

J.D. Power Reports: Member Satisfaction Significantly Increases as Health Plans Take Customer-Centric Approach

WESTLAKE VILLAGE, Calif.: 9 March 2015 — Following a year filled with negative news coverage about health insurance, a bumpy start to the launch of the Affordable Care Act, and an atmosphere of fear, member satisfaction with health plans has increased significantly as plan administrators take a customer-centric approach, helping to build member trust and loyalty, according to the J.D. Power 2015 Member Health Plan StudySM released today.

Now in its ninth year, the study measures satisfaction among members of 134 health plans in 18 regions throughout the United States by examining six key factors: coverage and benefits; provider choice; information and communication; claims processing; cost; and customer service. Satisfaction is calculated on a 1,000-point scale.

Overall member satisfaction averages 679, which is a 10 point improvement from 2014. The increase in satisfaction is driven by improved performance across all factors, most notably in information and communication (+17 points), which is primarily a result of efforts among many of the health plans to retool their approach by refining messaging, adjusting message frequency and upgrading their website. Satisfaction in the customer service factor has increased by 11 points, driven partially by matching communication methods to member preferences, such as mobile and text. Cost satisfaction increases by 13 points while fewer members indicate having experienced an increase in their monthly premium, as well as a decline in overall out-of-pocket expenses for individuals and families.

“Health plans have come a long way since last year as the focus has shifted toward better serving member needs and building trust. However, there is still a lot of work to do,” said **Rick Johnson, senior director of the healthcare practice at J.D. Power**. “Health plans need to take a more customer-centric approach and keep their members engaged through regular communications about programs and services available through their plan. When members perceive their plan as a trusted health partner, there is a positive impact on loyalty and advocacy.”

According to the study, overall satisfaction is significantly higher among the 19 percent of members who strongly agree their health plan is a trusted partner in managing their health. Among members who say they “strongly agree” that their health plan is a trusted partner, satisfaction increases by 201 points.

KEY FINDINGS

- Members who say they “strongly agree” that their health plan is a trusted advisor are less likely to switch health plan providers.
- Within information and communication, satisfaction ratings have improved from 2014 in the factor’s four attributes: ease of understanding your plan’s benefits and services (6.4 vs. 6.2, respectively, on a 10-point scale); frequency of communications (6.3 vs. 6.1, respectively); usefulness of information (6.4 vs. 6.2, respectively); and variety of communications (6.3 vs. 6.1, respectively).

- Similarly, satisfaction ratings have also improved year over year in the attributes within the cost factor: premiums (5.9 vs. 5.7, respectively); deductible amount (5.8 vs. 5.7, respectively); co-pays for prescription medication (6.4 vs. 6.2, respectively); and co-pays for doctor visits (6.3 vs. 6.2, respectively).
- Overall member satisfaction is 108 points higher among members who have contacted their plan via mobile app at least once in the past 12 months than among those who haven't. While members under 40 years old contact their plan via text and mobile app at a significantly higher rate than older members, the telephone is still the most frequently used contact method across all age cohorts.

Study Rankings

Satisfaction is highest among health plan members in the California (695), Northwest (693), Illinois–Indiana (689), Michigan (688) and Mountain (686) regions. Satisfaction is lowest among members in the New England (664) and the Southwest and Minnesota–Wisconsin regions at a tie (665).

WEST

- **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan** (778) ranks highest among health plans in the California region for an eighth consecutive year. No other plans in this region perform above the region average.
- **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan** (733) ranks highest among health plans in the Colorado region for an eighth consecutive year. No other plans in this region perform above the region average.
- **SelectHealth** (711) ranks highest among health plans in the Mountain region—which includes Idaho, Montana, Utah and Wyoming—for a sixth consecutive year, followed by **Aetna** (694).
- **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan** (736) ranks highest among health plans in the Northwest region—which includes Oregon and Washington—for a second consecutive year, followed by **Group Health Cooperative** (710) and **Providence Health Plan** (707).
- **Cigna** (676) ranks highest among health plans in the Southwest region—which includes Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada—followed by **Aetna** (674) and **BlueCross BlueShield of Arizona** (672).

MIDWEST

- **BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas** (701) ranks highest among health plans in the Heartland region—which includes Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma—followed by **BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas City** (698) and **BlueCross BlueShield of Oklahoma** (685).
- **BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois** (699) ranks highest among health plans in the Illinois–Indiana region. No other plans in this region perform above the regional average.
- **Health Alliance Plan of Michigan** (692) ranks highest among health plans in the Michigan region for an eighth consecutive year, followed by **BlueCross BlueShield of Michigan** and **Priority Health** in a tie (691).
- **Dean Health Plan** (698) ranks highest among health plans in the Minnesota–Wisconsin region, for a second consecutive year, followed by **HealthPartners** (684) and **Medica Health Plans** (671).
- **Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of Ohio** (686) ranks highest among health plans in the Ohio region, followed by **Aetna** (685).

