

2023 SURVEY REPORT

Benefits Insights

The Growing Need for Virtual Care and
Consolidation of Solutions



Contents

Introduction	1
Key Findings	3
Survey Insights	8
The Case for Virtual Specialty Care	12
Methodology	13
About Summus	14



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The case for consolidation amidst too many point solutions and varied quality

Introduction

HR and benefits leaders are managing multiple narrowly focused, condition-specific benefits solutions and actively seeking benefit consolidation opportunities.

Designing the optimal employee benefits solution in a complex market

Healthcare and medical benefits are one of the most valued components of an employer's benefit offerings. They attract and retain top talent, increase employee engagement and satisfaction, and support diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging efforts that contribute to the company's bottom line.

To understand more about HR and benefits leaders' current healthcare and medical benefits solutions and their perceptions of virtual specialty care, Summus partnered with an independent research firm to conduct a survey of 273 U.S. HR and benefits managers across all industries. HR leaders are realizing that condition-specific benefits portfolios are difficult to use, manage, and measure, with 74% looking to consolidate their benefits in the upcoming year.

About the survey

Findings from the survey impact employers, brokers and consultants, and health plans. The survey highlights the need for comprehensive, virtual solutions that accelerate access to leading specialists and account for employees' or members' personal preferences.

- ▶ **Employers** face rising medical costs and increased workloads managing multiple benefits providers and vendors, underscoring the need for solutions that cover the full range of health conditions and concerns, streamlining disparate point solutions.
- ▶ **Brokers** and consultants are advising their clients about benefit options that support employee recruitment, retention, and satisfaction while yielding results from reduced workloads to return on investment for both financial and health outcomes.
- ▶ **Health plans** are investing in solutions that accelerate access to specialists and speed time from diagnosis to treatment and reduce medical cost amidst an ongoing access and affordability crisis.



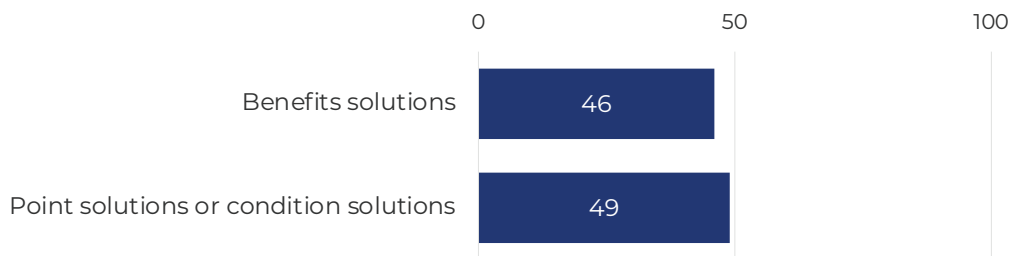
Key Findings



The majority of HR leaders are looking to consolidate benefits.

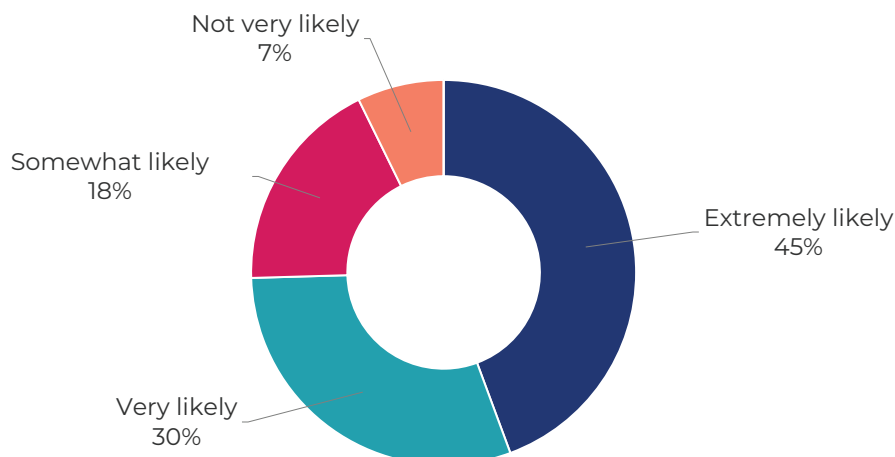
The typical benefits team is managing 46 or more benefit vendors and 49 or more condition-specific point solutions.

Current Number of Health and Medical Care Solutions Managed



While 86% of benefits leaders are satisfied with their current healthcare and medical benefits, 74% of HR leaders are actively planning to consolidate employee benefits in the coming year, with some HR leaders implementing new benefits to facilitate consolidation later this year and beyond.

