36TH ANNUAL

HBCE®

Health Benefits Conference + Expo

February 2-3, 2027

Sawgrass Marriott | Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida

Preconference: February 1

Smarter Health Benefits Strategies for 2027 and Beyond



FULL AGENDA

www.HBCE.com

International Foundation® OF EMPLOYEE BENEFIT PLANS

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Smarter Health Benefits Strategies for 2027 and Beyond

The **Health Benefits Conference & Expo (HBCE)** is the go-to educational event for innovative, practical solutions that elevate your organization's health plans. Take a deep dive into dynamic educational sessions packed with actionable, timely insights to help you reduce costs, boost employee well-being, and stay ahead of the latest trends and topics. Whether you're managing a health plan or designing wellness and lifestyle programs to support the health of your workers, HBCE delivers the tools and inspiration you need.

Who Should Attend

Content at HBCE is designed for mid- to senior-level professionals from private and public sector employers, hospitals and health care systems, and universities in the following fields:

- Benefits and total rewards
- Employee health services
- Human resources including on-site/near-site clinics
- Occupational health and safety
- Wellness, health promotion and population health management
- Workers' compensation and absence management.

Why You Need to Join Us This February

1. A Robust Agenda

There are numerous facets of health benefits programs, which is why there are numerous topics and sessions to choose from at HBCE. The session topics presented touch on a large variety of subjects and issues your plan may face, all in the same conference!

2. Strong Peer Networking Opportunities

Beyond the expert presenters and case studies, HBCE is the best place to create a network of peers who are facing the same challenges as your organization and may have solutions that your organization has been looking for.

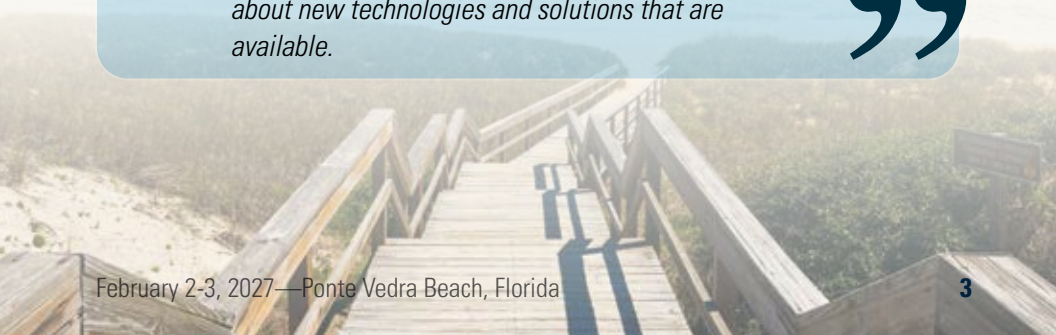
3. New Point Solutions

Take advantage of the exhibit hall and select sessions to hear directly from new and innovative service providers. Make connections to help you find solutions you can bring back home with you.

4. Continuing Education Credits

Earn continuing education (CE) credits while attending a conference that will provide you with answers to your organization's health benefits questions.

> *I have attended this conference for five or more years. I look forward to attending and recharging my enthusiasm for benefits and taking care of employees. The speakers are always wonderful and provide lots of ideas to try at your own organization. The opportunity to visit with benefit vendors and learn about new technologies and solutions that are available.*



SESSIONS AT A GLANCE

MONDAY | February 1, 2027		
8:00-11:30 a.m.		**MORNING PRECONFERENCE:** Health Care Plan Compliance Workshop
12:30-4:00 p.m.		**AFTERNOON PRECONFERENCE:** Optimizing Your Pharmacy Benefits Manager Partnership
TUESDAY | February 2, 2027		
8:00-9:15 a.m.		**OPENING SESSION:** The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Health Benefits
9:45-10:45 a.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* Reimagine Cancer Care With a Proactive, End-to-End Strategy
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Rethinking Benefits for the Next Generation
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	A Practical Playbook for Employers to Improve Outcomes and Reduce Health Care Costs
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Bending the Cost Curve: Employer Strategies for Prediabetes Prevention, Diabetes Management and Optimized GLP-1 Integration
11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* The Real Cost of GLP-1s: Why "ROI" Has to Include What Happens After Treatment Ends
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	I Sat in Your Seat: An HR Leader's Playbook for Fiduciary Governance
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	AI Benefit Litigation—How AI Use in Claims Determinations Could Expose Plans to Liability
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Recognize and Support Hidden Caregivers in Your Workplace
1:15-2:15 p.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* Why Every Self-Funded Employer Is Paying for Chronic Disease Twice
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	From Prevention to Progress: Building a Benefits Strategy for the Full Health Continuum
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Managing Rising Health Care Costs While Protecting Employee Access and Quality
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Now That Transparency Is Here: Turning PBM Insight Into a Smarter Pharmacy Pricing Strategy
2:45-3:45 p.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* Keeping Members Healthy While Protecting the Fund
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	People Power: Activating a Well-Being Champion Network to Increase Benefits Engagement
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Beyond Cost Shifting: Building Health and Welfare Solutions That Support Business Outcomes
	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	Beyond the PBM RFP: An Executive's Guide to Building a Modern Pharmacy Strategy

