



Business Group  
on Health

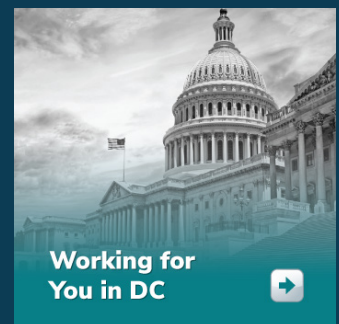
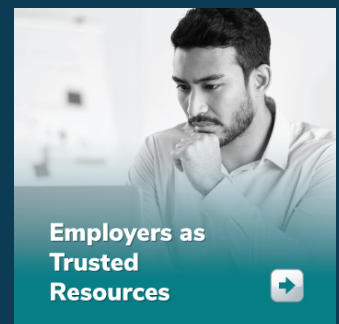
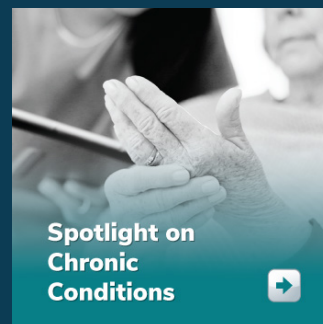
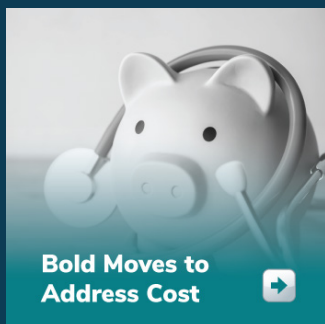
Driving Change Together

2025

YEAR IN  
REVIEW

For more than half a century, Business Group on Health has been a community of innovative employers and health industry leaders dedicated to finding solutions to the most critical health, well-being and workforce strategy issues. Over this past year, the challenges facing employers, employees and the industry overall have escalated. In response, we deepened our impact across an array of areas by leveraging the unique strength of our multistakeholder community, practical employer perspectives, comprehensive industry insights and far-reaching influence. As 2025 comes to a close, we are recapping key highlights and sharing representative examples of these expansive efforts.

The following are key focus areas of our convenings, content and thought leadership in 2025. For each section, we have included samples of what was produced throughout the year. For a comprehensive list of our resources and events, we encourage members to access our [Resource Library](#) and [Learning and Event hub](#) – our one-stop-shop for live webinars and on-demand content.





## Bold Moves to Address Costs

Employers explored and made bold moves to manage ongoing cost challenges across the health and pharmacy benefits landscape.

Results from our 2026 *Employer Health Care Strategy Survey* projected health care costs to rise 9% in 2026 – which on a compounded rate, is a total increase of 62% since 2017. As health care cost trends continue to soar year over year, the urgency for employers to explore bold and transformative strategies is high.

During our 2025 Annual Conference and in many of our in-person and virtual forums and committee meetings throughout the year, employers shared how they are raising the bar on addressing rising health care costs; by adopting innovative models, demanding greater transparency and accountability and collaborating with their partners on actionable solutions. Many looked to alternatives to traditional health benefit design, with the goal of higher quality and improved affordability through new models.

We addressed employer concerns by providing information and ideas on how to move forward with cost-saving measures. By offering these resources and opportunities, we led and supported employers as they navigated this challenging landscape:

### READ

**Driving Value through Alternative Health Plan Strategies: Considerations for Employers.** As the landscape of health plan options becomes more diverse, and cost pressures rise, employers are turning to new plan options and benefit designs to enhance their efforts to deliver greater value in their health care offerings.

### KEY INSIGHT

In an **employer-to-employer sharing call**, we brought together HR/benefit leaders to discuss challenges and opportunities with alternative health plan approaches. In another **employer-to-employer sharing call**, members discussed the impact of rising health care costs on the scope and focus of well-being leaders' work and benefit offerings.

### READ

**Prior Authorization: Benefits, Burdens, and Bold Ideas for Improvement.** Prior authorization (PA) has long been a tool to assess appropriateness and drive utilization management. Understanding the challenges (and opportunities) PA presents for different stakeholders across the industry can lead to improved efficiency while helping employers remain steadfast to quality, cost and member experience goals.

