2017 Healthcare Benefits Trend Survey Findings Issued

According to a February 2017 report and survey results from the Healthcare Trends Institute, throughout 2016 organizations remain committed to providing a standard suite of benefits. The national report offered several important data points:

- Preferred provider plans (PPPs) were the most offered health coverage option at 70%.
- Additionally, employers have begun to make the switch to high deductible health plans (HDHPs) (53%) with health savings accounts (HSAs) (59%) and away from health maintenance organizations (HMOs) (37%) (Figure 1).
- The average number of medical plans being offered remained at three or more in 2016.
- About 41% of employers are still providing several coverage options. The top three health plan types offered are PPPO, followed by HDHP and finally HMO.
- Employee benefit communication continues to evolve as companies must work to reach several generations of employees throughout the year.
- The majority of respondents are relying on email (77%) as at least one way to reach employees.
- However, approximately half of companies are also actively using multiple methods of communication such as face-to-face meetings (51%), print (49%), internal Web sites (48%), and insurance advisor meetings (47%) to reach employees in their preferred communication styles.
- Approximately 37% of respondents feel confident that they are communicating well with employees, while another 50% believe they are very effective in their communication approach with workers.

The top three solutions offered by organizations to deal with the ongoing challenges related to healthcare costs are to increase employee cost sharing (20%), increase employee healthcare engagement (22%), and enhance efforts related to wellness and health management programs (18%) to control future healthcare costs.

With the US Centers for Medicare and Medicaid anticipating healthcare spending to reach $4.2 trillion by 2020, employers will have their work cut out for them (Figure 2).

Please contact your Conner Strong & Buckelew account representative toll free at 1-877-861-3220 with any questions.