

Colorado's All Payer Claims Database

Self-Insured Health Insurance Plan FAQs



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VALUE IN HEALTH CARE

What is a Self-Insured Employer?

Self-insured employers are businesses that pay for employee health insurance claims directly, either out of pocket or through special funds earmarked for this purpose. This means that the employer assumes all financial risks for their employees and does not have a traditional “fully-insured” plan through a commercial insurance company. Some self-insured plans are subject to the federal Employee Retirement Income Security Act (ERISA) standards while some are not. More information can be found at the Self-Insurance Institute of America (www.siaa.org).

What is the Colorado All Payer Claims Database (CO APCD)?

Created by legislation in 2010, the CO APCD is the most comprehensive source for health care price, cost, quality, and utilization data in Colorado. The secure database currently includes health insurance claims from the largest health plans including, non-ERISA self-insured and voluntarily submitted ERISA-based self-insured plans, Medicare and Medicare Advantage, and Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program). These claims represent more than 4.3 million unique covered lives and the vast majority of the insured population of Colorado.

Who is the Center for Improving Value in Health Care?

The Center for Improving Value in Health Care (CIVHC), a non-profit, objective organization administers the CO APCD through appointment by the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF). CIVHC strives to empower individuals, communities, and organizations through collaborative support services and health care information to advance the Triple Aim of better health, better care, and lower costs.

Why Does Colorado Need an APCD?

Our health care delivery system does not consistently deliver high-quality or cost-effective care, and it is difficult to identify where we have opportunities to make improvements. The CO APCD fills those gaps by providing employers, consumers, payers, providers, policy makers and other stakeholders a more complete picture of health care spending and utilization across Colorado.

Why Do Self-Insured Claims Need to be Included in the CO APCD?

Self-insured claims represent approximately 30 percent of insured lives in CO and pose a significant gap in the market when it comes to analyzing data in the CO APCD. While some ERISA-based plans are already submitting their data, adding more Coloradans covered under this important part of the market will allow for a more complete picture, illuminating even more opportunities for positive change. Including self-insured ERISA plans will help employers identify ways to save costs and improve the health of their employees and enhances health care transparency for the benefit of all Coloradans.

What are the Benefits to Self-insured Employers?

Self-insured employers have endured rising health care costs year after year, putting a financial burden on their business and ability to recruit and retain employees. By adding their health insurance claims to the CO APCD, they will have the ability to compare themselves to other plans across the state, illuminating ways to save money and improve the care provided to their employees. Data from the CO APCD can help employers identify where they have options to make informed decisions including selecting plans with high value providers and changing benefit designs focused on keeping employees healthy and helping them make smart, informed health care decisions.



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What is the cost?

There is no cost from CIVHC to include claims in the CO APCD. Many Administrative Service Organizations (ASOs) and Third Party Administrators (TPAs) are not charging clients for this service. We suggest employers check directly with their ASO or TPA to inquire.

How is Privacy Protected?

Data submitted to the CO APCD by health insurance companies is encrypted, access-controlled and aggregated. No identified data is available in the public reports we provide, and the Colorado APCD complies strictly with all HIPAA, HITECH, and Anti-Trust laws. Protected data elements such as name, street address and Social Security number are removed and replaced with a unique identifier to ensure patient protection.

Who Else Can Use the CO APCD, and in What Ways?

- **Providers and facilities** can gauge their costs and outcomes across all of their patients, not simply those covered by one particular health plan. They can get a picture of how they compare to their peers and how new payment and delivery initiatives are working.
- **Health plans** can use CO APCD data to identify variability in costs and outcomes, and assist with benefit design that rewards high-value providers.
- **Policymakers** can identify areas of disparity in costs and outcomes, share best practices from high-performing areas and target interventions and policies that can reduce variation.
- **Consumers** can use public data available to shop for high value health care services by searching prices and quality.

Are ERISA Plans Required to Submit to the CO APCD?

Although Colorado can no longer require ERISA plans to submit data to the CO APCD due to the Gobeille vs. Liberty Mutual Supreme Court Ruling in March, 2016, the ruling DOES NOT prohibit voluntary submission of claims information from self-insured ERISA plans. CIVHC and the Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF) are strongly encouraging employers to continue or begin to submit data to the CO APCD.

If I'm another category of payer, not an ERISA plan, can I stop submitting data to the CO APCD?

No. The Supreme Court's decision only applies to a narrow subsection of payers – specifically, to ERISA plans. The decision does not affect the legal obligation under the Colorado statute and implementing regulations for non-ERISA self-funded employer sponsored health plans that have 100 or more covered lives or any other entities that meet the definition of payer under 10 C.C.R. § 2505-5(1.200) to submit claims data to the CO APCD.

To learn more, visit www.civhc.org or contact ColoradoAPCD@civhc.org.