

# OHIC NEWS

## OHIC, OBAMACARE HAVE SAVED RHODE ISLAND \$220 MILLION SINCE 2012

### Premium growth has slowed; progress threatened by ACA repeal

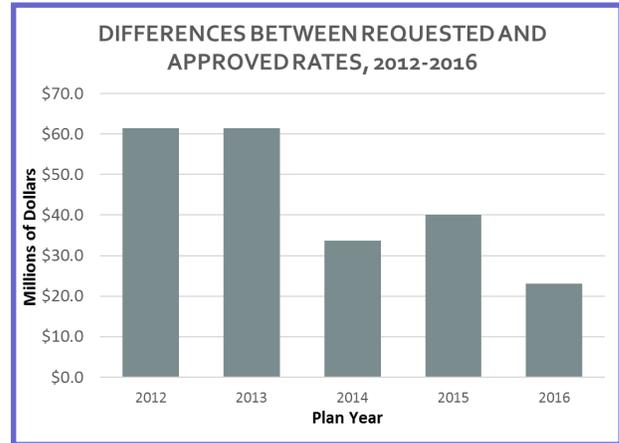
Thanks to the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner and the Affordable Care Act, Rhode Islanders have saved \$219.7 million in premium increases since 2012, according to data presented by OHIC to the Health Insurance Advisory Council (HIAC) at its December meeting.

HIAC Co-Chair Stephen Boyle, president of the Greater Cranston Chamber of Commerce, said the savings showed that “the Affordable Care Act is working in Rhode Island, and [OHIC] has done an incredible job leveraging the resources provided to the state by the ACA.”

The savings were realized through improvements to OHIC’s annual rate approval process brought about by the ACA.

Commercial health insurers in Rhode Island must have approval from OHIC before changes in their premium rates can take effect. The annual approval process, known as Rate Review, has been in place since the creation of OHIC in 2005 but was enhanced by the ACA.

Providence Business News [reported in January](#) that RI Health Insurance Commissioner Dr. Kathleen Hittner wrote to the chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on



*Difference between insurers’ requested health insurance premium rates and the rates approved by OHIC.*

Health, Education, Labor and Pensions.

She urged lawmakers “to keep the [ACA’s] existing financial structure intact, maintain the coverage gains of recent years and preserve vital consumer protections to ensure financial stability and access to fair coverage for Rhode Island’s families.”



Dr. Kathleen Hittner

## Commissioner Speaks to Mass. Panel Studying Medical Pricing

Policymakers in Massachusetts heard from Rhode Island’s top health insurance regulator at the end of last month.

Commissioner Kathleen Hittner gave a presentation at the January 31<sup>st</sup> meeting of Massachusetts’ *Special Commission to Review Variation in Prices among Providers*.

The 23-member commission was established last Fall and is charged with examining specific factors and deciding whether they are acceptable or unacceptable reasons for price variation. The panel is also reviewing

hospital and provider contracting practices and discussing provider price variation in other states.

“Given Rhode Island’s past focus on hospital price variation and our innovative Affordability Standards regulation, Commissioner Hittner was invited as an expert speaker,” according to Cory King, Delivery System Analyst for OHIC.

## New Care Transformation and Alternative Payment Convenings in 2017

As part of its ongoing mission to make health care more affordable, OHIC is convening a series of new work groups that will dive deep into the issues of delivery system and payment model transformation.

OHIC's Care Transformation Advisory Committee (CTAC) is forming two subgroups. One will study evidence-based approaches to help doctors identify high-risk patients. By identifying these patients and providing them with enhanced care management services, practices can realize savings through better preventive care.

The other will explore ways to engage small primary care practices that are not currently designated PCMH in order to identify and help those practices overcome the barriers they may face in attaining a PCMH designation.

The Alternative Payment Methodology (APM) Committee is also forming subgroups to study innovative payment models for primary care practices and to examine the

interrelationship between population-based and episode-based contracts and to begin to define parameters for episode-based payments.

The CTAC and APM Committee were established in 2015 as part of the Affordability Standards – OHIC's continuing effort to address healthcare costs and improve the state's healthcare system. The committees are comprised of health insurers, provider representatives, and other interested stakeholders. Each committee is charged with developing targets in the areas of alternative payment and care transformation annually. The new subcommittees will help insurers and providers achieve the targets established for 2017-18.

More information about the Affordability Standards—including the Care Transformation Committee, the Alternative Payment Methodology Committee, and their respective annual targets—can be found on the [OHIC website](#).

### Upcoming Meetings

- State Innovation Model (SIM) Steering Committee**  
*Meets second Thursday of each month*  
 Next Meeting: Thursday, February 9, 5:30 PM  
 HP Conference Room 203  
 301 Metro Center Blvd. Warwick, RI 02886
- Health Insurance Advisory Council**  
 Tuesday, February 21, 4:30-6:00 PM  
*Meets third Tuesday of each month*  
 Department of Labor and Training Conference Room  
 1511 Pontiac Ave. Building 73-1, Cranston, RI 02920
- APM subgroup: Primary Care Alternative Payment Model and Care Delivery**  
 Tuesday, February 28, 10:00—11:30 AM  
 Department of Labor and Training Conference Room,  
 1511 Pontiac Ave. Building 73-1, Cranston, RI 02920
- CTAC subgroup: Outreach to Non-PCMH Small Primary Care Practices**  
 Tuesday, March 7, 7:30—9:30 AM  
 Department of Labor and Training Conference Room  
 1511 Pontiac Ave. Building 73-1, Cranston, RI 02920
- Alternative Payment Methodology (APM) Committee**  
 Tuesday, March 7, 10:30 AM — 2:30 PM  
 Department of Labor and Training Conference Room  
 1511 Pontiac Ave. Building 73-1, Cranston, RI 02920



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