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*		
4:00-5:00 p.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* Inside the Strategy: How Benefits Leaders Are Approaching Comprehensive Obesity Care
		Leveraging AI in Benefits and Well-Being Communications
		Leave as a Leading Indicator: What Your Absence Data Is Telling You About Workforce Health—And What Clinical Oversight Can Do About It
		Overcoming Barriers to Care
WEDNESDAY | February 3, 2027		
8:00-9:00 a.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* Nine Proven Practices to Build and Scale Caregiver Support Programs
		Beyond Open Enrollment: Engaging Employees With Their Benefits All Year
		From Commercials to Claims: How Drug Advertising and Rebates Are Driving Employer Pharmacy Costs
		Whose Kid Is This? And Other Good Reasons to Conduct Dependent Eligibility Audits
9:30-10:30 a.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	*Solution Spotlight Session:* Preparing for the Next Wave of Cell and Gene Therapy: What Benefit Plan Leaders Need to Know
		Find the Hidden Dollars: Reducing Waste in Your Self-Funded Health Plan Without Reducing Benefits
		GLP-1 Coverage and ERISA Fiduciary Risk: What Plan Administrators Need to Know
10:45-11:45 a.m.	BREAKOUT SESSIONS	A Model for Reducing Catastrophic Surgical Claims
		How Workplace Interactions Shape Well-Being, Trust and Utilization
		How New Vision Benefits Impact Overall Health and Wellness
12:00 noon-1:00 p.m.		**CLOSING SESSION:** Advancements in Care—And the Stories Powering Them

(All times are listed in Eastern Time.)
Sessions subject to change. Breakfast and lunch will be provided.

Solutions Spotlight Sessions are breakout sessions that highlight an innovative and effective product or service, presented by the vendor representative.

REGISTER TODAY! www.HBCE.com

Arrive Early and Extend Your Learning

Register for one or both preconference sessions offered this February. Take a deep dive into solutions-focused education and leave with key takeaways you can apply to the obstacles you face in your role.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2027 | 8:00-11:30 a.m.

Health Care Plan Compliance Workshop

Facilitated by: **Rory Akers, JD**, and **Katy Gozalka, PhD, CEBS**

Recent legal and legislative changes have left plan stakeholders in a state of uncertainty. Plan sponsors must be prepared to adapt to ongoing changes in a tumultuous environment. This half-day, interactive workshop will include table activities and discussion, and will:

- Identify recent changes to government agencies
- Interpret how these changes impact existing programs
- Review the potential impact on your plan and its participants
- Explain compliance with MHPAEA, No Surprises Act, ACA, COBRA and more
- Develop practical action plans and next steps for plan sponsors, administrators and other stakeholders.

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 2027 | 12:30-4:00 p.m.

Optimizing Your Pharmacy Benefits Manager Partnership

Facilitated by: **Asha Chikani** and **Eric Cionka**

Pharmaceutical costs impact both your health plan's bottom line and the well-being of your members. This interactive session goes beyond basic Pharmacy Benefit Manager (PBM) strategies, uncovering what you need to know to deliver a high-value plan, and will help you:

- Demystify the complex role PBMs play in the health care ecosystem
- Evaluate the impact of pharmacy networks and emerging "cost-plus" trends
- Learn how to be effective when negotiating your PBM contract to lower costs without sacrificing member access
- Take actionable steps to maximize your PBM partnership
- Explore industry shifts on the horizon to future-proof your pharmacy benefit strategy.

The Opening Session You Can't Afford to Miss

The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Health Benefits



Featuring:

Michael Stoyanovich, MPA, CDPSE
Vice President and Senior Consultant,
Administration and Technology Consulting
Segal

Artificial intelligence is no longer a future concept; it is actively reshaping how health programs are designed, managed and optimized. For plan sponsors and benefits leaders, this brings both opportunities and obligations. This keynote explores various impacts of AI, including cybersecurity risks, shifting fiduciary duties and necessary governance. Attend this session to learn how AI can positively transform the area of health benefits within your organization.