### READ

**Solving the Health Care Trend and Pharmacy Cost Crises.** Employers are implementing new strategies for managing rising health care and pharmacy costs through bold, transparent and sustainable solutions.

 SELECT CONVENING

During gatherings of our **Cost & Delivery Institute** and **Value Purchasing Committee**, participants spent considerable time discussing impactful and proven strategies to improve care quality, effectively use data to measure outcomes and drive value in the benefit offerings.

 READ

**Taking Action on Health Care Costs: A Business Group on Health Viewpoint.** In this viewpoint, we provided insights and actionable ideas for employers managing short-term trend increases and driving long-term value.

 SELECT CONVENING

The **Evidence-based Benefit Design Committee** explored the growing scope and flexibilities of centers of excellence (COEs). The committee delved into the evidence-based criteria employers should consider when evaluating a COE network, discussed health plan and third-party vendor approaches, compared methodologies to calculate savings and provided guidance on driving utilization and ensuring a quality member experience.





## Pharmacy Cost and Innovation

Employers called for transparency and alternative approaches to manage complex and costly pharmacy benefit challenges.

The level and pace of pharmacy cost increases in 2025 compelled employers to deeply understand the drivers of costs and how they can react quickly and strategically. According to our 2026 Employer Health Care Strategy Survey, 95% of employers are concerned about pharmacy costs. The increasing utilization of GLP-1s to treat obesity, an influx of late-stage cancers needing more aggressive treatment protocols and the pipeline of high-cost cell- and gene-based therapies have been relatively new contributors to mounting pharmacy costs.

To assist employers as they grapple with the complexity of rising pharmacy costs and contracting challenges, as well as evaluate new solutions, we provided support through our various resources and insights:

### READ

**Taking Action on Pharmacy Benefits. A Business Group on Health Viewpoint.** In this viewpoint, we shared insights on the drivers of rising pharmacy costs, as well as provided actions employers can take.

### KEY INSIGHT

In an **employer-to-employer sharing call**, employers discussed their ability to control GLP-1 spend and overall trade-offs between contractual guarantees, formulary control and rebates.

### READ

**Evolving and Alternative Pharmacy Benefit Management Models: Exploring the Broader Array of Employer Choices.** As employers seek improvements in pharmacy cost, transparency

and member experience, they may be more willing to disrupt the traditional pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) model and embrace innovation.

### READ

**Rethinking Prescription Drug Rebates: Moving Toward Transparent Pricing.** A comprehensive look into prescription drug rebates and their unintended consequences, along with an evaluation of their impact on price and formulary decisions.

### READ

**New GLP-1 Most Favored Nation Pricing Deal Raises Questions for Employers.** An analysis of the “Most Favored Nation” agreement on costs for GLP-1 injectables and forthcoming oral formularies.

 SELECT CONVENING

Our **Pharmacy Benefit Committee** took a deep dive into how employers can unlock the savings potential of biosimilars at an accelerated pace. Employers also learned about pros and cons of new drug pricing models and evolving pharmacy RFP and audit strategies.

 WATCH

We tackled challenging pharmacy issues in two interactive discussions with industry experts – one event uncovered strategies to manage costs and utilization of **GLP-1s** and the other **explored bold moves** in pharmacy benefit management.



## Spotlight on Chronic Conditions

Rising chronic condition needs and health care cost pressures around the globe underscored the importance of high-quality treatment and regular preventive care and screenings.

Employers continued to emphasize high-quality care as a way to address conditions driving costs. Many focused on prevention and investing in primary care, quality networks, using value-based design and partnering with clinical solutions rooted in evidence, paired with proven outcomes.

According to the 2026 Employer Health Care Strategy Survey, cancer, musculoskeletal (MSK) conditions, cardiac conditions, diabetes and mental health were employers' top five cost drivers in 2025. In addition to investing in higher quality treatment, employers didn't lose sight of ways to prevent chronic conditions as an upstream approach to mitigate rising health care costs tied to modifiable risk factors. Throughout the year, we highlighted approaches to address specific conditions through select resources and events:

### READ

**Taking Action on Cancer: A Business Group on Health Viewpoint.** In this viewpoint, we shared a strategic overview of the cancer care landscape, including emerging trends, considerations and actions for employers.

