

December 6, 2017

New Blood Pressure Guidelines Impact Individuals and Wellness Programs

By Cory Panning

In November 2017, The American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology tightened the guidelines for high blood pressure: from 140 over 90 to 130 over 80. This new definition takes into consideration complications that can occur at the lower guidelines, with the goal of earlier interventions to treat and prevent complications.

It is expected that about half (46 percent) of American adults now meet the new definition for high blood pressure; and that 14 percent who previously were considered prehypertensive are now classified as hypertensive. In particular, men and women under age 45 who previously were considered prehypertensive are now classified at a higher risk. Individuals with at-risk blood pressure may wish to seek medical guidance from their doctor.

Employers offering outcomes-based wellness incentives should take time now to evaluate their program design. Those incentivizing for achieving each biometric outcome (such as blood pressure, glucose, cholesterol, and/or weight) are advised to update their blood pressure goals to align with the new guidelines. Companies who incentivize based on the achievement of a consolidated health score should contact their wellness vendor to understand the effect these changes will have on the health goal algorithm and program design.

American College of Cardiology press release:
Source: <https://www.acc.org/latest-in-cardiology/articles/2017/11/08/11/47/mon-5pm-bp-guideline-aha-2017>

American Heart Association press release: <https://news.heart.org/nearly-half-u-s-adults-now-classified-high-blood-pressure-new-definitions/>

The information provided is a summary and should not be relied upon in lieu of the full text of a particular law, regulation, notice, opinion, legislative proposal or other pertinent information, and the advice of your legal counsel. Findley does not practice law or accounting, and this publication is not legal or tax advice. Legal issues concerning your employee benefit plans should be discussed with your legal counsel. This publication is intended for informational purposes only and is in no way intended to offer investment advice or investment recommendations.

© Copyright 2018 • Findley • All rights reserved.

