Health Reform Brief

Private Exchanges: Myth Vs. Reality p. 1
The Supreme Court Challenge Against ObamaCare Is Rapidly Falling Apart p.1
How ObamaCare Can Survive A Knee-capping By The Supreme Court p. 2
Top Obamacare Opponent Mansplains Health Reform To Reporter, Gets His Butt Handed To Him p.2
Here’s How Health Insurers Dream Of Replacing Obamacare p.2
Health Insurance Co-ops Detail Growing Pains p.2

Private Exchanges: Myth Vs. Reality

Private exchanges are here to stay, but for advisors and their small employer clients, questions still remain about their value. Is the opportunity they offer more myth than reality? Likely, the answer is a bit of both. Let’s examine four popular beliefs about private exchanges.

Private exchanges will dominate the market and become the primary method for small employers to provide their employees with access to benefits.

Despite some reports that make the press, the volume of business flowing through a private exchange is small and is going to stay small in the near-term.

Source: BenefitsPro

The Supreme Court Challenge Against ObamaCare Is Rapidly Falling Apart

The latest legal assault on the Affordable Care Act, which the Supreme Court will be considering in March, is based on the most obtuse of premises. The plaintiffs argue that Congress did not intend for subsidies to be available to individuals who purchase insurance on the exchanges established by the federal government. This is the equivalent of including a big red self-destruct button in the legislation — with many Republican-led states refusing to build their own exchanges, this would leave millions of Americans without the subsidies they need to afford health insurance.

Source: The Week

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Here's How Health Insurers Dream Of Replacing Obamacare

We got a glimpse last week of what would happen to our health care system if Republicans increase their control of Congress and win the White House in 2016.

Gone would be the part of Obamacare that Americans tell pollsters they don’t like: the requirement that they enroll in some kind of health plan or pay a penalty that grows more severe every year. In addition, the GOP would get rid of the provision mandating that employers with more than 50 workers offer subsidized coverage.

Source: The Huffington Post

Health Insurance Co-ops Detail Growing Pains

Insurance cooperatives face daunting startup challenges, from market forces to federal and state regulations. A Co-op in Iowa has already succumbed to financial and political pressure. Building a health insurance carrier from scratch is risky business.

The rapid financial collapse of CoOportunity Health, an Iowa-based insurance cooperative launched last year, highlights the growing pains being experienced at nearly two dozen federally financed co-ops across the country.

Iowa insurance officials say two factors unraveled CoOportunity's finances...

Source: Health Leaders Media

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How ObamaCare Can Survive A Knee-capping By The Supreme Court

This summer, the conservative majority on the Supreme Court will once again decide whether it dares to destroy ObamaCare. In King v. Burwell, the justices will determine whether the law’s subsidies can flow through the federal exchange of Healthcare.gov, based on a wildly tendentious challenge to the statute.

This raises the question of stakes. What happens if the Obama administration loses? Millions may lose their insurance — of those, many thousands may die of preventable medical conditions.

Source: The Week

Top Obamacare Opponent Mansplains Health Reform To Reporter, Gets His Butt Handed To Him

If you are going to misrepresent a journalist’s own reporting, it’s probably not a good idea to do it on a webcast that she is moderating. The conservative Cato Institute’s Michael Cannon is one of the architects of a lawsuit called King v. Burwell, which seeks to defund much of the Affordable Care Act by cutting off tax credits in many states that help people pay for their health insurance.

Source: Think Progress
**What Happens To The ACA If The Petitioners In King v Burwell Win At The Supreme Court?**

One of the mechanisms through which the Affordable Care Act (ACA) expands access to health insurance is through tax subsidies provided to individuals to help offset the cost of health insurance. These subsidies are only available if people purchase highly-regulated and -mandated policies that are sold only through government-run insurance exchanges.

The law’s formula for determining the amount of these premium subsidies specifies that people are eligible for them if they are enrolled in qualified plans offered in “an Exchange established by the State under [section] 1311 of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.” However, only 13 states are operating state-based exchanges this year.

*Source: Forbes*

**Widespread Extensions Ahead Of Midnight Deadline**

The Saturday outage of an Internal Revenue Service function for Obamacare enrollment could have prevented about 500,000 people from enrolling, but nearly all should have the chance to sign up thanks to widespread deadline extensions and now-smoothly running sites. The glitch prevented some people from getting their income verified so they could enroll on HealthCare.gov and at least some state exchanges by the Sunday deadline.

*Source: USA Today*

**Why Republicans Secretly Hope The Supreme Court Will Save Obamacare**

Because a Supreme Court decision for plaintiffs in King v. Burwell would impose extreme hardship on Affordable Care Act beneficiaries in 34 states and leave President Obama’s signature achievement in a frightening state of limbo, the law’s supporters are united in opposition to such a ruling.

And for the same reason, most analyses of the consequences of an adverse King decision have centered around the practical nightmare the ruling would create: How would states react? Congress?

*Source: New Republic*

**The Two Questions That Could Make Or Break The Case Against Obamacare**

A month before the Supreme Court hears the King v. Burwell case, outlets are digging into the argument against the tax credits. Here’s what they’ve found. The conservative lawsuit against Obamacare’s premium subsidies is important, but also wonky, not the sort of thing that does well on cable news. And yet for a few weeks last fall, the biggest story on Fox News was the unearthing of videos depicting Jonathan Gruber.

*Source: Bloomberg*
About Softheon

Empowering the nation’s first state health benefit exchange since 2008, Softheon’s vision and strategic direction address healthcare payer, provider, and government agencies’ goal of meeting Affordable Care Act (ACA) milestones. Softheon provides solutions for interacting with Federal and State Health Insurance Exchange (HIX) Marketplaces, while measurably reducing administrative costs, improving member and provider satisfaction, as well as addressing regulatory compliance challenges in all managed care administrative processes.

Softheon’s Marketplace Connector Cloud (MC2) has been trusted by health plans, in all 50 states, as an accelerated federal, state, and private exchange integration platform. Softheon MC2 is a Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution where insurers pay a one-time activation and ongoing PMPM fees for exchange members only, while eliminating most, if not all, risks associated with ACA enrollment compliance and other mandates.

To find out more about the Softheon, visit www.softheon.com.