

# The Advantages Of Offering Health Benefits To Small-Business Employees

(NAPSA)—Despite media hoopla about the Affordable Care Act's (ACA's) regulatory and compliance burdens, the advantages of offering employer-sponsored health benefits to America's 60 million-plus small-business workers and their families have never been stronger or more important.

After salary, health care benefits remain one of the most powerful tools for attracting and retaining employees. A 2016 Harris Poll survey commissioned by jobs and recruiting site Glassdoor hammers home this point. It found that workers rank health insurance—including medical, dental, vision and so forth—as the number one wanted benefit. Others, such as vacation time, retirement plans or even bonus programs, typically rate much lower.

For the nation's approximately 27 million small businesses, however, providing employer-sponsored health plans is often easier said than done. It typically comes down to a key question: Does the advantage of offering health benefits outweigh the costs?

In today's highly competitive job market, many experts continue to say yes. "Going without benefits may boost your bottom line in the short run, [but] the penny-wise philosophy could strangle your business' chances for long-term prosperity," says Entrepreneur magazine.

Beyond recruitment and retention, small business-sponsored plans provide a number of other advantages. They typically offer workers more choice and options to affordably mix and match benefits packages. Another is the ability to use pretax dollars to help offset plan costs.

Other pluses include access to options such as Flexible Spending Accounts, or FSAs, that enable employees to save money to pay for certain out-of-pocket health care costs. FSAs are only available through companies and—in many instances—are subsidized with employer contributions. Chiropractic, acupuncture and other so-called ancillary services, which are hard to get through individual policies, are also more readily available in small-group plans.

So how do small businesses deliver



**Good health care benefits are among the best ways to attract and retain good workers.**

these benefits yet manage the costs, all while navigating a complex industry immersed in an era of health care reform? And how do employees take best advantage of offered benefits?

"Start with a good broker or benefit adviser," recommends Ron Goldstein, president and CEO of CHOICE Administrators, the nation's leader in developing and administering employee-choice health benefit programs for employers, and CaliforniaChoice, the country's first multicarrier private exchange specifically for small business.

"They are experts who will help employers navigate their options and ACA requirements and they'll provide employees with hands-on help to design and select plans that work best for their needs."

Goldstein added that teaming with a professional is more important than ever for small employers to help traverse the vast—and often confusing—variety and array of group benefit plans. They also help routinely serve as the de facto human resources, personnel and/or payroll departments as many smaller firms have fewer staff and resources to research, manage and administer plans.

Offering health benefits continues to be one of the strongest incentives for attracting and retaining the best workers. Cost pressures and compliance requirements must be addressed, but the smartest small businesses will recognize that choices and options are available to provide their workers with the benefits they want most.

For additional information, visit [www.mycalchoice.com](http://www.mycalchoice.com) or [www.calchoice.com](http://www.calchoice.com).