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DFWBGH Benefit Design Survey Indicates Employers Remain Committed to Wellness Programs

December 3 Value-Based Benefits & Wellness Forum to bring national experts to DFW

DALLAS – November 4, 2009 – Today the Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health, a non-profit coalition of DFW area employers, released the results of its employer survey regarding 2010 benefit plan designs indicating that in spite of current economic pressures 83 percent do not plan to cut back on their benefits and 37 percent have plans to add or improve benefits.

“The only way to bend the curve of increasing health care costs is to focus on wellness and prevention,” said Matt Robins, Director of Benefits, Sabre Holdings, a DFWBGH member. “At Sabre we’ve implemented a variety of worksite wellness programs that have positively impacted the health and well being of our employees as well as our health care costs.” Sabre’s wellness programs include employee education, health screenings, an on-campus Farmers Market and workout facility, healthy menu options in the company’s cafeteria and organized health challenges.

The survey also indicated that nearly half (48 percent) plan to shift additional costs on to employees, 93 percent have no plans to delay benefit plan changes pending final federal health care reform legislation, 57 percent anticipate an increase of six to ten percent for 2010 medical premiums, while seven percent anticipate a decrease in premium costs.

Educating Employers on Value-Based Benefits and Wellness

To support DFW employers’ wellness and prevention efforts, the DFWBGH will host its Fifth Annual Value-Based Benefits & Wellness Forum and Vendor Fair on December 3, 2009. Employers will learn about benefits and wellness programs that improve employee health and performance, save money, and deliver measurable returns on investment.

“Given the impact the economy has had on travel budgets, we are pleased to be able to bring nationally-recognized experts to Dallas to assist area employers in learning more about value-based benefits and wellness strategies,” said Marianne Fazen, PhD, executive director, DFWBGH.

The program will feature several employer case studies of successful value-based benefits strategies presented by Safeway, HEB Grocery, City of Mesquite and Covenant Health Systems, as well as sessions on key benefits and wellness design issues, such as applying behavioral economics to employee decision-making, effective incentives, and ensuring program compliance with new health care legislation and regulations.

For additional information on DFWBGH's employer survey and the December 3 Benefits and Wellness Forum, please visit www.dfwbgh.org.

About the Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health

The Dallas-Fort Worth Business Group on Health is a 130-member coalition of Dallas and Fort Worth area employers committed to market-based health care reform. Members include American Airlines, Bell Helicopter-Textron, Brinker International, Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas, JC Penney, Neiman Marcus, Sabre Holdings, Southwest Airlines, and Texas Instruments. A member of the Texas Business Group on Health and the National Business Coalition on Health, DFWBGH's goals are to empower employers to make informed health care purchasing decisions and to encourage health care providers to continuously improve their performance.

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