



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

November 2022

FITNESS FOCUS

HEALTHCARE DOLLARS

The Health Savings Account

“You’ve probably heard of health savings accounts (HSAs), and you may have wondered if one would be a good fit for you. You aren’t alone.

According to a survey released in 2021, approximately 30 million Americans have chosen to use a health savings account coupled with a high-deductible health plan (HDHP) to pay for current and future healthcare costs. More than half of American workers with employer-sponsored health coverage were enrolled in HDHPs as of 2020 (some people have an HDHP but opt not to open an HSA; you’re allowed to contribute to an HSA if you have HDHP coverage, but are not required to do so).

HSAs have increased in popularity since their debut in 2004. Understanding the increase in enrollment isn’t difficult when one takes a closer look at how HSAs work and the impressive array of benefits they offer to people willing and able to use them.”

This introduction by author Louise Norris of the Health Insurance and Reform Authority is the lead in to a very helpful article entitled “**Top 10 Reasons To Use Health Savings Accounts**” that was published on June 1, 2022. The full article with its Top 10 Reasons and supporting links can be found [HERE](#).

More information about specific HSA-eligible plans can be found throughout this month’s newsletter. (kt)

HEALTH TIP



INSURANCE VS. HEALTH COST-SHARING – PLEASE READ

307Health has always recommended that members carry some type of third-party health care coverage in addition to their direct primary care (DPC) membership. This coverage can help cover medical expenses from other providers that are often incurred in catastrophic situations like unplanned illness or injury requiring specialty, surgical, or hospital-based medical care. There are two types of health care coverage.

Health Insurance - Traditional health insurance carriers (i.e. Blue Cross / Blue Shield) guarantee coverage for medical expenses as outlined in their explanation of benefits in exchange for a monthly fee. Your insurance carrier must have the financial means to pay for the specific benefits you have purchased. This type of insurance is complicated by deductibles, co-pays, out-of-pocket expenses, etc.

Health Cost-Sharing – Organizations offering this type of coverage are NOT insurance companies but rather “communities” of people coming together to “share” each others significant health care costs. Members pay a monthly “contribution” into an escrow account which is then used to pay for bills submitted by other members. Members are committed to healthy and conscientious living to keep health care costs down. Original plans were religious based, however, newer plans are now available that pair specifically with DPC memberships like 307Health and may even allow contributions to a tax-sheltered health savings account (HSA). Because health cost-sharing plans are NOT insurance, there is NO guarantee of coverage of medical bills. (db)



DOCTOR’S NOTE

OPEN ENROLLEMENT SEASON—AFFORDABLE OPTIONS INCREASE

By Karrie Tracy, Newsletter Editor

Here it is again – that window of time to enroll in health insurance for next year. As much as we’d like to avoid the decision, no decision is a decision. Sigh. Where’s my crystal ball?

It has been said that “insurance is planning for the worst while expecting the best.” There is no question in our minds that health insurance is a good thing to have. I know this first hand as health insurance has financially underwritten my own unplanned cancer care and orthopedic surgeries to an extent that probably helped my childhood and adult families avoid medical indebtedness or bankruptcy.

But medical insurance is increasingly expensive and complicated to figure out for people of all ages and stages. High-deductible plans, health savings accounts, and medical expense cost-sharing organizations have responded to this dilemma, but these, too, are overwhelmingly dense and complicated at times for the average person who is just trying to steward and complete life’s responsibilities while finding time to enjoy life’s pleasures like family and hobbies.

We hope you find this month’s newsletter focus helpful. You can read about our new partnership with **HSA For America** in *Practice News* and we focus on the new medical savings account (MSA) plan offered to Medicare clients through **Lasso Healthcare** in *Healthcare News and History*. Both these organizations offer healthcare coverage products that could pair well with your Direct Primary Care membership at 307Health.

307HEALTH
250 N. EVARTS STREET
POWELL, WY 82435
307HEALTH.ORG

BETTER ACCESS = BETTER CARE.

PRACTICE NEWS

**ANNOUNCING A NEW PARTNERSHIP WITH HSA FOR AMERICA
DPC-Specific and HSA-Eligible Cost-Sharing Plans Available**

307Health announces a new partnership with Colorado-based **HSA For America**. This brokerage company was established in 2004 to bring game-changing product coordination to the healthshare plan market. **HSA For America** is a centralized brokerage company that offers free one-stop shopping for clients seeking to learn more about affordable and personally-tailored healthcare coverage plans.

