

DECEMBER 1, 2021

HealthView Insights

PlanCompare



Savvy consumers spend a substantial amount of time weighing the various costs between goods and services before making a purchase (Can anyone say, “Black Friday?”), which is both smart and practical. For the real money savers, there are a host of websites and applications that offer a comparative shopping experience – heck, there is even a phone app that reveals the lowest gas prices in any given area.

Now how much time do average Americans spend comparing the various costs and elements of their health plans? Probably a lot less than they do investigating the latest features of a high-def television. This is unfortunate - but does make some sense. It is inherently more enjoyable to imagine a football game in your living room on an 8k TV than checking which health plan offers the lowest copay for chiropractic care.

Workers typically have access to multiple employer-sponsored health insurance choices, but it is often hard for individuals to determine the optimal plans for themselves or their families. Trying to wade through the labyrinth of deductibles, premiums, and benefits can be daunting (and trying to calculate potential costs is nearly impossible), so employees frequently make uninformed decisions that are not in their best interest. To be on the safe side, many simply default to the one with the most coverage, which may result in employees paying more for benefits that they may never use.

Highlights

Healthcare comparative shopping experience

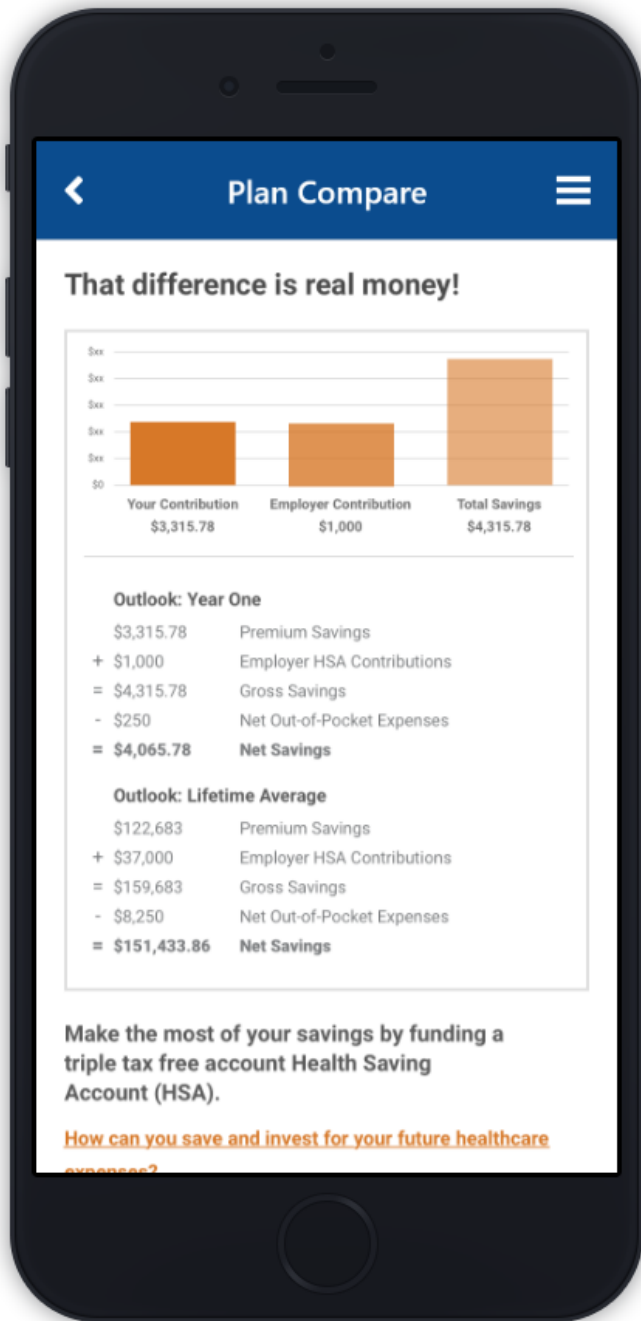
Many selecting the default option end up over covered

Potential solution to allow participants to customize base on their needs

Empower people with knowledge of what could change in the future



HealthView
SERVICES



A potential solution is to offer tools that will allow plan participants to input relevant personal and family information into an application that calculates the best option based on individual needs. Variables should at least include - but not be limited to - age, gender, health status, family-health status, and state of residence. Outputs project actuary-backed, personalized out-of-pocket costs for both the present and future based on coverage selection. Children can also be added with health expenses adjusted for age. (Outputs can be overridden if the child has a unique medical condition.)

The application should also include potential costs related to one-time health events - and allow users to input hypothetical medical scenarios - like pregnancy or a heart attack - to see how they can impact future costs.

So what is the ultimate goal? To choose the most favorable plan with the lowest price to fit individual lifestyles. (It is understood that this choice can change over time, as major life events – such as the birth of a child – requires a reassessment of plan offerings.) Participants will also appreciate being able to see how much money they can save by making the best choice. For example, those with access to a high-deductible health plan (HDHP) who take advantage of a health savings account (HSA) can see accurate short- and long-term savings projections right in the application. Armed with this information, individuals will feel empowered to make smarter decisions that can lead to better health and increased wealth.