Closing the Conference With Takeaways to Bring Home

Advancements in Care—And the Stories Powering Them



Featuring:

Tyler Amell, PhD, MSc, BSc
Chief Health and Strategy Officer
MediKeeper, Inc.

Health headlines continue to focus on negative trends, telling a story of increasing costs and decreasing levels of quality. At the same time, the evolution of medical and technological advances is rapidly improving health care. This closing keynote explores a modern take on patient care, from gene therapies and AI diagnostics to wearable technology and 3D printing. Discover how these cutting-edge advancements are impacting benefit plans, shifting disease trends, altering patient behavior and rewriting the human stories behind the statistics.

PROGRAM SCHEDULE

(All times are listed in Eastern Time.)

MONDAY | February 1, 2027

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Registration/Information

4:00-6:00 p.m.

Welcome Reception in Exhibit Hall

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027

7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Registration/Information

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast in Exhibit Hall

7:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

Exhibits Open

8:00-9:15 a.m.

Opening Session:
The Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Health Benefits

Artificial Intelligence is no longer a future concept; it is actively reshaping how health programs are designed, managed and optimized. For plan sponsors and benefits leaders, this brings both opportunities and obligations. This keynote explores various impacts of AI, including cybersecurity risks, shifting fiduciary duties and necessary governance. This session will also explain how AI can positively transform the area of health benefits within your organization.

Speaker: **Michael Stoyanovich, MPA, CDPSE**, Segal

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

9:15-9:45 a.m.

Networking and Refreshment Break in Exhibit Hall

9:45-10:45 a.m. | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session:
Reimagine Cancer Care With a Proactive, End-to-End Strategy

In this session, learn how an employer and their cancer benefit partner implemented a proactive, end-to-end cancer care strategy designed to improve access, accelerate follow-up and deliver direct clinical support across the full cancer journey. Attendees will learn how the organization achieved quick and meaningful results across various population demographics in only the first two months of partnership, including 11.25% enrollment, a 14% increase in screening adherence and closure of 56% of identified screening gaps. Speakers will also share how an integrated cancer care model can drive measurable outcomes beyond early detection, including improvements in treatment, survivorship care, employee experience and overall ROI.

Sponsored by: color

Speakers: **Heather Morgan, PHR**, Citadel Federal Credit Union
Stephanie Ventrella, Color

Rethinking Benefits for the Next Generation

As health care costs continue to rise, employers face the challenge of managing expenses while meeting the changing needs and expectations of a multigenerational workforce. Different generations have different priorities, shaped by their life stages, financial pressures and experiences. From mental health and financial well-being to flexibility, student debt, retirement security and work-life balance, understanding what employees value—and why—is essential to designing competitive benefits programs.

Through practical examples and employer case studies, this session will explore how organizations can balance rising health care costs, high-cost claims and specialty drug expenses with innovative, data-driven benefits strategies. Participants will also examine key regulatory considerations, including ERISA, HIPAA, GINA and mental health parity, to help ensure programs are both effective and compliant.

Speaker: **Michelle Jolivet, PHR**, HR-Inclusion

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

9:45-10:45 a.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

A Practical Playbook for Employers to Improve Outcomes and Reduce Health Care Costs

Many employers have access to Centers of Excellence, but fragmented care, inconsistent navigation and disconnected provider decisions can limit their impact. This session provides a practical framework for aligning high-value provider selection, patient navigation, benefit design and outcomes measurement to create a more connected care journey. Attendees will gain actionable tools to build their own Centers of Excellence strategy or evaluate potential partners.

Speaker: **Dana Baker, MBA**, Mayo Clinic

Bending the Cost Curve: Employer Strategies for Prediabetes Prevention, Diabetes Management and Optimized GLP-1 Integration

Diabetes and prediabetes are a claims, pharmacy and productivity challenge for every employer-sponsored plan. This session helps benefits leaders quantify those costs, evaluate prevention programs like the National Diabetes Prevention Program and build GLP-1 coverage that pairs clinical criteria with lifestyle support. Attendees will leave with a clearer business case and practical plan-design actions to lower claims and strengthen workforce health.