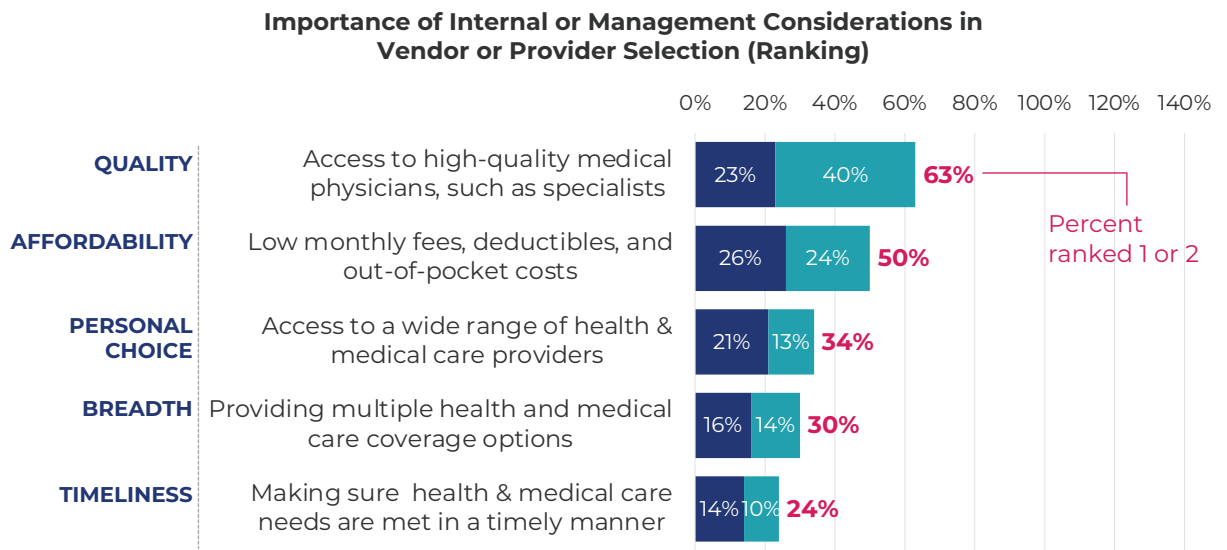
Likelihood of Consolidating Health & Medical Benefits





HR leaders want healthcare benefits that are high quality, affordable, and easy for employees to use. They also want solutions that are easy to integrate and implement.

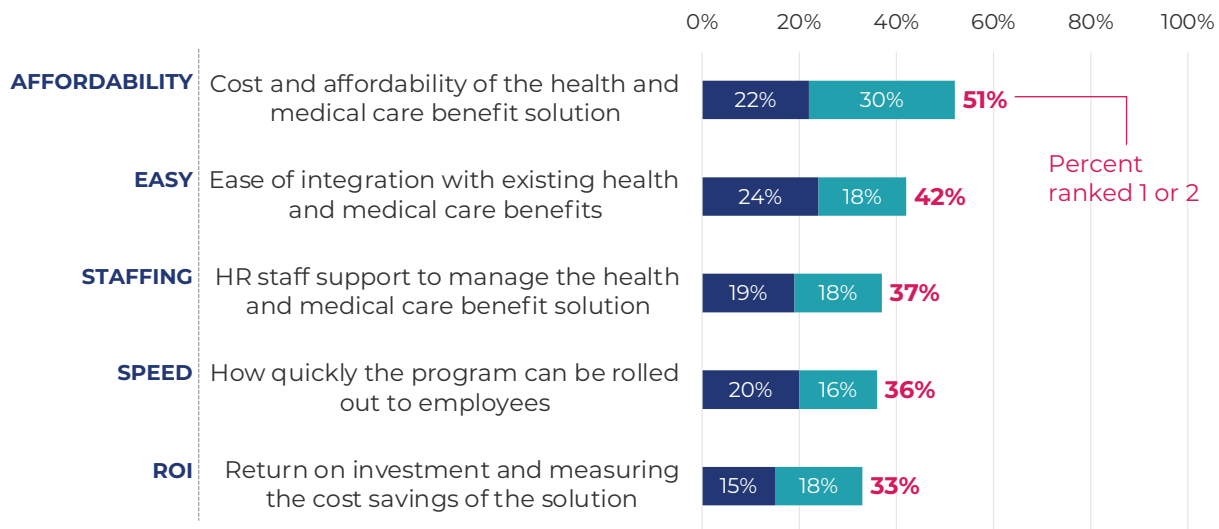
When it comes to employees, 63% of HR leaders are focused on identifying solutions that provide access to high quality specialists and 50% are focused on ensuring specialty care solutions are affordable for employees.





