

HEALTH INSURANCE

## Easy to Sell, Easy to Use

Offering limited-benefit health plans is worth your clients' time and money. | By Curt A. Wieden

For many health-insurance advisors, the world of limited-benefit health plans is foreign territory. Questions about administration, implementation and return-on-investment are common. Many advisors ask: "Is offering a limited-benefit health plan worth my client's time and energy?"

If you're offering the right plan to the right client, it definitely is worth it. A good limited-benefit health plan requires minimal time and effort from the employer, and the returns are well worth the investment.

### Recruit, retain and reap the rewards

The value of a limited-benefit plan lies in its ability to cover common day-to-day medical expenses (such as for antibiotics and office visits) with a reasonable amount of coverage for unexpected illnesses and accidents. A good limited-benefit plan helps an employee offset the cost of routine medical care and plan for ongoing health expenses—at an affordable price.

Access to everyday medical care and wellness benefits ensures healthier and happier workers, improved productivity and a decrease in employee turnover. This means that your client spends less time in hiring and training new employees and sees less employee absenteeism. Also, providing access to benefits can make a difference when recruiting high-caliber employees in a competitive job market.

So what does it cost the employer to improve recruitment, retention, productivity and employee health? More often than not, nothing. Many limited-benefit plans require little or no contribution from the employer, with plans starting at just an hour or two of an employee's weekly pay. The

biggest investment required is in selecting the correct plan for the employees. Once that's done, the plan usually requires minimal effort to implement.

Clients with a large percentage of high-turnover, hourly employees—both full- and part-time—experience the greatest rewards. These include industries such as hospitality, retail, restaurant, construction and manufacturing. Even staffing firms are implementing limited-benefit health plans to attract higher-quality workers.

## You've got the resources and the knowledge to simplify and optimize your client's benefits strategy.

### What to focus on

When selecting a limited-benefit health plan for your client, focus on ease of enrollment and administration as well as on the simplicity of the plan itself.

To meet your client's needs, look for a plan with easy administration and support from dedicated account managers. Other features such as a state-of-the-art billing system that allows for automated payroll deductions can interface with your client's system and reduce hassles.

Limited-benefit plans are often an individual's first experience with health insurance. Therefore, plans with complicated reimbursement requirements, convoluted disclaimers, or too much industry jargon in membership materials can be troublesome. Look for easy enrollment, simple plan design, "high-touch" consultative customer service and bilingual communications. Some companies even offer decision-support tools for employees to help choose a plan that works best for them.

### How to sell them

Selling these plans is easy. Start by explaining what a limited-benefit health plan *is not*. It's *not* a major medical plan designed to cover catastrophic health issues. It's *not* a discount plan with minimal value. It is a health insurance plan designed to cover common medical illnesses and injuries for people who don't have access to comprehensive insurance coverage. As mentioned before, limited-benefit health plans can be perfectly positioned to meet the needs of clients

with a population of high-turnover, part-time and hourly employees.

In addition, many employers need multiple solutions for health coverage, including a waiting-period plan for their professional staff, a leaner plan for hourly workers, and something in between for franchise or store-level managers. Fortunately, many limited-benefit health plans provide varying levels of coverage designed for employees with different wage levels.

In this case, an advisor is the most valuable asset a client will have to help sort through the available options. You've got the resources and the knowledge to simplify and optimize your client's benefits strategy. And with one additional product in your portfolio, you'll be prepared to provide a benefit solution that meets the needs of all of your client's employees. □

