a future citizen, employee, and taxpayer. So, to put in economic terms, their health is important for the future of our country, the economy, and our standard of living. The health of children and families directly impacts employers' healthcare costs and worker productivity. While we should care about children for their own sakes, we must care for them for our sakes as well.

Approximately 60% of children and 66% of pregnant women in the United States (48 million people) are covered by employer-sponsored benefits; and children, adolescents, and young adults typically comprise one-third of a large employer's beneficiary population. In fact, maternal and child healthcare services, like prenatal care and immunizations, account for \$1 out of every \$5 that a large employer spends on health care.

Employers who provide evidence-informed, high-value health benefits and innovative family-friendly work/life benefits can lower their healthcare costs, improve employee productivity, and reduce turnover. The enclosed toolkit presents 34 health, pharmacy, vision, and dental benefits specifically designed to meet the needs of children, adolescents, and pregnant women. It also provides recommendations and tools to help employers, healthcare consultants, and health plans develop an organizational maternal and child health strategy that will promote health and prevent disease and injuries. Other toolkit highlights include:

- The business case for investing in maternal and child health.
- Actuarially-driven cost-impact assessments for recommended benefits.
- A benchmarking crosswalk that links Maternal and Child Health Plan Benefit Model recommendations to current HEDIS® measures.
- Guidance for employers on effective health communication and beneficiary education.
- Education materials for beneficiaries about important maternal and child health topics.
- Employer case-studies.

In the current resource-constrained environment, employers should cover and promote the most essential health services. As such, employers should devote more resources to prevention and early intervention – the foundation of maternal and child health care. *Investing in Maternal and Child Health*, built upon sound evidence and large-employer-specific cost data, provides the information employers need to design health promoting and cost-effective medical benefits.

We have every reason in the world to invest in mothers and we should treat each newborn as a national treasure to be appropriately cared for to enjoy a long, healthy, happy, and productive life. It is in our interest as employers to do so to ensure a strong future workforce.

Helen Darling, President