### READ

**Taking Action on Primary Care: A Business Group on Health Viewpoint.** This viewpoint highlighted the role of effective primary care models in prevention, chronic condition management and mental health, with actions for employers and industry partners to consider.

### KEY INSIGHT

In an **employer-to-employer sharing call**, we brought together employers to share their mental health priorities for 2026 and to discuss strategic approaches for sustaining support despite rising costs.

### SELECT CONVENING

The focus on chronic conditions was a recurring topic during the Asia Pacific, India and EMEA **regional meetings** convened in 2025. Employers and their partners discussed how to support employees amid the growing prevalence of chronic conditions such as obesity and cancer. Convenings such as these also surfaced ideas for tailoring benefits to meet the specific health needs of women across different regions and cultural expectations.

### WATCH

In a **webinar** focused on MSK conditions, we heard an employer case study on a comprehensive approach for MSK support, including offering hybrid care along with a preventive care program and physician-led support, to enhance workforce well-being, improve engagement and reduce costs.

 READ**Exploring Innovation in Preventive Care.**

We took a fresh look at screening guidelines and testing methods that assist employers in managing rising costs, improving compliance and reducing barriers to access.

 SELECT CONVENING

The **Evidence-based Benefit Design Committee** discussed rising cancer rates among the younger population and showcased evidence-based approaches specifically highlighting lifestyle changes and the elimination of known risk factors to promote long-term health.

 KEY INSIGHT

Another **employer-to-employer sharing call** provided an opportunity for HR/benefit leaders to share how they're evaluating and implementing weight management strategies as part of broader efforts to balance costs, provide long-term value and grant employees access to popular GLP-1 medications.





## Employers as Trusted Resources

The role of employers has evolved alongside broader industry trends.

Now more than ever, employers have had to adapt their health and well-being approaches to reflect ongoing market changes, macroeconomic uncertainty, fast-growing technological innovation, historic cost increases and employee confusion regarding select public health matters. Employers felt the pressure from internal business leaders and employees to provide access to affordable, high-quality health care, support well-being needs and find ways to help during crises, many of which were driven by weather-related events. In addition, employers are increasingly relied on to provide guidance on a variety of health and well-being topics; for example, conflicting messages and guidance on recommended screenings, vaccinations and treatments.

As employers navigated these external and internal dynamics, we addressed the many ways that the scope of the employer role has widened in the following resources:

### READ

**Employer Strategies to Support Employee Well-being During Emergencies and Disasters.** In this article, we asked employers to share their approaches to supporting employees during crises. A complementary **survey** was also conducted.

### SELECT CONVENING

In our **Global Institute**, we examined approaches for quantifying climate risk given the increasing frequency and severity of climate-related events and their impact on workforce health, safety and productivity. We explored how employers can support employee well-being in climate emergencies and how data can be used to proactively prepare for and mitigate climate-related risks and prioritize areas of focus.

### READ

**On-Site and Near-Site Clinics: Maximizing Value as Needs Evolve.** As employee health and well-being needs evolve and gaps in access to care increase, employers explored on-site and near-site clinics as an increasingly powerful tool in their benefits portfolio. We also held an **employer-to-employer sharing call**, which gave a platform for companies to share their on-site strategies.

### SELECT CONVENING

At the **Leadership Forum on Employee Experience**, we focused on the role employers play in communicating in an era of mistrust and misinformation. Experts presented how employers can communicate about top-of-mind public health issues, including examples in action, pitfalls to avoid and contributors to success.

 READ

**Expert Tips to Transform Your Health and Well-being Communications Strategy.** Elevate your health and well-being communications strategy with research-backed tips and real-world employer examples.



## Heightened Expectations of Vendor Partners

Employers increased their expectations for vendors, pushing for greater integration and increased accountability.



As cost pressures rose and workforce needs became more complex, employers pressed vendor partners to show proof of measurable impact, demonstrate integrative connection points to other vendors and make contracting terms more transparent. Rethinking and optimizing vendor partnerships was a prominent topic again in 2025, as employers pushed vendors to demonstrate their value. This focus reflects a continued evolution from transactional relationships to more strategic partnerships based on delivering value to both the employee and the organization. Throughout the year, we highlighted employer strategies related to vendor management and accountability through select resources and events:

### KEY INSIGHT

**2025 Annual Conference.** Rethinking and optimizing vendor partnerships was a prominent topic at the 2025 Annual Conference. Employers and industry partners talked about the need to better leverage data to support the value of programs and solutions.

