Walk into your neighborhood grocery store or pharmacy, and chances are you may see signs of a new service option that has been added, but it’s not an item on store shelves. Many pharmacies and grocery store chains are beginning to add retail health clinics to their locations.

These retail health clinics are neighborhood walk-in clinics which are usually owned and operated by the chains in which they’re located. The clinics treat common medical conditions such as cold and flu, ear infections, and minor skin conditions. They also offer certain preventive care services such as flu shots and other vaccinations.

As an employer—whether you have 20 employees or 200 employees—this option can be a beneficial part of your health coverage if your health plan provides in network coverage for visits to these clinics. Employees appreciate the convenience and low cost of these walk-in clinics, which can also help people avoid unnecessary emergency room visits for simple problems.

While these retail health clinics should never be considered a substitute for a primary care visit, they can be a supplemental resource to share with employees for situations such as after-hours care when their physician’s office may be closed. Individuals also should ask the clinics to send the diagnosis, treatment and other relevant information about the visit to their primary care physicians as an important follow-up.

Surveys have shown that these clinics can deliver value through convenience and low-cost treatment, resulting in high patient satisfaction rates for the more than 1,250 clinics that exist nationwide.*

Retail health clinics are an effective option that employers may want to consider promoting in ongoing efforts to keep employees happy, healthy and productive.

Every week, experts from BCBSAZ address workplace wellness issues in this dedicated column. If you have questions you would like addressed, please email them to us at wellness@azblue.com.


Walk-In Retail Health Clinics a Convenient, Low-Cost Complement to Primary Care

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