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The rising cost of healthcare, particularly prescription drugs, continues to be a pressing concern for human resources (HR) professionals with each new plan year. A large majority (88%) express concerns about providing affordable health insurance to their employees. This increase in cost is largely driven by a select few high-cost products, notably specialty drugs. Projections for [2023](#) estimate the cost of specialty drugs to reach approximately about \$311 billion, with three-quarters of medications in development belonging to this category.

In response to these concerns, Aimed Alliance, the Alliance for Patient Access, and HR.com's Research Institute conducted a study involving HR professionals to gather input from a cross-section of employers providing health insurance coverage to their employees. The 32-page research report, titled "[Managing Prescription Drug Costs 2023-24](#)," along with an accompanying infographic, are now available for free download. These resources are designed to help HR professionals and employers better understand emerging trends in managing prescription costs and how these trends impact employees and their organizations.

While alternative funding programs (AFPs) are sometimes considered a solution for reducing drug costs, the study reveals that only 46 percent of respondents are familiar with AFPs. However, these programs raise significant concerns. Notably, there are concerns that in the U.S., specialty drugs obtained through AFPs may be sourced from international channels, raising legal implications not widely recognized by employers.

The report highlights that self-funded plans are especially likely to use AFPs, with over a quarter (28%) of self-insured employers currently employing them, compared to 16 percent overall.

"The impact of healthcare plans and these specialty drugs for employees that need them is forcing employers to think out of the box to reduce expenses," stated Debbie McGrath, Chief Instigator and CEO of HR.com. "But they have to examine the risks and regulations of these alternatives."

Download the full report and infographic to gain insights into the current trends shaping the attitudes, concerns, priorities, and skills of today's HR professionals and how they will be transformed in the near future.

[Download the Research Report: https://web.hr.com/82bna](https://web.hr.com/82bna)

About [Aimed Alliance](#)

Established in 2013 and based in Washington, D.C., Aimed Alliance is a non-profit health policy organization that works to protect and enhance the rights of healthcare consumers and providers. Aimed Alliance achieves this mission by conducting legal research and analysis; developing sound, patient-centered policy recommendations; and disseminating its findings to inform policymakers and increase public awareness. Learn more about Aimed Alliance at aimedalliance.org or on X (formerly Twitter) at [@AimedAlliance](https://twitter.com/AimedAlliance).

About [Alliance for Patient Access \(AfPA\)](#)

Founded in 2006, the Alliance for Patient Access (AfPA) is a health policy organization that advocates for policies that support clinical decision-making, limit abusive utilization management techniques, and acknowledge each person's individual healthcare needs deserve to be met. Learn more about AfPA at allianceforpatientaccess.org.

About [HR.com](#) and the [HR Research Institute](#)

The HR Research Institute (HRRI) helps you keep your finger on the pulse of HR! Powered by HR.com, the world's largest HR community, the HRRI identifies key trends and best practices to help more than 2 million HR professionals and their organizations make strategic decisions with informed and insightful research findings.

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