Speaker: **Lana M. Saal, EdD, NBC-HWC, CWP, MCHES**, The VitHealthity Group



TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session: **The Real Cost of GLP-1s: Why "ROI" Has to Include What Happens After Treatment Ends**

Most employers have moved past the question of whether to cover GLP-1s. The harder, less-discussed question is what "return" actually means for a benefit like this, and most ROI conversations stop at the price tag. A program's true cost-effectiveness depends as much on what happens after someone starts—or stops—treatment as on the sticker price. Drawing on metabolic health ROI research, this session unpacks two often-overlooked variables: the shape of the cost curve over time (not just launch pricing), and the durability of outcomes once medication use ends. Attendees will leave with a more complete ROI lens and a set of questions to bring back to their own program's measurement plan.

Sponsored by: NOOM HEALTH

Speaker: **Elizabeth Entin, MPH, RD**, Noom Health

I Sat in Your Seat: An HR Leader's Playbook for Fiduciary Governance

Most fiduciary education is led by brokers and attorneys who have never sat in the HR seat. In this session, learn from a 25+ year global benefits executive who carried the weight of decisions that affected tens of thousands of employees. This session moves past legal theory and into the real work of building a governance process, running a benefits committee that holds up under scrutiny, and holding vendors and advisors accountable for the outcomes they promised. Attendees will leave with a practical governance checklist, a vendor scorecard and an HR fiduciary question bank they can put to work immediately.

Speaker: **Maria Fraga**, Ethos Benefits



TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

11:00 a.m.-12:00 noon | *breakout sessions (continued)*

AI Benefit Litigation—How AI Use in Claims Determinations Could Expose Plans to Liability

This session explores the litigation risks of using AI in benefit claim determinations. Drawing on recent cases involving Cigna, UnitedHealth Group and Humana, attendees will explore how AI-assisted decisions can lead to fiduciary breach allegations and the crucial role of human review in claims processes and plan documents.

Speaker: **Grant Piechocinski, JD**, Arnold and Kadjan, LLP

Recognize and Support Hidden Caregivers in Your Workplace

Many employees support a loved one without ever calling themselves caregivers, yet they face higher rates of depression, chronic disease, absenteeism and turnover. This session helps plan sponsors identify hidden caregivers, find benefit design and communication gaps, and build a coordinated response across leave, EAP, disease management, financial wellness and community resources to support caregivers before burnout drives them out.

Speakers: **Harriet Redman, MSEd**, Wisconsin Family and Caregiver Support Alliance
Kristin Voss, The Center for Caregiver Serenity Inc.

12:00 noon-1:15 p.m.

Lunch

Register online at www.HBCE.com

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

1:15-2:15 p.m. | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session: **Why Every Self-Funded Employer Is Paying for Chronic Disease Twice**

Most self-funded employers believe they are paying to manage chronic disease, but they are paying twice; once for ongoing management through medications, specialists and monitoring, and again for the preventable complications that follow when root causes go unaddressed. Dr. Erica Armstrong will break down the hidden cost structure behind employer health care spending, showing how metabolic, musculoskeletal, autoimmune and hormonal conditions compound costs across medical claims, pharmacy and lost productivity. Attendees will leave with a framework for evaluating root-cause care models that address disease drivers at employer scale and reduce long-term costs.

Sponsored by: root

Speaker: **Erica Armstrong, MD, IFMCP**, Root Functional Medicine

From Prevention to Progress: Building a Benefits Strategy for the Full Health Continuum

Rising health care costs, increasing chronic and multichronic disease prevalence, and gaps in preventive care are creating growing challenges for employers and their workforces. A sustainable benefits strategy requires moving beyond reactive care to a more integrated approach that supports employees across the full health continuum—from prevention and early risk identification to condition management and targeted clinical intervention.

This session explores how organizations can combine broad population health strategies with focused, evidence-informed interventions to promote whole-person well-being, identify health risks earlier, improve outcomes and address the clinical drivers of avoidable health care spending. Attendees will gain practical insights into building a strategy that balances population-wide impact with targeted support for individuals and conditions driving the greatest health and cost burden.

Speakers: **Christine Muldoon, MBA**, WebMD Health Services
Erin Seaverson, MPH, WebMD Health Services

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

1:15-2:15 p.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

Managing Rising Health Care Costs While Protecting Employee Access and Quality

Rising health care costs are placing increasing strain on both organizations and the workforce. Drawing on the latest research, this session examines how benefit leaders can address these challenges through thoughtful plan design strategies that balance cost management with employee needs and outcomes.