### READ

**Reimagining Vendor Relationships: New Approaches and Strategies.** In a rapidly evolving and increasingly complex industry, employers are elevating their expectations to find new ways to hold their vendor partners more accountable for health outcomes and cost management.

### KEY INSIGHT

In an **employer-to-employer sharing call**, we provided a platform for members to share their approaches for integrating and operationalizing data from across their benefit ecosystems.

### READ

**Holding Vendors Accountable for Results and Assessing the Impact of Program Interventions.** As health care trends reach new highs worldwide, employers are increasingly looking to their partners to deliver measurable results. Specific actions may be needed to increase vendor accountability for cost, quality and outcomes and enhance collaboration among employers and their partners.

### READ

**Solving the Lost In-network Challenge.** As clinical “point solutions” have become integral components of employers’ strategies, integration with health plan partners is essential. Offering them via the health plan network eases the contracting and administrative burden – and should theoretically improve clinical and data integration - however, their visibility and inclusion within the network may not be well known, potentially diluting their value. This article outlined ways employers must press their partners to solve this challenge.

**WATCH**

**Thought Leadership Series: Vendor Accountability.** This installment of our Thought Leadership Series explored how employers can use data and contract transparency to hold vendor partners accountable, foster collaboration and define clear metrics for success.

**KEY INSIGHT**

In our **Health Innovations Forum**, we discussed the application of third-party validation for vendor accountability to support employers through the difficult decision-making of whether to implement and maintain vendor relationships while continuing to strive to achieve the greatest programmatic value.

**READ**

**Artificial Intelligence in Health Care and Employee Benefits: What Employers Need to Know.** Use of AI presents opportunities and risks for employers and their vendor partners looking to drive innovative health and well-being strategies.

**READ**

**Innovation Showcase Recap: Leveraging Data to Drive Benefits Strategy.** This Innovation Showcase recap detailed how employers are using data-driven strategies to inform benefits, manage costs and improve employee well-being.

**WATCH**

**Innovation Showcase: AI in Action.** This Innovation Showcase episode highlighted how advanced analytics and AI are reshaping employer approaches to health benefits.





## Investing in Holistic Well-being

Employers have continued to deepen their focus on well-being while deploying a healthy scrutiny of existing programs.

Despite economic headwinds, employers maintained – and in some cases – deepened their commitment to employee well-being in 2025. This commitment was made to not only improve and maintain employee health, but also to impact business outcomes. Findings from our 2025 Employer Well-being Strategy Survey revealed that nearly all employers include physical well-being, mental health and financial well-being in their overall strategy. Moreover, some are looking to expand their strategy to include areas such as social determinants of health (SDOH) and family support. Despite this expansion in thinking, employers continue to evaluate the impact of their well-being initiatives through data analytics. Companies brought data to life by using well-being dashboards, which facilitated meaningful conversations with leadership on the value of their investments in well-being.

### READ

#### **2025 Employer Well-being Strategy Survey.**

This report provided detailed findings on how employers are implementing well-being strategies in 2025 and how that will change in the future.

### READ

**Taking Action on Well-being: A Business Group Viewpoint.** In this viewpoint, we provided a strategic overview of the value of sustained employer investment in well-being.

### KEY INSIGHT

Our **Well-being & Workforce Strategy Institute** brought forward the latest research and trends, along with real-world strategies, for supporting both women's and men's health in the workplace, highlighting the unique needs of each population.

### READ

**Validating the Impact of Workforce Well-being.** Employers are evolving their approaches to validate and enhance employee well-being initiatives, linking measurable outcomes directly to business success.

### READ

**Best Employers Award: Excellence in Health & Well-being — How Winning Companies Ensure Workforces Get Well, Stay Well, Thrive.** We outlined the five foundational elements of a well-being strategy and how the *Best Employers Award: Excellence in Health & Well-being* winners set new standards in helping their workforces get well, stay well and thrive through holistic, innovative and measurable approaches.

 READ

**Strategies to Support Financial Well-being.** Explore why a comprehensive financial well-being strategy is essential for employers and how supporting employees' financial health can drive engagement, productivity and long-term organizational success.