EAST

- **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan** (762) ranks highest among health plans in the Mid-Atlantic region—which includes Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C.—for a seventh consecutive year, followed by **Cigna** (683) and **CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield** and **UnitedHealthcare** in a tie (676).
- **Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire** (682) ranks highest among health plans in the New England region—which includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont—followed by **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care** (677) and **BlueCross BlueShield of Massachusetts** (676).
- **Capital District Physicians' Health Plan, Inc.** (739) ranks highest among health plans in the New York-New Jersey region for a second consecutive year, followed by **Independent Health Association** (733) and **BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York and BlueShield of Northeastern New York** (692).
- **Highmark BlueCross BlueShield** (696) ranks highest among health plans in the Pennsylvania region, followed by **Highmark BlueShield** and **Independence BlueCross** in a tie (692) and **Capital BlueCross** (691).

SOUTH

- **Humana** (687) ranks highest among health plans in the East South Central region—which includes Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee—followed by **BlueCross BlueShield of Louisiana** (684) and **Cigna** (683).
- **AvMed** (718) ranks highest among health plans in the Florida region for a fourth consecutive year, followed by **Cigna** (688) and **Humana** (682).
- **Kaiser Foundation Health Plan** (718) ranks highest among health plans in the South Atlantic region—which includes Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina—for a sixth consecutive year, followed by **Aetna** (703) and **Cigna** (690).
- **BlueCross BlueShield of Texas** and **UnitedHealthcare** tie for the highest ranking among health plans in the Texas region (690). No other plans in this region perform above the region average.

J.D. Power plans to release a Health Insurance Marketplace Exchange Shopper and Re-enrollment Study (HIX), focused on member satisfaction with health plans purchased through public exchanges, as well as the shopping experience on those exchanges, in April, 2015. In October 2015, J.D. Power will also release a Medicare Advantage Study, focused on member satisfaction with Medicare Advantage plans.

The 2015 Member Health Plan Study is based on responses from more than 31,000 members of 134 commercial health plans across 18 regions in the United States. The study was fielded in November and December 2014. For more comprehensive health plan rankings for all 18 U.S. regions, please visit www.jdpower.com.

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NOTE: Two charts follow.

J.D. Power 2015 Member Health Plan StudySM

Regions Included in the Member Health Plan Study

California

Colorado

East South Central (includes Alabama, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi and Tennessee)

Florida

Heartland (Includes Arkansas, Iowa, Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska and Oklahoma)

Illinois–Indiana

Michigan

Mid–Atlantic (includes Maryland, Virginia and Washington, D.C.)

Minnesota–Wisconsin

Mountain (includes Idaho, Montana, Utah and Wyoming)

New England (includes Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Rhode Island and Vermont)

New York–New Jersey

Northwest (includes Oregon and Washington)

Ohio

Pennsylvania

South Atlantic (includes Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina)

Southwest (includes Arizona, New Mexico and Nevada)

Texas

Source: J.D. Power 2015 Member Health Plan StudySM

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2014 Member Health Plan StudySM

Top Three Plans in Overall Member Satisfaction by Region

California* Highest: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan	Mountain* Highest: SelectHealth Aetna
Colorado* Highest: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan	New England Highest: Anthem Health Plans of New Hampshire Harvard Pilgrim Health Care BlueCross BlueShield of Massachusetts
East South Central Highest: Humana BlueCross BlueShield of Louisiana Cigna	New York–New Jersey Highest: Capital District Physicians' Health Plan, Inc. Independent Health Association BCBS of Western New York and BS of Northeastern New York
Florida Highest: AvMed Cigna Humana	Northwest Highest: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Group Health Cooperative Providence Health Plan
Heartland Highest: BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas BlueCross BlueShield of Kansas City BlueCross BlueShield of Oklahoma	Ohio* Highest: Anthem BlueCross BlueShield of Ohio Aetna
Illinois-Indiana* Highest: BlueCross BlueShield of Illinois	Pennsylvania Highest: Highmark BlueCross BlueShield Highmark BlueShield (tie) Independence BlueCross (tie) Capital BlueCross
Michigan Highest: Health Alliance Plan of Michigan BlueCross BlueShield of Michigan Priority Health	South Atlantic Highest: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Aetna Cigna
Mid–Atlantic Highest: Kaiser Foundation Health Plan Cigna CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (tie) UnitedHealthcare (tie)	Southwest Highest: Cigna Aetna BlueCross BlueShield of Arizona
Minnesota–Wisconsin Highest: Dean Health Plan HealthPartners Medica Health Plans	Texas* Highest: BlueCross BlueShield of Texas (tie) UnitedHealthcare (tie)

** No other plan in this region performs above the region average.*

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