



Wednesday, September 13, 2023

**Statement from Lora Pellegrini, President and CEO of the MA Association of Health Plans
On the Health Policy Commission’s 2023 Health Care Cost Trends Report and Recommendations**

“The Massachusetts Association of Health Plans applauds the Health Policy Commission for its continued commitment to identifying and analyzing the primary drivers of health care spending: high and ever-increasing provider and pharmaceutical prices along with routine care being delivered in high-cost settings. This year’s Annual Cost Trends Report confirms that without action to constrain excessive provider prices and enhance oversight of pharmaceutical spending, health care and coverage will be unaffordable for many employers and consumers.

MAHP and our member plans agree with the HPC’s sentiment that “policymakers should not settle for a false choice between a high-quality health care system and an affordable one.” In Massachusetts, where close to 90% of every premium dollar is spent on direct medical care, health plans must use all tools at their disposal to contain costs and ensure quality for the employers and consumers they serve. But today, many of these tools are under attack by pharmaceutical manufacturers, physician groups and other special interest groups seeking to eliminate vital checks and balances in our health care system. If these tools continue to be eroded, health plans will be unable to ensure member access to affordable, high-quality, equitable health care and we will fail to meet the state’s cost growth benchmark.

Over 30 state reports and countless national studies have pointed to provider prices and run-away pharmaceutical costs as the key drivers of rising health care premiums. Without concrete action to constrain these costs, health plans will be unable to meet any proposed affordability target or the cost growth benchmark. As premiums reflect the cost of care, it is imperative that the Legislature take action to address the primary drivers of health care spending to make health care more affordable for employers and consumers in Massachusetts. MAHP’s member health plans have and will continue to do all we can to contain costs and make health care more affordable for citizens of the Commonwealth.”

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