More than 42% of HR leaders indicate ease of use and integration as key factors in the selection of new benefits.

Importance of External or Workplace Considerations in Vendor or Provider Selection (Ranking)

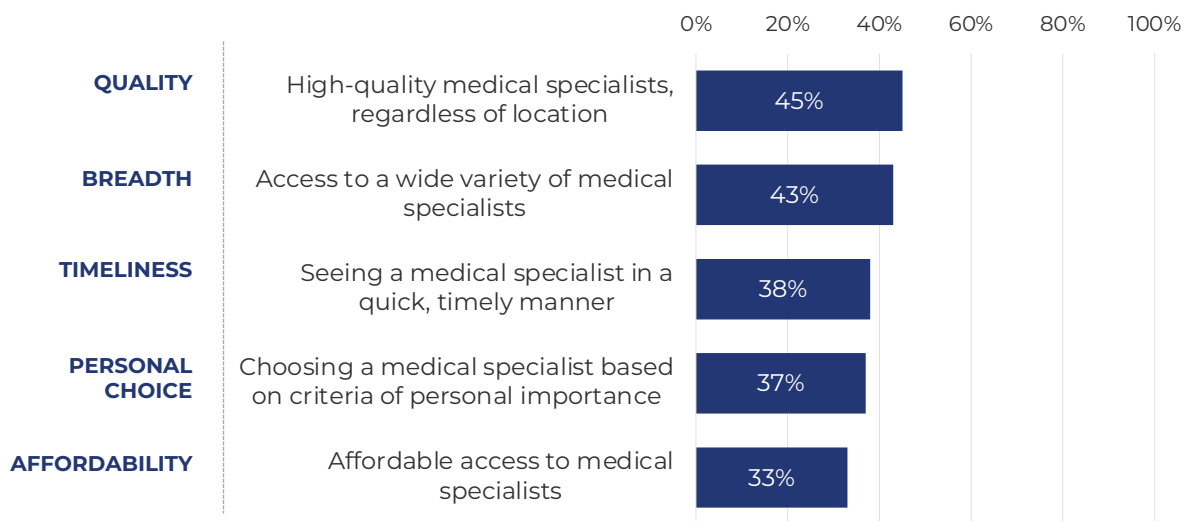




Specialty care is missing in today's employee benefit offerings.

Today's benefits strategies reveal a gap in benefits that deliver specialty care that extends beyond what an employee's primary care provider or general practitioner can provide. Of those organizations that offer a specialty care benefit, less than half of HR leaders are satisfied with the quality (45%), breadth of access to a variety of medical specialists (43%), and cost (35%) of the narrowly focused point solution.

Quality of Current Health & Medical Benefits in Access to Medical Specialists (% Excellent)

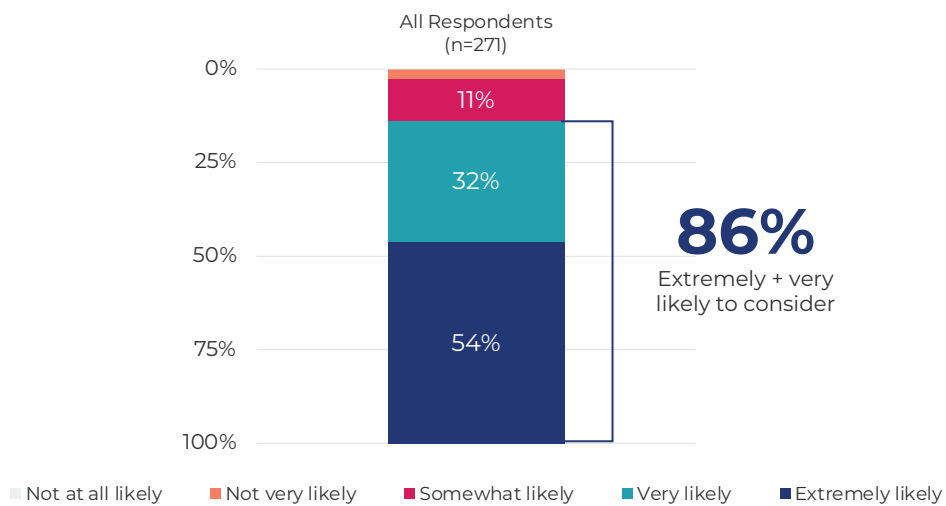


When considering a virtual specialty care benefit, HR leaders are prioritizing solutions that:


- ▶ offer personal choice and account for employee preferences
- ▶ deliver access to specialty expertise across all health concerns and conditions
- ▶ are easy to use to access diverse networks of specialists

Approximately 86% of HR leaders shared that they are likely to add virtual specialty care to their employee benefits portfolio in the next calendar year.

