



Key Findings from the EBRI 2016 Health Benefits Survey Results

The Employee Benefit Research Institute (EBRI) has issued their comprehensive annual employer based benefits benchmarking survey on key trends and changes in benefits. The EBRI is a widely respected national non-partisan and non-profit research institute based in Washington, DC that exclusively produces independent research on employee benefit and retirement related benefit materials. Key findings from this year's survey are below:

- In general, workers are moderately satisfied with the benefits package offered by their employer. While 15% report being extremely satisfied and 33% are very satisfied, another 32% are only somewhat satisfied, and 20% are either not too satisfied (11%) or not at all satisfied (9%).
- Workers overwhelmingly consider health insurance to be the most important workplace benefit when considering whether to stay in a current job or choose a new job. Nearly two-thirds (64%) say this benefit is extremely important, while an additional 23% consider it to be very important.
- While generally satisfied with their current benefits package, some workers express concern about whether their employer will provide similar benefits in the future.
- One-half of workers (49%) are extremely or very confident that their employer will offer a similar package three years from now. However, among those who are less confident, 43% believe their employee benefits package will worsen, including fewer benefits or lower value.
- Benefits coverage in the workplace, including health insurance, is far from universal:
 - More than 82% of workers report their employer offers them health insurance
 - Three in four each indicate they are offered dental insurance (74%) or a retirement savings plan (74%), and about two-thirds each say they are offered vision insurance (67%) or life insurance (63%).
 - Nearly 6 in 10 report their employer offers them short-term disability insurance (58%), and one-half report their employer offers them long-term disability insurance (51%).
 - One-third or fewer say they are offered long-term care insurance (33%), accident insurance (28%), supplemental health insurance for workers (21%), critical illness (19%) or cancer insurance (16%).
- Not all workers offered a benefit at the workplace take advantage of it, though participation is markedly lower when the employer does not contribute to the cost. Overall, 85% who are offered health insurance and 79% offered dental insurance report they currently take advantage of these benefits through their employer.
- Three-quarters of those offered vision insurance (72%) or life insurance (76%) indicate they take advantage of this coverage through the workplace, while 64% report that they have elected short-term disability insurance and 58%, long-term disability insurance (see table).

Reported take-up of health and medical workplace benefits, 2014-2016.						
	Among all employees			Among employees offered benefit		
	2014	2015	2016	2014	2015	2016
Health insurance	64%	68%	70%	82%	85%	85%
Dental insurance	59	56	59	81	80	79
Vision insurance	47	47	48	74	75	72
Short-term disability insurance	38	34	38	66	61	64
Long-term disability insurance	34	29	30	63	59	58
Accidental death & dismemberment insurance	30	26	25	60	58	59
Health savings account	19	20	22	38	42	46
Accident insurance	15	13	14	45	41	50
Long-term care insurance	11	8	9	36	25	28
Supplemental health insurance for workers	6	7	7	26	29	34
Critical illness insurance	7	6	7	34	28	35
Home health insurance	3	5	5	23	31	38
Cancer insurance	5	4	6	33	27	34
Supplemental health insurance for retirees on Medicare	3	3	5	20	18	31
Health insurance for early retirees	3	3	5	21	19	29
Hearing aid benefits	NA	NA	4	NA	NA	35

Source: Employee Benefit Research Institute, *EBRI Notes*, April 18, 2017

- Workers are confident in their ability to make informed benefits decisions, with 64% feeling very or extremely confident. Six in 10 workers (60%) claim to understand their health benefits very or extremely well, while just 48% feel they understand their non-health benefits as well.
- Though not a majority, some workers dislike the idea of paying for benefits without an employer contribution.
- Workers are split with respect to how comfortable they feel having their employer pick their benefits providers (health plan). While 47% are extremely or very comfortable having their employers pick the companies that provide their health insurance benefits, another 38% are only somewhat comfortable, and 15% are not too or not at all comfortable.
- Similar splits are found for comfort with having their employer pick their disability insurance provider (42% and 14%), and providers for plans that help with out-of-pocket medical and hospital costs (41% and 16%).

EBRI surveyed some 1,500 US workers nationally between the ages of 21-64 across a wide range of employers. For the 12-page report [click here.](#)

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