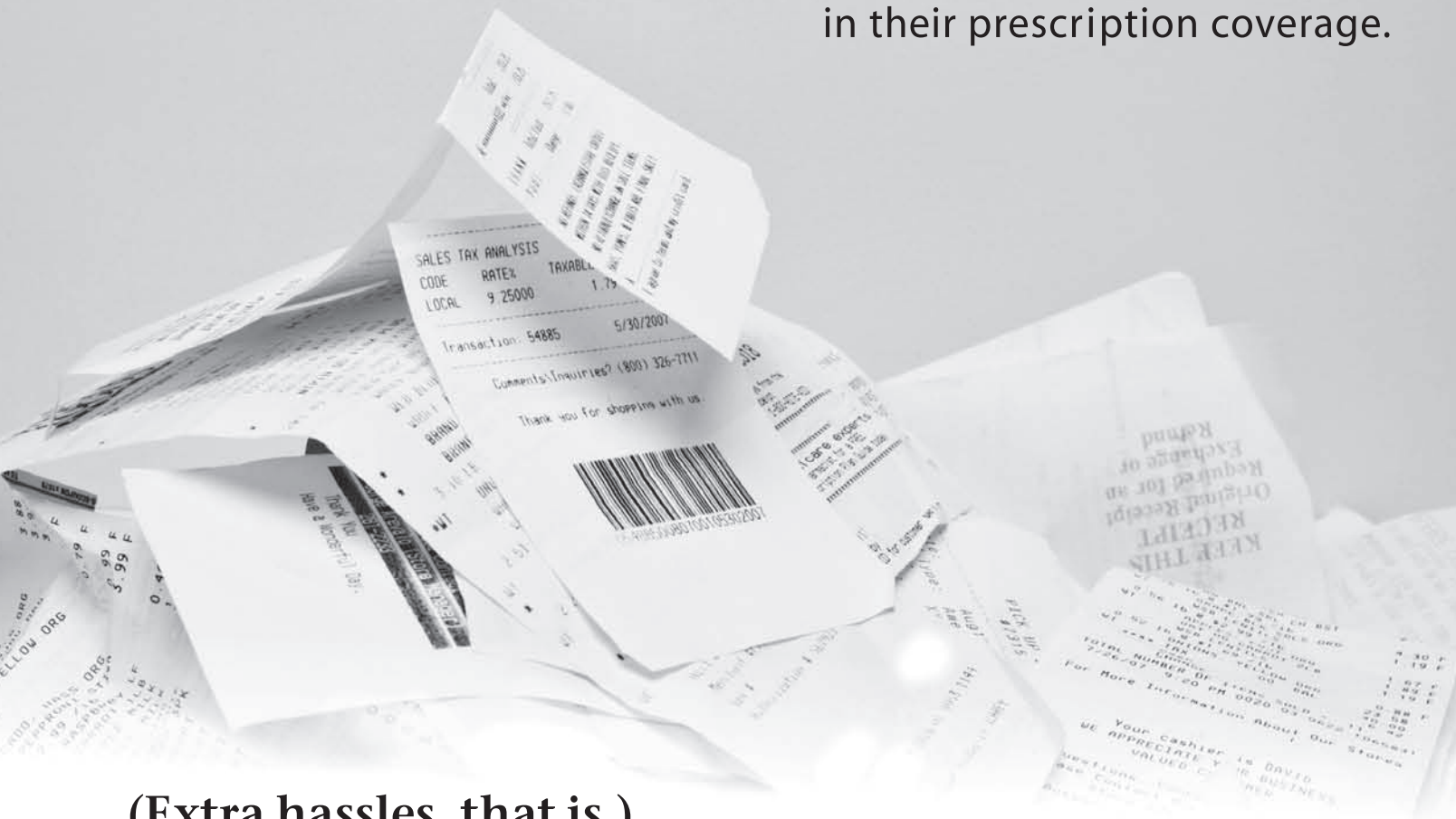
---

Curt A. Wieden is vice president of Product and Marketing for CIGNA Voluntary at its headquarters in Phoenix. He can be reached at 800-258-9260.

Some limited-benefit plans include

# a lot of extras

in their prescription coverage.



## (Extra hassles, that is.)

Limited-benefit health plans are only useful if they're usable. That's why CIGNA Voluntary introduced a new copay prescription benefit as part of our Starbridge limited-benefit plans.

There are no forms to fill out, no need to keep records and receipts, and no waiting for reimbursement by mail. Our members simply pay a copay at the pharmacy just like they would with many major medical plans.

At CIGNA Voluntary, we believe that easy-to-use, easy-to-administer plans are good for our members, and good for business.

---

**Find out more at [www.starbridge.com/broker](http://www.starbridge.com/broker) or call 1-877-874-8836**

---



Not available in all states. "CIGNA" and "CIGNA HealthCare" refer to various operating subsidiaries of CIGNA Corporation. Products and services are provided by these operating subsidiaries and not by CIGNA Corporation. These operating subsidiaries include Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Tel-Drug, Inc. and its affiliates, CIGNA Behavioral Health, Inc., Intracorp, and HMO or service company subsidiaries of CIGNA Health Corporation and CIGNA Dental Health, Inc.

