

Press Release



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Large Employers Combat Opioid Epidemic in Workplace

New paper shows steps Chief Human Resource Officers are taking to prevent and treat opioid abuse among employees and dependents

Washington, D.C. – Today, the American Health Policy Institute (AHPI) releases “[The Opioid Crisis: Thoughts from the CHRO Suite](#)” by AHPI Senior Fellow, Henry C. Eickelberg. President Donald Trump recently addressed the rapidly escalating epidemic of drug addiction in the US by declaring the opioid crisis a “public health emergency.” Coping with this troubling epidemic will require solutions from both the public and the private sector.

With the thought of private sector solutions in mind, in summer 2017, AHPI reached out to Chief Human Resources Officers (CHROs) and benefits professionals at some of the nation’s largest employers to get their feedback on perceptions of the opioid crisis and its effect on their organizations, employees and dependents. This paper distills some of their concerns about the epidemic, and their efforts to address it.

CHROs discuss taking steps to end the stigma associated with opioid dependency so that employees feel more comfortable seeking help. Most large employers utilize pre-employment drug screening in the hiring process to identify potential opioid abuse. Employers are also engaging with the health care provider community to advocate for prescription quantity control. In addition, health plan administrators and Pharmacy Benefit Managers (PBMs) are working closely together to identify and reach out to those who have been prescribed opioids for more than a given timeframe.

Mr. Eickelberg says, “59,000 Americans died from drug overdoses in 2016. In addition, in 2015, two million people had prescription opioid use disorder. Few people can say that they have not been directly touched by the opioid epidemic. In order to cut back opioid abuse, the private sector and public sector must work together to address the problem.”

To view the paper, please visit the following link: <http://bit.ly/2AcQpNK>

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American Health Policy Institute is a non-partisan non-profit think tank started by the HR Policy Foundation that examines the practical implications of health policy changes through the lens of the American large employer. The Institute looks at the challenges employers face in providing health care to their employees and recommends policy solutions to promote the provision of affordable, high-quality, employer-based health care. The Institute serves to provide thought leadership grounded in the practical experience of America's largest employers. The Institute's mission is to develop impactful strategies to ensure that those purchasing health care are able to not only bend the cost curve, but actually break it by keeping health care cost inflation in line with general inflation. To learn more, visit www.americanhealthpolicy.org.