Speaker: **Benjamin Isgur, FACHE**, Fidelity Investments

Now That Transparency Is Here: Turning PBM Insight Into a Smarter Pharmacy Pricing Strategy

Drug pricing transparency is here. Now what? Learn how to put it to work, including the questions to ask your PBM about pricing, fees and incentives. Look beyond rebates and discounts to a strategic, holistic approach to lowering pharmacy costs, building financial predictability for plans and affordability for members.

Speaker: **Nick Taylor, RPh**, CVS Health

2:15-2:45 p.m.

Networking and Refreshment Break in the Exhibit Hall

2:45-3:45 p.m. | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session: Keeping Members Healthy While Protecting the Fund

Health care has become increasingly difficult for members to navigate. Delayed care, unnecessary ER visits, fragmented treatment and confusion over benefits can increase costs while frustrating members. Learn how integrated case management, disease management, utilization management and concierge services help members receive the right care at the right time while improving fund performance.

Sponsored by: MedWatch
Empowering People. Improving Lives.

Speakers: **Sally-Ann Polson**, MedWatch, LLC
Amy Tennis, RN, MBA, MedWatch, LLC

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

2:45-3:45 p.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

People Power: Activating a Well-Being Champion Network to Increase Benefits Engagement

A successful well-being champion network doesn't happen by accident. Learn how St. Luke's Health System built and sustained a network of more than 550 volunteer champions by intentionally educating, engaging and empowering employees to serve as trusted ambassadors for well-being and benefits. Attendees will explore the tools, resources, communication strategies, development opportunities and recognition practices that help champions thrive and drive meaningful increases in employee awareness, engagement, and utilization of benefits and well-being programs.

Speaker: **Eren Barker, MS, ATC, CSCS, ACE-CHC, LSSGB**, St. Luke's Health System

Beyond Cost Shifting: Building Health and Welfare Solutions That Support Business Outcomes

As health care costs continue to rise, employers can't simply shift more of the burden to employees and expect better outcomes. This session will explore practical approaches to designing health and welfare offerings that balance cost, competitiveness and employee value while supporting broader business and talent objectives.

Speaker: **Gene Mason, CEBS**, Total Rewards by Design

Beyond the PBM RFP: An Executive's Guide to Building a Modern Pharmacy Strategy

The pharmacy landscape is undergoing unprecedented transformation. New regulations, breakthrough therapies, escalating specialty drug costs, evolving pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) and pharmacy benefit administrator (PBA) models, and a growing ecosystem of innovative partners are creating both opportunities and challenges for plan sponsors. Success in this environment requires more than a PBM procurement strategy; it requires a comprehensive pharmacy strategy that aligns clinical, financial, operational and member experience objectives. This session will provide executives with a practical framework for evaluating market developments, assessing emerging solutions and building a modern pharmacy strategy that positions their organizations for long-term success.

Speakers: **Nathan Drapkin, MS**, Gallagher
Janelle Montalvo, Gallagher

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

3:45-4:00 p.m.

Networking and Refreshment Break in the Exhibit Hall

4:00-5:00 p.m. | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session: Inside the Strategy: How Benefits Leaders Are Approaching Comprehensive Obesity Care

Don't miss this opportunity to hear population health decision makers and benefits leaders share how they've evaluated and integrated obesity management medications (OMMs) into their plans. You'll gain insight into the steps they took, stakeholders involved, analyses that informed their decisions, and strategies used to track utilization and measure outcomes.

Sponsored by: Lilly — A MEDICINE COMPANY

Speaker: **Kevin Hern**, Lilly

Leveraging AI in Benefits and Well-Being Communications

While a massive 72% of employers plan to embed AI into benefits over the next two years, only 20% actively use it today—leaving a critical execution gap for HR leaders. Drawing from real-world benefits case studies and a global seven-month AI process-mapping initiative at Booksy, this session cuts through the hype to deliver a practical roadmap for scaling personalized benefits communications. Attendees will discover how to safely utilize AI for creative workflows like drafting and speechwriting while establishing the essential governance and guardrails needed to protect sensitive employee data.

Speaker: **Rachel Beck-Garcia, PHR, CWWP**, Booksy Inc.

TUESDAY | February 2, 2027 *(continued)*

4:00-5:00 p.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

Leave as a Leading Indicator: What Your Absence Data Is Telling You About Workforce Health—and What Clinical Oversight Can Do About It

Most HR and benefits professionals encounter leave and absence data as an administrative and compliance output—but for those trained to read population health signals, absence patterns are among the most powerful early warning systems available to an employer. This session teaches benefits professionals to interpret five specific absence patterns as clinical workforce health diagnostics, with particular attention to intermittent FMLA and ADA leave as a chronic disease management failure that compliance-only management consistently makes worse. Attendees will leave with a practical absence diagnostic framework, a clinical early intervention model for engaging employees at the leave trigger point, and a blueprint for integrating leave administration, case management and EAP into a coordinated population health response.

