

# ACT ON THE FACTS

## Care After Mental Health Hospitalizations

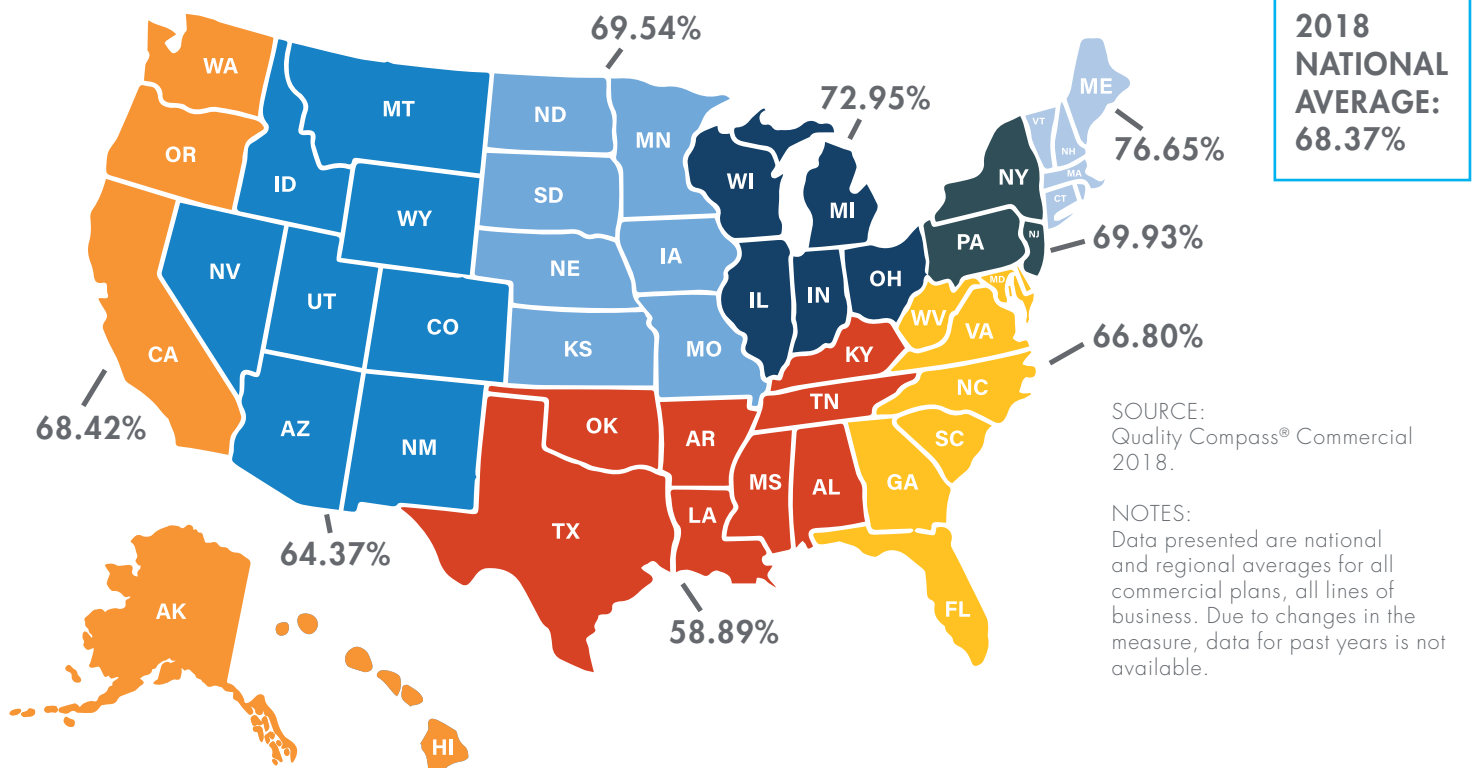
Mental health has become a serious concern for employers, especially as they consider the workforce cost and productivity implications. When a diagnosis of serious mental illness requires hospitalization, extra attention and care is required. Employers can take measures to ensure appropriate care and treatment and lower rates of readmission that lead to lower costs and better outcomes.

The following provides an overview of this topic and provides suggested actions employers can take.

### OVERVIEW

Data pulled from NCQA's Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set (HEDIS®) highlights the variation in mental health care in the United States. The map below shows the percentage of adults and children (6 years and older) who were hospitalized for treatment of a mental health disorder and received follow-up care with a specialist within 30 days of their hospital stay. This data shows that even in the highest performing parts of the country, a significant number of individuals are not receiving timely follow-up care. Health plans that connect these individuals to appropriate care can help improve transitions back to work and lower the risk of repeated trips to the hospital.

### PERCENTAGE OF ADULTS AND CHILDREN RECEIVING FOLLOW-UP CARE WITHIN 30 DAYS AFTER MENTAL HEALTH HOSPITALIZATION BY REGION



HEDIS is the most widely used health care quality measurement tool in the United States and is designed to help employers understand the quality of health care provided to their employees and dependents.

## WHAT EMPLOYERS CAN DO

Ensuring quality health care for employees and their dependents with serious mental illness can be a challenge for employers, yet, in the interest of success for both the individual and the organization, it is critically important for this population to receive care that leads to the best possible outcomes. Employers can take action by implementing the following steps:

- Determine health plan performance on current post-acute care strategies for your population. How does your health plan compare with national and/or regional benchmarks?
- Work with your health plan to implement an action plan that includes a focus on mental health and an effective approach to follow-up care.
- Identify appropriate mental health programs available through your health plan, employee assistance program or other health care partners. Determine how these programs can integrate with current benefits.
- Make sure your current communication strategy reduces the stigma of mental health issues and highlights the value of seeking care. Support employee utilization of appropriate programs and services with consistent communication through different media (online, print, social).

## RESOURCES FOR EMPLOYERS

**eValue8™:** An online plan evaluation tool of the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser coalitions. It was created by business coalitions and employers to define, measure and evaluate health plan performance.

In 2018, the National Alliance developed an eValue8 deep dive report on **Mental Health** that assessed the performance of health plans and behavioral health organizations across key areas and provided action steps that support all stakeholders (employers, health plans, behavioral health organizations and providers).

**HEDIS:** A standardized population health management tool that can help employers learn about the health of their employees and measure the quality of care their population receives.

**Quality Compass:** A comprehensive online database that provides national, regional, state and health plan benchmarks and individual plan results for publicly reported performance HEDIS measures. This online database provides up to three years of performance trends to allow year-over-year tracking.

### About NCQA

The National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) is a 501 (c)(3) not-for-profit that uses measurement, transparency and accountability to improve health care. NCQA creates standards, measures performance and highlights organizations that do well. All this helps drive improvement, save lives, keep people healthy and save money.

HEDIS® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

Quality Compass® is a registered trademark of the National Committee for Quality Assurance.

1100 13th Street NW | Third Floor | Washington, DC 20005

[www.ncqa.org](http://www.ncqa.org)

### About National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions

The National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions is the only nonprofit, purchaser-led organization with a national and regional structure dedicated to driving health and healthcare value across the country. Our members represent more than 12,000 employers/purchasers and 45 million Americans, spending \$300 billion annually on healthcare.

1015 18th Street, NW, Suite 730 | Washington, DC 20036

[www.nationalalliancehealth.org](http://www.nationalalliancehealth.org)

NCQA1141-0819