HSA For America offers access to the familiar cost-sharing plans such as Medi-Share, but also offers two new plan options that may open the door for many people who were not eligible to use a health expense cost-sharing plan in the past. These two plans are briefly described here.

MPB Health: Direct - This wrap-around catastrophic plan provides low-cost ER and hospital-stay protection that is designed to specifically pair with direct primary care services like 307Health. This plan understands 307Health will meet your primary care needs and is streamlined to help cover only unexpected emergency or hospital bills. For some people, this plan can start at \$170/month.

MPB Health: Secure - This is the first healthcare expense-sharing product we are aware of that provides *ACA preventive coverage* which then makes it eligible to pair with a tax-deferred Health Savings Account. We have reviewed these plans and find they are reasonably priced compared to other healthcare expense-sharing plans while providing preventive care coverage (i.e. mammograms, colonoscopies) and also allowing for tax-deferred **HSA contributions**.

HSA For America agent **LOU SPATAFORE** can help clients find the best plan for them from a wide array of healthshare plans. For more information about **HSA For America** offerings, please contact Lou Spatafore directly at 877-676-1039. (db)



MEMBER SERVICES FOCUS

NEWSLETTER ARTICLES INDEXED AND AVAILABLE ONLINE

Four hundred and twenty-five is the number of articles that have been written for the monthly 307Health newsletter since the practice doors opened in in 2015. That is a lot of good information for our members and the community!

These articles are all posted by month-of-publication on the 307Health public website. Now, the next step to easy article discovery, reference, and sharing has been taken with the creation of three article indices – General, Wellness, and CoVID. Under these three general subjects, individual articles are grouped by topic categories such as “Wellness”, “Accounts and Billing”, and “Communications: Patient – Provider Messaging”.

- Health & Wellness Article Index **HERE**
- General Article Index **HERE**
- CoVID Article Index **HERE**

Please take a few minutes to explore these three new article indexes and let us know your thoughts – is this new website feature helpful for you? (kt)

NOTICE-OF-CHANGE SENT TO MEMBERS

On October 6, a “notice-of-change” to the *307Health Terms and Conditions of Membership* was sent to all active 307Health members **HERE**, along with an accompany letter of explanation **HERE**. The two changes described in the notice go into effect January 1, 2023. The changes are related to pricing and involve a \$5/month increase to the monthly member fee across all but one pricing tier, along with a new monthly cap for larger families.

A \$25 increase to the \$50 enrollment fee for new members will bring this one-time fee to \$75. The enrollment fee increase will not affect those 307Health members enrolled prior to January 1. Questions? Reach out anytime. (kt)

HEALTHCARE NEWS AND HISTORY

THE MEDICARE MEDICAL SAVINGS ACCOUNT PLAN

A New Option In Wyoming

A Medicare MSA plan combines a high-deductible insurance plan with a medical savings account. The company **LASSO HEALTHCARE** is offering the first such policy in Wyoming.

Medicare's website describes the Medical Savings Account (MSA) this way - “Medicare works with private insurance companies to offer you ways to get your health care coverage. These companies can choose to offer a consumer-directed Medicare Advantage Plan, called a Medicare MSA Plan. These plans are similar to Health Savings Account Plans available outside of Medicare. You can choose your health care services and providers (MSA plans usually don't have a network of doctors, other health care providers, or hospitals).”

A four-step process is described in more detail on Lasso Healthcare's website:

- Sign up for a high-deductible health plan with a medical savings account. There is no charge to sign up for these plans. (You must continue to pay your Medicare Part B (Hospital) premium.)
- Money will then be deposited by Lasso into your medical savings account. For example, if you have a \$5000 deductible, \$2000 will be deposited into your medical savings account.
- You may use your MSA funds to pay for health care expenses. Unused funds may be rolled over into the next calendar year.
- Lasso pays for Medicare-covered services once the deductible is reached. Under this example, there is a maximum of \$3000 out-of-pocket

A Medicare drug plan (Part D) must be purchased separately. (mt)