Speakers: **Kellee Grimes, BSN, MBA, RN, ADAC**, Mutual of Omaha
Amanda O'Connell, RN, BSN, ADAC, Mutual of Omaha

Overcoming Barriers to Care

Clinical care accounts for only a fraction of a population's health outcomes; social and economic factors, neighborhood conditions, stigma and bias shape whether workers can use the benefits offered to them. This session examines how social drivers of health and health disparities create barriers to care, and how plan sponsors can use workforce data—including neighborhood-level indices and segment analysis—to pinpoint where those barriers concentrate. Participants will leave with practical worker-focused and community-focused strategies for targeting benefits, resources and communications to the populations that need them most.

Speakers: **Deb Friesen, MD, MBA, FACP**, Kaiser Permanente
Karen Urban, Kaiser Permanente

5:00-6:00 p.m.

Networking Reception in Exhibit Hall

WEDNESDAY | February 3, 2027

7:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m.

Registration/Information

7:00-8:00 a.m.

Continental Breakfast in Exhibit Hall

7:00-11:00 a.m.

Exhibits Open

8:00-9:00 a.m. | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session: Nine Proven Practices to Build and Scale Caregiver Support Programs

Caregiver programs succeed when they blend empathy, accessibility and measurable outcomes. Drawing from Trualta's national experience supporting thousands of caregivers, this session unpacks nine data-driven best practices that define effective caregiver initiatives—from recognizing the diversity of caregiver journeys to creating emotional connection and quantifying outcomes.

Sponsored by: TRUALTA

Speaker: **Tom Mudd**, Trualta

Beyond Open Enrollment: Engaging Employees With Their Benefits All Year

Employee benefits are one of an organization's largest investments, yet many employees only engage with them during open enrollment. This session will equip you to build a strategic, year-round communication approach using targeted messaging, seasonal campaigns, automation and engaging touchpoints that command attention, drive action and help employees get the full value of their benefits all year long. Attendees will also receive The Benefits Engagement Blueprint™: A 12-Month Communication Calendar to help put these strategies into practice.

Speaker: **Heather Huffman, MSHRM**, Lanagail & Co.

WEDNESDAY | February 3, 2027 *(continued)*

8:00-9:00 a.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

From Commercials to Claims: How Drug Advertising and Rebates Are Driving Employer Pharmacy Costs

Prescription drug advertising and complex rebate arrangements can influence which medications patients request, how pharmacy benefits are managed and what employers ultimately pay. This session will explore how these forces affect pharmacy costs and provide practical strategies for evaluating plan performance, managing prescription drug spending and communicating with plan members. Attendees will leave with actionable steps to help control costs while supporting informed medication decisions and access to appropriate care.

Speaker: **John Drakulich**, ProCare Rx

Whose Kid Is This? And Other Good Reasons to Conduct Dependent Eligibility Audits

This in-depth session explores why dependent eligibility audits are essential for verifying enrolled dependents, identifying ineligible participants and uncovering meaningful plan savings. Drawing on 18 years of experience working with dependent audit teams, the presenter will share industry insights and practical best practices for conducting a successful audit.

Speaker: **Leslie Wilkins, MBA**, Part D Advisors Inc.

9:00-9:30 a.m.

Networking and Refreshment Break in the Exhibit Hall

Register online at www.HBCE.com.

WEDNESDAY | February 3, 2027 *(continued)*

9:30-10:30 a.m. | *breakout sessions*

Solution Spotlight Session: **Preparing for the Next Wave of Cell and Gene Therapy: What Benefit Plan Leaders Need to Know**

As cell and gene therapies become more common, benefit plan leaders must prepare for their financial impact. This session will provide a practical overview of the current and emerging therapy landscape, the implications for self-insured health plans, and the strategies available to manage cost, access and care. Attendees will learn key questions to ask and determine which approaches best meet the needs of their plan participants.

Sponsored by: ETS®

Speaker: **Ashley Hume**, Emerging Therapy Solutions

Find the Hidden Dollars: Reducing Waste in Your Self-Funded Health Plan Without Reducing Benefits

Most self-funded plans watch premium trends, but some of the biggest savings are hiding in everyday medical claims. Learn where unnecessary spending happens and how labor funds can reduce it without cutting benefits, using clinical oversight, member advocacy and evidence-based care management. Explore high-cost claims, avoidable admissions, specialty drugs and levels of care, and leave with practical ideas for any plan size.

