

KNOW YOUR EMPLOYEE BENEFITS



Be a Wise Health Care Consumer:

Create Choices by Electing a Consumer Driven Health Plan

Was there ever a time when a consumer could afford to get sick?

The cost of illness has never been of more concern than it is today with health care costs spiraling upward. This is precisely the reason that the health care system welcomes the new consumer-driven model where it is possible to save on the front end *and* over the long haul.

Both a traditional plan and a consumer-driven model require some out-of-pocket expenses, but an HDHP (high deductible health plan) with an HSA (Health Savings Account) has proven about 43 percent savings each year over a traditional plan based on premiums alone. That leaves substantial pre-tax dollars that can be put away for a health situation in the future.

Studies show that HSAs do not negatively affect people's health; being afraid to go to the doctor for financial reasons is

what causes harm. Some would argue that the thousands of uninsured people who go without medical treatment because they can't afford it are a result of the traditional health care system which has

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prioritized up front, high-dollar premium payments over actual medical treatment. And, even among the insured, there are many who elect to brush off doctors' orders because the treatment is not covered by insurance, or the copay is too expensive.

HSA participants are no more likely to abstain from care than

any other patient, and are more likely to look into preventative and wellness care and think through the relative cost of treatment options.

HSAs allow the patient to save money on premiums, set aside pre-tax money to pay for out-of-pocket expenses, and pay with cash when the time comes. That means savings on the front end, tax savings throughout the year, and the negotiating power of cash at the point of service.

Consumer-driven health care creates choices for each and every transaction, and can be a cost-efficient alternative to traditional health plans.