

Worker contribution to health benefits up in 2017

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(HealthDay)—In 2017, health benefits coverage remained stable, while

workers faced considerable variation in costs, according to a report published online Sept. 19 in *Health Affairs*.

Gary Claxton, from the Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation in Washington, D.C., and colleagues analyzed data from the 19th annual Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation/Health Research and Educational Trust Employer Health Benefits Survey.

The researchers found that in 2017, average annual premiums (employer and worker contributions combined) rose 4 percent for single coverage, to \$6,690, and 3 percent for family coverage, to \$18,764. On average, covered workers contributed 18 percent of the premium for single coverage and 31 percent for family coverage, although there was [considerable variation](#). Ten percent of covered workers in [small firms](#) did not make a premium contribution for family coverage, while 36 percent made a contribution of more than half of their premium. Compared to the previous year, the share of firms that offered [health benefits](#) (53 percent) and of workers in those firms covered by their employers' plans (62 percent) remain statistically unchanged.

"Small firms are much less likely to offer health benefits to their workers, and when they do, workers may find it quite costly to enroll their families," the authors said in a journal news release.

More information: [Abstract](#)
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