Speaker: **Gina Ciccia**, WTW

Register online at www.HBCE.com

WEDNESDAY | February 3, 2027 *(continued)*

9:30-10:30 a.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

GLP-1 Coverage and ERISA Fiduciary Risk: What Plan Administrators Need to Know

As plans grapple with the high cost of GLP-1s, coverage restrictions and PBM formulary decisions are creating new ERISA fiduciary exposure. Explore what plan administrators should consider, from how GLP-1 claims are processed to whether coverage exclusions align with FDA-approved indications and whether PBM formularies are consistent with plan terms.

Speaker: To be announced

10:30-10:45 a.m.

Networking and Refreshment Break in the Exhibit Hall

10:45-11:45 a.m. | *breakout sessions*

A Model for Reducing Catastrophic Surgical Claims

Surgery is one of the most common and underestimated pathways to catastrophic claims and rising costs. This session first reveals how a nurse-navigated support model reduced complications to lower those costs, spanning 2,380 employees across 62 employers, then covers two additional employer case studies.

Attendees will leave with a practical, data-backed framework for improving care outcomes while reducing costly complications, recovery time and risks of a routine surgery becoming a catastrophic claim with a proactive approach to surgical care navigation.

Speaker: **Joshua Barnett, PhD, MHS**, Goldfinch Health

WEDNESDAY | February 3, 2027 *(continued)*

10:45-11:45 a.m. | *breakout sessions (continued)*

How Workplace Interactions Shape Well-Being, Trust and Utilization

Benefits can be well designed and still go unused. This session looks at how routine interactions, manager behavior and team norms influence stress, burnout, absenteeism and cost, as well as what employees, people leaders and benefits administrators can each do differently. Participants will leave with practical, behaviorally grounded strategies to spot strain early, build psychological safety, strengthen communication and connect people to the resources already available to them.

Speaker: **Karla Chin, MA**, Exude

How New Vision Benefits Impact Overall Health and Wellness

This session explores how vision, dental and hearing benefits play a powerful role in identifying health risks and improving overall wellness. Attendees will examine how biomarkers and the future of AI-based predictive modeling can help detect chronic and neurological conditions to improve patient care and outcomes. The session will also explore how traditional discounted hearing aids have seen low utilization, but newer FDA-approved treatment options are gaining greater acceptance.

Speaker: **John Lahr, OD**, EyeMed Vision Care

11:45 a.m.-12:00 noon

Morning Break

12:00 noon-1:00 p.m.

Closing Session: Advancements in Care—And the Stories Powering Them

Health headlines continue to focus on negative trends, telling a story of increasing costs and decreasing levels of quality. At the same time, the evolution of medical and technological advances is rapidly improving health care. This closing keynote explores a modern take on patient care, from gene therapies and AI diagnostics to wearable technology and 3D printing. Discover how these cutting-edge advancements are impacting benefit plans, shifting disease trends, altering patient behavior and rewriting the human stories behind the statistics.

Speaker: **Tyler Amell, PhD, MSc, BSc**, MediKeeper, Inc., Pacific Coast University for Workplace Health Sciences

Hotel Information

Sawgrass Marriott
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida



Reservation Deadline: January 11, 2027

Rates: US$309 single/double occupancy (Additional US$20/person per night for a third and/or fourth guest)

Taxes and Fees (subject to change): 11.5% room tax

Resort Fee: Discounted resort fee of $19/room per night

Resort Fee Includes:

- Enhanced guestroom Wi-Fi
- Daily fitness classes at the Sawgrass Spa
- Miniature golf daily
- One (1) hour bicycle rental for up to four (4) bikes (based on availability)
- Private access to the Cabana Beach Club
- Complimentary shuttle service to the Cabana Beach Club, TPC Sawgrass Clubhouse and other locations up to one (1) mile off resort property
- One (1) year *Golf Digest* subscription

Hotel Cancellation Policy: Hotel deposit forfeited for reservations canceled within 72 hours prior to arrival.

For additional hotel information, visit our Hotel/Travel tab at www.HBCE.com.

For hotel questions, contact the Registration Department at (888) 334-3327, option 2, or edreg@ifebp.org.

**Note: Hotel room availability is not guaranteed outside of scheduled program dates.*

Location Details

Ponte Vedra Beach, part of Florida's Historic Coast, has plenty to explore during your stay this February. Stroll along the beautiful beach, take in the sights and explore the vast outdoor activities available after a day of robust learning and networking. Visit www.HBCE.com for more information on booking your stay.