Likelihood to Consider Virtual Specialty Care



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 **Company size and type impacts satisfaction of specialty care offerings.**

The larger the organization the lower HR leaders' ratings for specialty care benefits across all industries. Companies with more than 5,000 employees and fewer than 15,000 report lower ratings for quality, access to a variety of specialists, and affordability. These findings are further exacerbated for publicly owned companies.

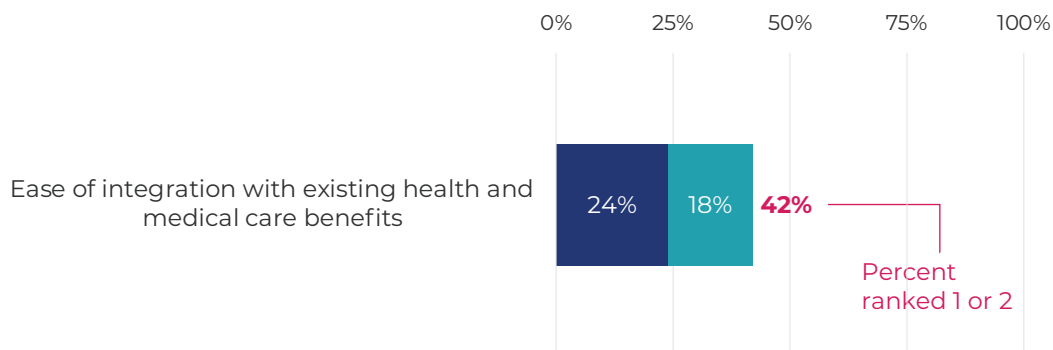
% Rating Excellent		Company size			
		1,000–2,500	2,500–5,000	5,000–15,000	15,000+
Quality	High-quality medical specialists, regardless of location	50%	53%	39%	37%
Breadth	Access to a wide variety of medical specialists	41%	51%	43%	33%
Timeliness	Seeing a medical specialist in a quick, timely manner	38%	46%	33%	35%
Personal Choice	Choosing a medical specialist based on criteria of personal importance	36%	51%	25%	35%
Affordability	Affordable access to medical specialists	29%	49%	29%	21%



Ease of benefit integration and ease of employees' use of benefits matter.

With increasing workloads and managing nearly 50 disparate point solutions, HR leaders want benefits that are easy to implement and seamlessly integrate within their existing ecosystem and infrastructure. Likewise, benefits should be easy for employees to use and access, so that they can reap all the benefits that lend to better health outcomes, productivity, and engagement.

Importance of External or Workplace Considerations in Vendor or Provider Selection (Ranking)

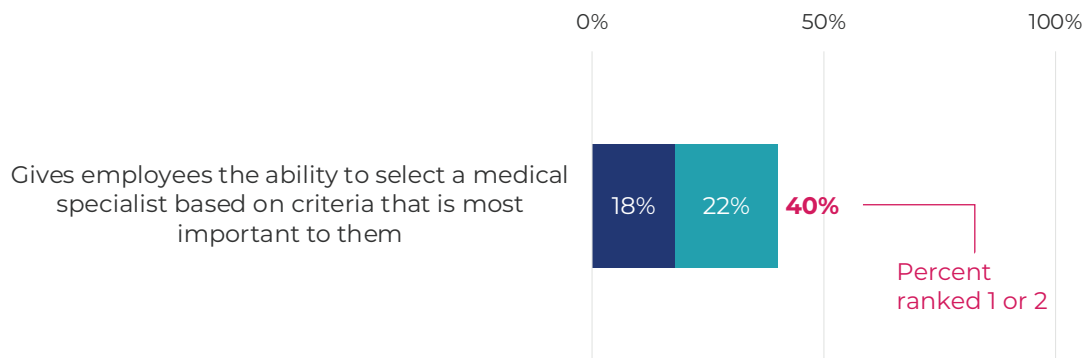




Personal choice is paramount.