 READ

**Family Benefits Bundle.** Discover how inclusive family benefits boost employee well-being, engagement and productivity in today's diverse workplace.

 KEY INSIGHT

During an **employer-to-employer sharing call**, attendees shared how their global leave policies support employee well-being holistically as well as efforts to expand data capabilities in this space.

 READ

**Understanding Pediatric Mental Health: The Crisis Facing Children, Adolescents and Young Adults.** The pediatric mental health crisis is reshaping family and workforce well-being. Explore how employers can strengthen benefits and policies to meet these evolving needs.

 READ

An **innovation showcase** detailed how employers can harness the power of nutrition to prevent disease, manage health care costs and support holistic employee well-being.



## Addressing Health and Well-being on a Global Scale

While U.S. health care costs are widely discussed and debated, multinational employers tackled the same issue through the lens of supporting growing health and well-being needs of a diverse, cross-cultural global workforce.



Results from our 2026 Employer Health Care Strategy Survey indicated that 75% of multinational employers are concerned about controlling health care costs outside the U.S. Employers shared that global costs are driven by cancer, musculoskeletal and cardiovascular disease. Rising health and well-being needs across their global populations, and the cost pressures that come with this, are further complicated by differing regional systems and diverse workforce needs. Employers redoubled efforts to promote culturally relevant and locally adaptable approaches to holistic well-being, as well as stronger personalization across life stages and regions. Members consistently elevated themes such as mental health, women's health across the life span, caregiver support and the ongoing challenge of striving for global consistency while honoring local market realities.

### READ

Our **2026 Employer Health Care Strategy Survey** provided further insight into health care costs globally, while our **2025 Employer Well-being Strategy Survey** outlined strategies for multinational employers to navigate global well-being design.

### SELECT CONVENING

At our EMEA, India and APAC **Regional Meetings**, we dug deeper into regional and country-level nuances, such as gender-specific health needs, caregiving burdens and cultural expectations, that inform global strategy and require tailored local implementation and communication.

### LISTEN

**Global Cancer Rates Are Rising: Address Regional Risk Factors to Reverse the Trend.** In this podcast episode, we discussed the soaring incidence of cancer globally, particularly in low- and middle-income countries, and shared how cultural factors, stigma and financial burdens can complicate the treatment journey.

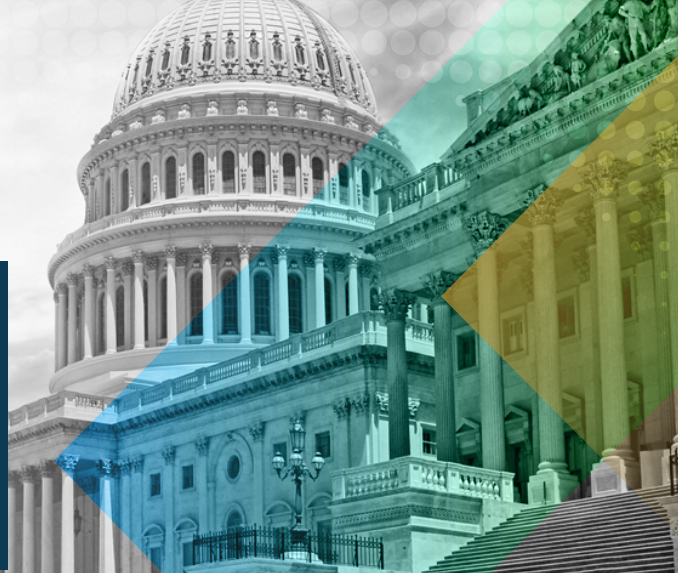
### READ

Our **Survey Results: Employer Strategies to Support Caregiving** showcased insights on how multinational organizations can support employees serving as caregivers.

### WATCH

In an **episode** of our Thought Leadership Series, we examined the business case for prioritizing women's health and employer strategies around the world, reinforcing the importance of culturally appropriate communication, resilience-building frameworks and benefits that evolve with workforce demographics.





## Working for You in DC

A wide range of public policy considerations have presented employers with new developments and ongoing challenges to consider.

