



## National Business Group on Health Survey Results Revealed: **Effectiveness of Benefits Decision Support Tools**

Most employees could use a little help when it comes to reviewing and selecting their benefits. There's a tendency for employees to just stay with the same benefits they have always had. In fact, 93% of employees choose the same health plan year after year.<sup>1</sup> That's where decision support software can significantly help.

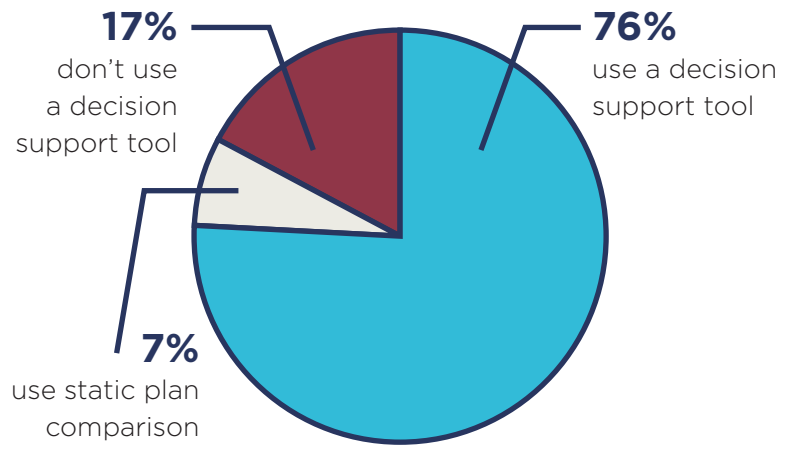
Decision support software can remove some of the bias when selecting a new plan by providing objective recommendations based on data. Robust decision support tools:

- Allow employees to run different medical scenarios and see the transparent costs of the different plans.
- Deliver a quick, data-driven recommendation based on inputs.
- Educate on common questions throughout the experience.
- Include a medical-spending baseline for an individual employee via actual claims history or "people like me" estimates.
- Provide employers and benefits consultants access to valuable metrics to help them better understand the success of the health plan design and enrollment.

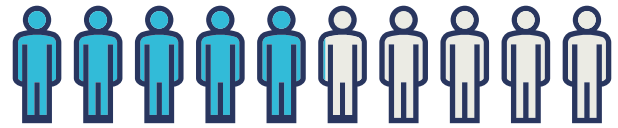
## WHY EMPLOYERS OFFER DECISION SUPPORT SOFTWARE

In December 2017, the National Business Group on Health (NBGH)<sup>2</sup> released a survey report on employers, open enrollment, and their decision support tools. In the report, 83% of respondents indicated they offered either a decision support tool (76%) or static plan comparison (7%). We didn't find this surprising—decision support tools are certainly becoming table stakes when it comes to open enrollment best practices.

And while the results revealed employers are using decision support tools for a variety of reasons, one thing was consistent. Organizations wanted to help their employees make better decisions.



**For 100% of survey participants, “getting employees into the best plans for their needs” was a primary reason.**



**And 52% of employers cited employee education.**



**Another 58% of employer participants said a primary reason was “increasing employee engagement with their own healthcare.”**



**33% of employers stated a main goal was to increase adoption of a CDHP plan.**

While you might expect these statistics, you may be surprised at the disconnect between the enrollment results employers want and what they actually get from their decision support software.

In this white paper, we're taking a closer look at what the decision support survey data revealed and things your organization should consider.

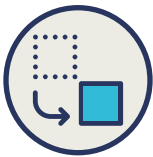


## **FINDING #1: 46% OF THE RESPONDENTS DON'T KNOW IF THEIR EMPLOYEES SWITCHED HEALTH PLANS.**

The NGBH survey measured the percentage of employees who adopted another health plan during open enrollment. Over half of employers reported that 20% or less of their employees made a transition.

However, 46% of survey participants stated they didn't know what percentage of their employees switched health plans after consulting their decision support tool—a critical piece of open enrollment information for organizations.

Many times, decision support tools fail to provide the insights employers need. While these software programs may give basic metrics, such as number of user sessions, they often don't provide more complex analytics that allow employers to understand employee behavior, such as the financial “tipping point” that causes employees to alter their plan choices and analysis of what plans employees picked compared to what the decision support tool recommended.



## **FINDING #2: 48% OF THE RESPONDENTS DIDN'T KNOW IF EMPLOYEES SELECTED THE BEST PLAN FOR THEIR NEEDS.**

Knowing if employees have selected the health plans that match their potential medical spending is important when evaluating the success of an open enrollment period.

However, the NGBH survey revealed that *almost half of employers* lack this important data.

This is especially unfortunate given 100% of participants stated that helping employees find the best health plan was a primary goal for their decision support tool. And this data underscores the fact that many organizations don't have basic information on their open enrollment efforts.



## **FINDING #3: 45% OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED THAT 20% OR LESS OF THEIR EMPLOYEES USED THEIR DECISION SUPPORT TOOL, AND 15% OF EMPLOYERS DIDN'T KNOW IF THEIR EMPLOYEES USED THE DECISION SUPPORT TOOL.**

Effectively communicating with your employees prior to open enrollment is important if you want them to be fully engaged with your decision support software.

Stats like this indicate organizations have room for growth. There's opportunity to educate employee populations on the benefits of using decision support when choosing health plans. A low percentage of employee engagement can indicate employees didn't perceive they needed guidance, especially if there was no change in their benefit options. The 15% of respondents that didn't know if their employees used their decision support tool is more troubling. These types of analytics should be readily and easily available from a decision support tool or from the software vendor.



## **FINDING #4: ONLY 29% OF RESPONDENTS REPORTED THEIR DECISION SUPPORT TOOL WAS VERY SUCCESSFUL IN ACCOMPLISHING THEIR GOALS.**

As we mentioned at the beginning of this white paper, employers have several objectives for their decision support tools—from helping employees make the best choices to increasing adoption for a new health plan.

However, this statistic reveals that many organizations have a gap between the decision support tools they offer and the results they're looking to achieve.

This statistic from the NBGH survey demonstrates that the majority of employers could get more from their decision support tools to help them reach their goals.

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### **WHAT THIS DATA MEANS FOR YOUR ORGANIZATION**

When you put the data from the survey results together, a picture begins to emerge.



#### **A large number of organizations rely on decision support tools that don't fully support their open enrollment initiatives.**

After reading these numbers, take some time to consider your decision support tool. Ask yourself...

*Are my employees getting the guidance they need to select the best health plans? Is my organization receiving key data to inform our future benefits communications?*

▶ To discover how we empower you—and your employees—to make informed decisions, visit us online at **tangohealth.com** or call us at (855) 468-2646.

### **ABOUT TANGO HEATH**

Established in 2008, Tango Health helps organizations give employers effective decision support software, clearly communicate about the benefits they offer, and stay ACA compliant. Working with both Fortune 500 organizations and smaller companies, we provide tailored, targeted solutions for organizations offering employer-sponsored healthcare. We've found that employees using our decision support software are up to 87% more likely to select the best health plan. To learn more, visit us online at [www.tangohealth.com](http://www.tangohealth.com).

### **ABOUT THE SURVEY**

The survey cited in this white paper was drawn from the National Business Group on Health report titled, "Quick Survey Findings: Open Enrollment and Decision Support Tools." Tango Health is a member of the National Business Group on Health.

<sup>1</sup> 2016 AFLAC Workforces Report

<sup>2</sup> Quick Survey Findings: Open Enrollment and Decision Support Tools, December 2017, © 2017 National Business Group on Health®.