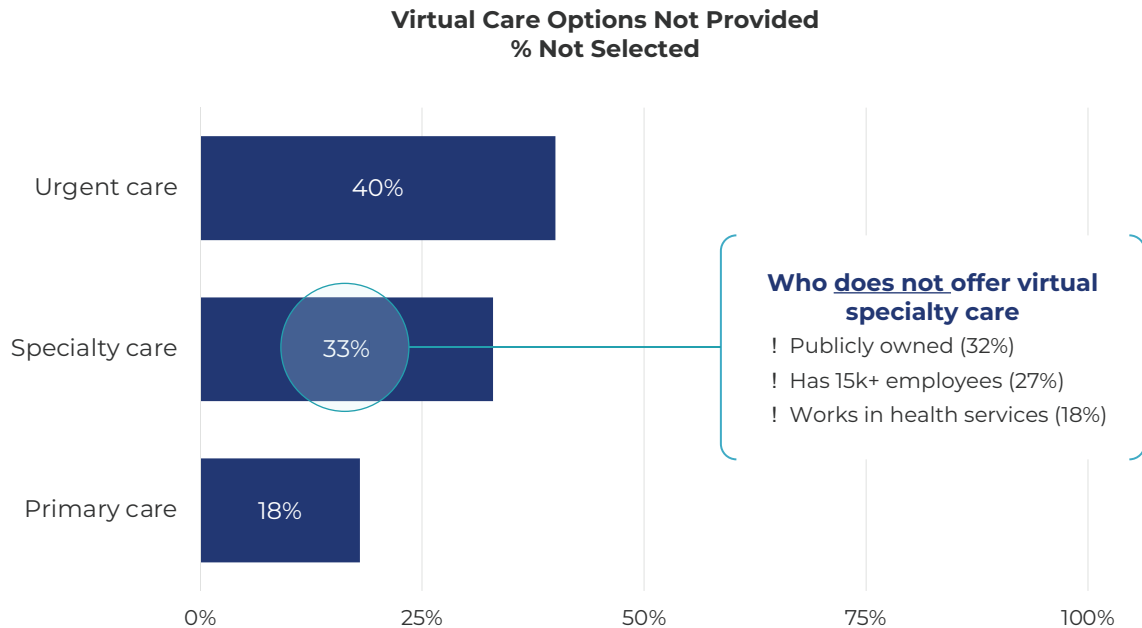
HR leaders know that employees want to have a choice in the selection of a specialist. Virtual specialty care that addresses the continuum of care with deep networks of specialists from all specialties and sub-specialties affords opportunities for choice, including choice of specialist based on their ethnic, cultural, and linguistic attributes.

Importance of Specialist Virtual Care Advantages % Importance to Organization (Ranking)





Virtual specialty care is a gap in today's benefits, but one that HR leaders are resolute to address.



A third of organizations surveyed who were publicly owned large companies and those in health services do not currently provide virtual specialty care to their employees. However, in the next year, more than 8 in 10 HR leaders are likely to consider a virtual specialty care solution that can support all their employees, regardless of condition or demographic.

The Case for Virtual Specialty Care

Virtual specialty care delivers comprehensive, affordable, and easy to use benefits

There are an unprecedented number of healthcare benefits solutions in the marketplace, seemingly one for every body part, health condition, and demographic. While the volume of options has helped HR leaders in developing a robust package, single comprehensive solutions can more effectively contribute to a healthy and productive workforce by supporting employee access and use.

Virtual specialty care transforms access to high quality medical expertise from leading specialists across any health question and journey. Using a simple and elegant platform employees can easily connect with specialists to get answers to their questions within days, or even hours, creating a clear path forward in their care. Plus, when provided as an employer or health plan-provided benefit, employees and members reap the benefits of access to education and guidance on everything from allergies and migraines to more complex conditions like cancer and ALS, all at no cost to them as individuals.



Methodology

Summus commissioned an independent research firm to administer the survey to 273 HR and benefits leaders in the United States, to better understand their current benefits and their perceptions of virtual specialty care. The survey, which was administered in partnership with Qualtrics, was conducted between April 25 and May 1, 2023.

All participants were screened based on:

- ▶ Title
- ▶ Responsibility in the selection and management of healthcare benefits
- ▶ Company size
- ▶ Company headquarters location

Participants worked for companies with 1,000 to more than 20,000 employees across all industries, company types (i.e., privately owned, publicly owned, non-profit), and regions in the United States.

About Summus

Summus is the leading virtual specialty care company, founded with a mission to restore human connection in healthcare. Our proprietary marketplace model attracts leading specialists who support better insights and decision making across all health questions. With a curated network of more than 5,100 renowned specialists from top academic medical centers, and more than 2.1 million members around the world, Summus serves as the clinical front door to access trusted, high quality healthcare expertise, and to support people in the moments that matter most.

Learn more: www.summusglobal.com



