



ASSOCIATION OF BENEFIT ADMINISTRATORS

JANUARY NEWSLETTER

2026

OUR NEXT MEETING IS
February 3rd!

LUNCH SPONSOR
Jim Lanfranchi
Sr. VP/Managing Director
Webster Bank Union Financial Services

Dear ABA Members,

Happy New Year! What will 2026 bring to retirement and health & welfare funds and those of us who administer them or work with those who do? It should be an eventful year, to say the least. And while we cannot predict the future, I think we're safe in anticipating health care costs will once again be a challenge. Also, unions and union funds are not likely to receive too many favorable outcomes from the current administration in DC. But together we will forge ahead, as we always do, placing our members' best interests first and foremost and doing what we can to improve their lives.

We are starting off the 2026 lunch meeting series with two interesting topics. The first will be by Mark Whitcher, CEO of both Promise Labor Benefits and KTP Advisors, presenting The Shift Toward Medicare Advantage: Causes, Consequences, and Market Impacts.

The second presentation will be by Annette Sanjines, Taft-Hartley Business Development Executive, Rx Benefits, entitled The Importance of Clinical Utilization Management.

Our February lunch sponsor is Jim Lanfranchi of Webster Bank. We have also included photos from our October breakfast roundtable discussion with BPEA, the annual IFEBP/ABA brunch held in Hawaii last November, as well as the holiday reception at the St. Regis Hotel.

NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday, February 3, 2026
RWDSU
370 7th Ave - 5th Floor Conference Room
(aka 7 Penn Plaza), New York, NY

12:00 PM - 2:00 PM

In Solidarity,
The Board of the Association of Benefit Administrators

HIGHLIGHTS FROM SEPTEMBER MEETING

Healthcare Cost Trends, Social Determinants of Health and Member Engagement

At our September meeting, Craig Kurtzweil, Chief Data & Analytics Officer, United Healthcare, discussed macro healthcare cost trends nationally and within the New York/New Jersey area. He also addressed the impact of social determinants of health, including their impact on risks among adults, increasing demand for care, their negative effect on seeking wellness and preventive care, increased utilization of ER services, and their negative impact on mental health.

Craig also spoke about GLP-1s, their effect on weight loss, who the average utilizer is, compliance rates, and their impact on overall costs. Lastly, Craig discussed how engaged members make better choices, have better outcomes and are less costly than those who are not engaged.

View the full presentation slides using the link below:

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL PRESENTATION](#)

Link to be added

GLP-1 Strategy and Population Health

Jay Goebel, Vice President of Business Development, and Chelsea Durnil, PharmD, BCACP, Director of Clinical Solutions, True Rx Health Strategists, covered GLP-1s' clinical role in treating Type 2 diabetes and obesity, as well as evolving utilization trends.

Their presentation also explored how access controls, step therapy, companion programs, and population health strategies can optimize the clinical and economic value of GLP-1s. Click the links below to read the related article, GLP-1s Are Changing the Game, But Strategy Wins the Season, and view the full presentation.

[CLICK HERE FOR ARTICLE](#)

Link to be added

[CLICK HERE FOR FULL PRESENTATION](#)

Link to be added

SEPTEMBER MEETING PHOTOS



Meeting attendees at the September meeting.



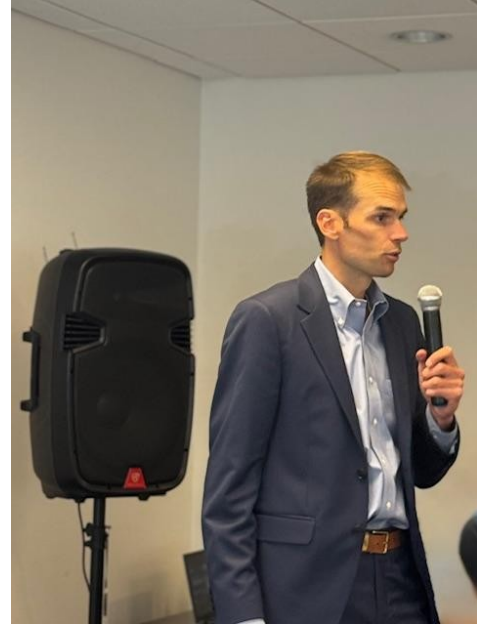
Charlie Hamilton opening remarks.



Presenter discussion during the September meeting.



Networking prior to the meeting.



September meeting presentation.



September meeting presentation.



September meeting presentation.

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION SPONSORED BY BPEA

Roundtable discussion on increasing engagement and utilization of healthcare point solutions, sponsored by BPEA.

Charlie Hamilton, Matt Platcha and Marcin Szajda of BPEA are shown with attendees during the discussion.



BPEA roundtable discussion on increasing engagement and utilization of healthcare point solutions.



Roundtable discussion participants during the October breakfast meeting.



Charlie Hamilton with Matt Platcha and Marcin Szajda of BPEA.

ABA BRUNCH IN HONOLULU

In November, the ABA hosted a brunch, free to its members and guests, at Menenhune Grill in Honolulu to coincide with the opening of the IFEBP Annual Conference.



ABA members and guests gathered at Menenhune Grill in Honolulu.



ABA brunch sponsor recognition during the IFEBP Annual Conference.



Members and guests enjoying the ABA brunch in Honolulu.

DECEMBER RECEPTION - ST. REGIS HOTEL, NYC

The ABA Annual Reception was held at the St. Regis Hotel in New York City. Photos and highlights from the event are included below.



ABA Board and key staff.



Hon. Donovan Richards, Jr., Charles Hamilton, Joseph Fontano, Fallon Ager-Norman and Anthony Norman.



Honoree Fallon Ager-Norman, UFCW International VP and Region 1 Director.

RECEPTION HIGHLIGHTS



Keynote speaker Hon. Donovan Richards, Jr., Queens Borough President.



Hon. Donovan Richards, Jr. addressing guests at the ABA Annual Reception.



Reception attendees at the St. Regis Hotel.



Reception attendees networking during the December event.



ABA Board and key staff.

HELPFUL LINKS

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