

JMCP Commentary Outlines Strategies to Address Health Inequities in the Workforce

A new commentary outlines factors that contribute to inequities among those with employer-sponsored insurance and the data-driven approaches to address them.

WASHINGTON, DC, UNITED STATES, February 27, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Inequities in healthcare utilization and outcomes are common among individuals with employer-sponsored insurance, disproportionately impacting those of lower income status as well as racial and ethnic minorities. While the root causes are numerous and can be difficult to address, employers and other plan sponsors are well-positioned to identify and mitigate the contributors to these observed inequities, per a new commentary published in the Journal of Managed Care & Specialty Pharmacy.

[“The Time Is Now: Addressing Health Inequities in the Workforce”](#) describes the opportunities for employers to improve the health equity for their respective employees and family members, such as supporting the equitable use of prescription medications. The paper is authored by Bruce W. Sherman, MD, of the Department of Medicine at the Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine and the Department of Public Health Education at the University of North Carolina-Greensboro and Brian Sils, MPP, and Kimberly Westrich, MA, of the National Pharmaceutical Council.

“While achieving health equity may seem like a daunting task,” said Dr. Sherman, “our framework — which includes gaining a better understanding of the scope and magnitude of existing inequities and then taking a systems-based approach to strategic planning — can add structure and focus to the process.”

In their analysis, the authors identify ways in which each stakeholder — from employers and their employees to clinicians, health systems, and health plans — contributes to the inequities observed in the workplace. Other systems-level factors, such as racism, implicit bias, medical mistrust, health literacy limitations, and healthcare access and affordability concerns, have been identified as contributors to inequitable outcomes.

The commentary’s structured approach to addressing health equity seeks to understand the available evidence, elicit employee insights regarding contributors to health inequities, and implement a system that is inclusive of quantitative and qualitative data. Some of the identified actions employers could take to improve health equity include:

- Revising the design of employer-sponsored benefits (an area where employers have the most significant influence and control);
- Leveraging value-based insurance design in health plan benefits to reduce out-of-pocket costs;
- Exploring options to partner with healthcare vendors and health plans to improve workforce health equity; and
- Engaging in advocacy with health systems for more equitable healthcare on behalf of their employees.

“If employers meaningfully address these observed inequities, their return on investment includes improving overall workforce health and well-being,” said Ms. Westrich. “Our commentary underscores the powerful equity impact employers can have and provides actionable opportunities for improving the status quo.”

[Read the Commentary](#)

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