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NAWHC Benchmarking Survey of Employer-Sponsored Centers Shows Positive Signs

According to a new report from non-profit National Association of Worksite Health Centers (NAWHC), employers are increasingly finding the use of onsite and near-site clinics as a successful strategy in controlling healthcare costs. According to their survey of 255 employers, by using onsite or near-site centers, employers have been able to create easy access to lower cost medical services, improve employee health, enhance engagement in worksite programs and ultimately increase productivity. The results come from the NAWHC's annual survey of employer sponsors of onsite clinics.

According to NAWHC and their industry research, the greatest return for clinic value is among employers who experience high emergency room use for nonemergency conditions, show high levels of lost time from unscheduled medical issues, or have covered populations that show low utilization of existing primary care, preventive screenings, or condition management programs and services. Other key highlights from the NAWHC survey include:

- A majority of respondents of all sizes said the financial objectives for their onsite clinics are being met with 64% seeing a reduction in medical care costs, almost 70% realizing reduced time lost by employees leaving work to see outside medical providers, and 63% had reduced use of the emergency room.
- Employers offering clinics are seeing enhanced integration of health management services, higher employee engagement in health management programs, and increased effectiveness of health promotion efforts.
- Over a third of employers with clinics do not consider their onsite clinics as part of their benefits plan, and there is uncertainty in how to value a clinic for purposes of the Affordable Care Act's excise tax computations.
- Telemedicine is an emerging trend for many using onsite clinics, especially in the areas of acute care, wellness and behavioral health.
- Acute care, emergency or first aid, preventive care, and wellness are among the top services offered at employer clinics.
- More than 30% of onsite clinics now provide primary care services, and this number is expected to grow in the future.
- Nurse practitioners/registered nurses and physician assistants are the main providers for these clinics.
- More than 35% of employers self-manage their clinics and do not contract with a vendor or provider to operate the facility or hire providers.

- While most employers contract with third-party vendors to manage their clinics, an increasing number of employers are finding partners among local physician groups and hospitals.

Among employers who are using onsite or near-site providers, they reported the following important “lessons learned”:

- The need to promote a clinic’s confidentiality and privacy
- Having providers who relate to and understand the workplace and its culture
- Offering services for free or lower than outside services
- Using vendors with state-of-the art return-on-investment tools
- Ensuring clinic activities are integrated with all wellness programs and vendors
- Offering easy access to the clinic

The survey included employers from across the United States and all sizes and industries. Conner Strong & Buckelew is helping employers evaluate and size up the practicality for such onsite or near-site care and can help you do the same. For more information, please speak to your Conner Strong & Buckelew account representative.



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