



Smarter
Health
Care
Coalition

2023 in Review 2024 Strategy & Outlook



The Smarter Health Care Coalition continues advocating for policies to make health care **smarter**. This document provides a brief summary of some of our recent successes – that wouldn't have been possible without your hard work – in addition to the strategic plans we have developed with your feedback for 2024.

As you can see, we've been hard at work in 2023 and are thrilled with the progress we've made. Much work remains, however, and we look forward to a busy and productive year of creating positive change in 2024. We are counting on your continued engagement to help us expand our track record to ensure easier access to high-value care for Americans and their families.

Expand pre-deductible coverage of chronic disease prevention for Health Savings Account-eligible health plans

The Coalition continues legislative and regulatory work to ensure additional chronic disease prevention drugs and services may be offered pre-deductible.

2023 Achievements

- In March, Senators John Thune (R-SD) and Tom Carper (D-DE) reintroduced the Chronic Disease Management Act (CDMA), which ensures Health Savings Account-eligible plans can cover chronic disease prevention pre-deductible.
- In June, Representatives Brad Wenstrup (R-OH) and Earl Blumenauer (D-OR) introduced the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act, H.R. 3800. The bill was referred to the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee. The same week, the Committee approved the bill by a vote of 34-6, garnering strong bipartisan support, including from Chairman Jason Smith (R-MO) and Ranking Member Neal (D-MA).
- In July, the Coalition sent a letter to Senate Finance Committee leadership expressing strong support for the amendment filed by Senators Thune and Carper advancing CDMA and urging its unanimous adoption.
- In November, Senators John Thune (R-SD) and Tom Carper (D-DE) introduced the Senate companion to H.R. 3800, the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act as S. 3224. They filed the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act as an amendment to the Better Mental Health Care, Lower-Cost Drugs, and Extenders Act, and the Coalition submitted a letter supporting its passage.

Goals for Year-End 2023 and 2024

- Advocate to get the Chronic Disease Flexible Coverage Act enacted in the 2023 year-end package
- Continue conversations w/ Treasury & IRS about the need to expand what can be offered pre-deductible
 - SHCC will partner with AHIP (and possibly EBRI) on another survey to better understand the most critical drugs and services plans and employers would like to be able to offer pre-deductible
- Continue advocating to secure even broader legislation to allow additional drugs and services pre-deductible, focusing on the connection between chronic disease and mental and behavioral health.

Protect the ability of employers and health plans to offer preventive services pre-deductible

Earlier this year, the U.S. District Court in the Northern District of Texas issued a ruling finding certain parts of the preventive services provision of the ACA to be unconstitutional. The Coalition has been working with Treasury and IRS to confirm a plan will not fail to be an HDHP solely because it covers, pre-deductible, items and services that have a recommendation of the USPSTF with an A or B rating.

2023 Achievements

- In March, the Coalition sent a letter to Treasury Secretary Yellen and IRS Commissioner Werfel, urging Treasury and IRS to issue guidance that confirms a plan will not fail to be an HDHP solely because it covers, pre-deductible, items and services that have a recommendation of the USPSTF with an A or B rating.
- Shortly after our letter, the Treasury Department issued FAQs addressing this issue and confirming pre-deductible coverage for HDHPs.
- The Coalition continued to raise the visibility of this critically important issue with policymakers and stakeholders, including it as a featured topic during our Annual Summit, in addition to hosting special briefings ad-hoc with expert thought leaders. The Coalition continues to have concerns about the implications of *Braidwood Management Inc. v. Becerra*.

Goals for 2024

- The Coalition will continue to follow the case and strategize a potential congressional response with key committee staff.
- The Coalition will host a briefing for policymakers and stakeholders on this issue and its implications in early 2024.

Expand the Medicare Advantage demonstration program and advocate for the permanent extension of uniformity flexibility to Medicare Part D

Although the ability to lower cost-sharing for prescription drugs will remain a unique feature of the MA V-BID demo, the application of clinically nuanced V-BID strategies beyond the model test presents an enormous opportunity for the Medicare Advantage program. The Coalition believes that V-BID can encourage the utilization of high-value providers and services, thus helping Medicare Advantage plans improve health and quality, enhance consumer engagement, and reduce costs.

Goals for 2024

- Continue working with CMMI and health plans to expand awareness of the V-BID demo.
- Work with congressional champions to extend flexibilities to Part D that allow MA plans participating in the V-BID demonstration to alter cost sharing and extend supplemental benefits to more beneficiaries.
- Conduct an environmental scan of the MA VBID model for best practices, lessons learned, outcomes and cost data, and stakeholder feedback to help develop an initial list of policy proposals to advance successful elements of the MA VBID model within the broader MA program. The goal is to publish a white paper to share and present with relevant administration staff, including CMS and CMMI.

Other important areas to protect and expand value-based payment and benefit design

Goals for 2024

- **Expand access to anti-obesity therapy and medications**
 - The Coalition will continue emphasizing the disparity that plans participating in the Federal Employee Health Benefit Program are required to cover anti-obesity medications, yet Medicare Part D plans are prohibited from covering them.
- **Decrease the prevalence of low-value care and redirect resources to high-value care**
 - Recruit members of Congress to champion legislation that will reduce low-value care.
- **Address social determinants of health (SDOH)**
 - Work with members of Congress to build cosponsors and advance introduced legislation addressing SDOH by making changes to benefit

Annual Policy Summit

On May 2nd, 2023, the Coalition in partnership with the [Center for Value-Based Insurance Design \(V-BID\)](#) held a [Virtual Policy Summit](#), featuring keynote remarks by Senator John Thune and Congressman Brad Wenstrup. Policymakers also heard from a range of thought leaders on a variety of topics including obesity, low-value care, chronic disease management, and more.

The Coalition is committed to hosting the **2024 Policy Summit in-person** in Washington, DC. We will convene policymakers, stakeholders and leading experts to advance our shared goal of achieving smarter health care for all.

2023 Summit Agenda Highlights

Senator John Thune (R - SD)

Congressman Brad Wenstrup (R - OH)

with perspectives from:

CMMI

American Heart Association

EBRI

U. Michigan V-BID Center

National Forum for Heart Disease and Stroke Prevention

American Benefits Council

plus

a thought-provoking panel on addressing barriers to obesity care

& More!

The Coalition continues to host monthly discussions to collaborate, share updates on Coalition activities, and strategize our approach to advancing our ongoing priorities.

In 2023, we heard from:

- Mark Fendrick, Director of the University of Michigan Center for Value-Based Insurance Design
- Nick Bagley, Asst. Professor of Law at University of Michigan
- Dr. Sanket Dhruva and Dr. Rita Redberg of UCSF
- Laurie McWright, Deputy Director, Seamless Care Models Group, CMMI

Additionally, the Coalition conducted multiple congressional meetings with:

- Staff from **Sen. John Thune's Office**
- Staff from **Sen. Tom Carper's Office**
- Staff from **Rep. Brad Wenstrup's Office**
- Staff from **Rep. Earl Blumenauer's Office**
- Drew Crouch, Senior Counsel on the Senate Finance Committee
- Eva DuGoff, Senior Health Advisor on the Senate Finance Committee
- Tara Jordan, Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO)

**Thank you for a fantastic year!
We look forward to continuing our important
work with you in 2024.**

Sincerely,

Katy, Ray, and Andrew
Co-Directors, Smarter Health Care Coalition