In 2025, a new administration was sworn in, triggering a rapid succession of executive orders, regulatory action and policy changes. Throughout the year, we advocated to ensure that employers' priorities, such as prescription drug affordability, transparency and telehealth coverage, were fully understood during meetings with high-level officials and policymakers from the White House, executive branch departments and Capitol Hill. The Business Group brings perspective on key issues, including downstream implications for employers, to guide decision makers as they address these policy areas. Our work on these topics is also reflected in written communications to leaders in Washington.

Beyond bringing the employer voice to policy discussions, our in-house policy experts provided our members with regulatory, legislative and judicial updates to assist them with ensuring compliance amid the myriad of changing requirements. Through our regular public policy webinars as well as our policy alerts and newsletters, we provided timely insight into critical policy issues in light of the new administration and examined key policy areas affecting employers, such as potential risks to the tax-favored status of employer-sponsored health coverage. We also highlighted pertinent regulatory updates as well as government actions that carry potential implications for employer-sponsored health plans, including enhancements to health savings accounts (HSA). In addition to policy-specific events such as webinars, our policy team also actively engages with members through participation in our various Institute, Committee and Forum gatherings. Examples of our policy efforts include:

### READ

**Business Group and Coalition Urge Congress to Preserve Tax Status of Employer-Sponsored Coverage.** We urged Congress to preserve the tax-free status of employer coverage and reject proposals that would raise health costs for working families.

### READ

**Business Group on Health Submits Statement on Price Transparency and Pharmacy Benefit Manager Reforms.** In this statement, we explained the importance of transparency in combating high prescription drug costs.

### WATCH

Throughout the year, we held monthly public policy **webinars** to keep employers and industry partners informed on the latest regulatory, legislative and policy changes.

### READ

**Business Group on Health Comments on Proposed Rule Enhancing Coverage of Preventive Services Under ACA.** We emphasized the need to maintain flexibility for employer-sponsored health plans and called for balanced policies that allow employers to design tailored, effective health care benefits.

 READ

**Business Group Submits Comments in Support of H.R. 2958, “Balance the Scales Act.”** We voiced our support for legislation that would increase transparency into EBSA’s use of “common interest agreements.”

 KEY INSIGHT

Throughout the year, we were selected to take part in meetings with legislators (Senate and House staff, including Committees), regulators (HHS, DOL) and the executive branch (White House) on a variety of issues pertinent to employers.

 CONVENING

Regularly, our policy work includes contributing issue-area updates and discussion sessions during Institute, Committee and Forum meetings. Whether an informal “coffee talk” or a detailed dive into the latest developments in pharmaceutical supply chain reforms and initiatives, we worked to keep members informed and engaged with Federal policy impacting employer health and welfare programs.



## Power through Community

Our community of employers and industry partner members is unparalleled - diverse and far-reaching and connected by a passion for improving the health and well-being of the workforce. Through leadership and guidance to our members, we provided a wide array of opportunities for this community to learn, connect and collaborate in 2025:



**146**

Resources  
and Articles



**49**

Live and  
On-Demand Events



**27**

Institute/Committee/  
Forum Meetings



**17**

Podcast  
Episodes



**11**

Employer-to-Employer  
Sharing Calls



**64**

Policy Alerts  
and Resources



**700+**

2025 Annual  
Conference Attendees



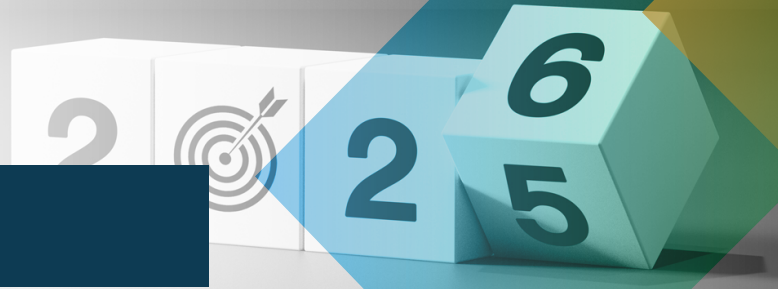
**144**

Attendees that convened  
across 4 events focused  
on non-U.S. topics



**700+**

Posts in the Employer  
Community



## Looking Ahead to 2026



**Register for the highly anticipated 2026 Annual Conference** [➔](#)



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