Grow Your Brand at HBCE

Who Exhibits and Sponsors

Service providers at the HBCE represent products and services including the following.

- Health benefits/insurance/ third-party administration/ private exchange platforms
- Pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs)
- Providers of ancillary benefits, such as dental, vision and life insurance; employee assistance programs (EAPs); and pet insurance
- Employee benefits consulting/ lifestyle coaching
- Wellness and preventive care
- Health systems, on-site clinics and health screenings
- Health and wellness data analytics
- Communication platforms
- Benefits and HRIS technology
- Workers' compensation and absence management
- Telemedicine

Why You Should Exhibit

Grow your business and secure quality leads with health and benefits professionals.

Position your organization in front of industry leaders looking for products and services.

Connect with existing clients and strengthen your relationships in person.





Current Conference Sponsors and Exhibitors

SPONSORS



















Exhibitors	Booth		
Arch Insurance	33	Mayo Clinic	16
Ascensus	34	MedImpact	38
BCS Financial	41	MedWatch LLC	31
Color Health, Inc.	39	Milliman	42
Eli Lilly and Company	28	Nationwide Pet Insurance	49
Emerging Therapy Solutions (ETS)	37	Noom Health	43
EmployeeCare Work-Life Benefits	25	RazorMetrics	30
Employers Health	24	RetireeFirst	1
Garner Health Technology	45	Reward Builder	27
GEM Enrollments	26	Riverside Recovery of Tampa	32
Genomic Life	36	Root Functional Medicine	40
Humana	29	Trualta	17
Integrity	19	Your Money Line	35
Know the Costs®	51		

Exhibitors as of November 19, 2026.

Learn More

The International Foundation has a number of health and wellness–related events and resources created to help support your work for your organization's health benefits. Visit www.ifebp.org for more information on all of the International Foundation and Wellness Alliance offerings.

Conferences:

37th Annual Art & Science of Health Promotion Conference
April 14-16, 2027 | Tampa, Florida

Health Care Management Conference
May 3-4, 2027 | Nashville, Tennessee

Annual Wellness Summit
August 3-5, 2027 | San Diego, California

In-Person Certificates and Courses:

Certificates:

- Benefit Plan Administration Certificate
- Benefits and Compensation Certificate
- Health and Welfare Plans Certificate
- Public Sector Benefits Administration Certificate
- Strategic Benefits Management Certificate

Courses:

- Ancillary Benefit Plans
- Basic Compensation Concepts
- Basics of Employee Benefits Administration
- Communicating Employee Benefits
- Funding and Finance of Health Benefits
- Health Benefit Plan Basics
- Health Care Cost Management
- Organizational Strategies for Health and Financial Wellness
- Public Sector 401, 403 and 457 Plans
- Total Rewards and Workforce Strategies

Online Certificates

- Fundamentals in Health Benefits
- Health Plan Navigation
- Self-Funding Group Health Plans

Visit www.ifebp.org/elearning for more information on online courses on health care topics.

REGISTRATION

Register today at www.HBCE.com.

CONFERENCE REGISTRATION FEES

	Through December 22, 2026	After December 22, 2026
Government/Nonprofit	US$750	US$950
Corporate/Plan Sponsor	US$850	US$1,050
Service Provider	US$950	US$1,150
Preconference	US$350	US$450

Save up to US$200 when you register by December 22!

POLICIES

Cancel and transfer fees are based on registration fee paid: 60+ days of meeting is 10%; 31-59 days of meeting is 25%; within 30 days of meeting is 50%. Registration fee is forfeited once program commences. For details and the current policy, see www.ifebp.org/policies.

CONTINUING EDUCATION CREDIT

Continuing education (CE) credit for professions and designations MAY be available for attendance at live sessions. You must register for the program and request CE credit at least 60 days prior to the beginning of the program so that the Foundation can seek preapproval from the governing agency.

Note: Requests made for CE credit do not guarantee administration of credit. For further information on CE credit, please call (262) 786-6710, option 2.

Educational sessions at this program can qualify for self-reported CEBS® Compliance credit. Visit www.cebs.org/compliance for additional information.

36TH ANNUAL

HBCE®

Health Benefits Conference + Expo

February 2-3, 2027
Sawgrass Marriott
Ponte Vedra Beach, Florida

Save up to US$200 when you register by **December 22**!

Visit www.HBCE.com to register.



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