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Employer-Sponsored Medical Clinics: Much More Than Convenience Care

According to a new position paper issued by International Society of Certified Employee Benefits Specialists, *Benefits Quarterly*, some employers are filling the gap between their wants and expectations and the reality of our current healthcare delivery system with an unlikely benefit – the employer-sponsored medical clinic. (Figure 1)

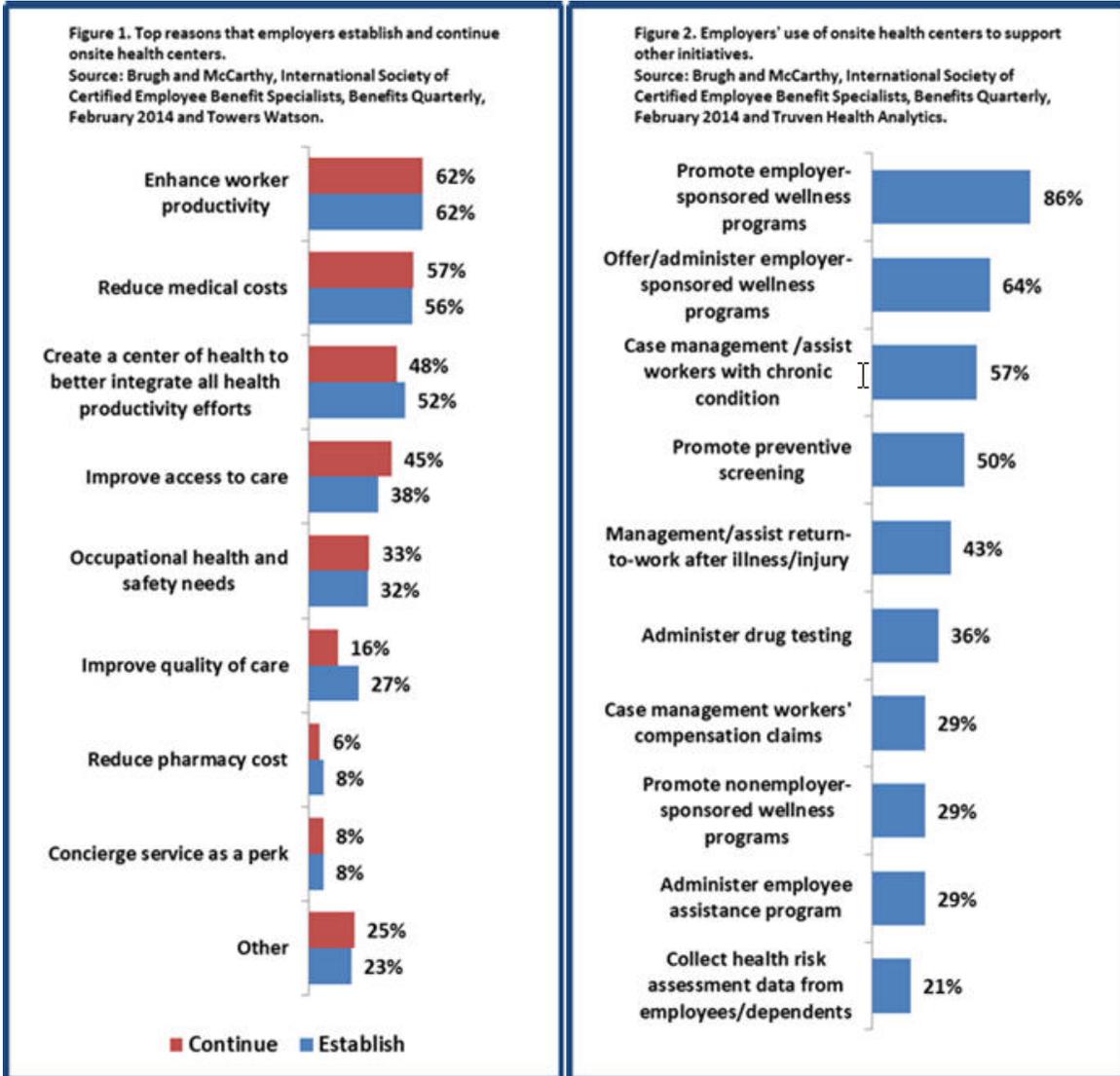
According to the report, clinics that meet cost-containment and employee productivity goals tend to have common characteristics:

- The clinic is part of an integrated, data-driven health and wellness strategic plan that has goals and objectives. The most effective strategies are premised on the idea that to have the biggest impact on cost and productivity, the plan identifies programs (both internal and external) and benefits that can work together to address the diseases and conditions that are primary cost drivers through analysis of the organization's available healthcare data.
- The clinic's management understands the organization's health and wellness strategic plan, knows what the organization's primary healthcare cost drivers are, and appreciates the clinic's role in meeting the plan's goals and objectives.
- The clinic's staff has the trust of the employees and can motivate them to follow recommendations and make needed lifestyle changes – possibly the most critical success component.
- The clinic's management and staff have intimate knowledge of the organization's other health and wellness benefits and programs and work to promote them to the clinic's patients.
- The clinic is held accountable for its role in meeting goals and objectives in the health and wellness benefit strategic plan.
- The organization has a mechanism for monitoring the clinic's clinical and nonclinical results and uses these metrics to identify and implement needed improvements.

Properly structured and integrated employer-sponsored medical clinics can have a significant impact on organizations' direct and indirect health care costs. According to the report, it is critical for employers that want to maximize the clinic's value to plan its role in the organization's data-driven, integrated health and wellness benefit programs' strategy and share that strategy with the clinic's management. In some organizations, clinics have become the center for developing, coordinating, and promoting internal health and wellness programs that are based on the organizations health care cost drivers. This integrated approach has resulted in one organization managing its five-year average healthcare cost growth to less than 4.1% per year.

A large majority (86%) of employers with on-site clinics use them for purposes well beyond standard medical care. (Figure 2)

On-site medical clinics continue to evolve as employers look to provide employees with broader services and high-quality medical care in an effort to improve employee productivity and control healthcare costs. According to the report, employers that have the greatest success in accomplishing this goal integrate the clinic into other programs and benefits that target their healthcare cost drivers.



Full text of the report is available online. Web site:

www.iscebs.org/Documents/PDF/bqpublic/BQ1_2014.pdf



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