

TURNS TO ALTERNATIVE MEDICINE TO IMPROVE THEIR HEALTH –AND MANAGED CARE PROVIDERS FOLLOW

More and more consumers are choosing alternative forms of healthcare, with such options as Chiropractic, Acupuncture and massage leading the way.

A survey done in 2004 measured the increase in popularity. Thirty-six percent of U.S. adults now use some form of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) services. With this level of popularity, managed care providers are beginning to follow the trend by providing more coverage for CAM

services. More than 60% of health plans now include CAM services as a covered benefit or offer "affinity" programs in which members receive discounts to CAM providers.

Employers are eager to utilize CAM

services to keep their workforce on the job after a study was released October 2004 in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* that showed the benefits possible. The study stated that when employees had Chiropractic coverage, they had 41% fewer hospitalizations for back pain than employees without Chiropractic coverage. And they had 32% fewer back surgeries and significantly lower utilization rates for CT/MRI scans and x-rays than other employees without this coverage.

SOURCE: Managed Healthcare Executive