



2025 ANNUAL REPORT

AEHC

Alabama Employer Health Consortium



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A Letter from the President & CEO

Dear Friends and Partners,

Thank you for your interest in the Alabama Employer Health Consortium (AEHC). You may not know it yet, but you have a powerful tool within your reach to help change what employers can expect from the healthcare system.

This year marked our eighth year of operations. What began as a small group of employers frustrated by rising costs and limited control has grown into a committed community of peers facing similar challenges and determined to find better solutions.

As you move through the next few pages, I hope you'll recognize something important: **You are not navigating these challenges alone.** Employers across Alabama and the nation are working together to purchase healthcare more effectively by sharing data, aligning strategies, and leveraging their collective voice. Through informed purchasing practices and policy advocacy, they are reshaping the market and proving that meaningful change is possible.

Our healthcare system is under real strain, and employers face unrelenting cost pressures unless they innovate and invest in smarter purchasing strategies. The good news is many employers already have and they are willing to share what they've learned. Within our community, you'll find practical, battle-tested insights that help accelerate progress without reinventing the wheel.

AEHC's reach extends beyond Alabama through our partnership with the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions, connecting us to coalitions nationwide representing more than **90 million covered lives**. A strong example of this collaboration is the Pulse of the Purchaser Survey, which gathered responses from more than 300 employers nationwide in 2025, offering both Alabama-specific insights and national comparisons.

Looking ahead to 2026, we are excited to see coalition members engage in the launch of The Employer Health Claims Collaborative, a purchaser-driven initiative designed to bring greater clarity to healthcare spending, utilization, and benefit performance.

Together, we can simplify the path to high-value health benefits.
Join peers who are shaping what's next.

Sincerely,
Michael Howard
President & CEO



A Year of Engagement & Impact: 2025 Key Accomplishments

National Influence and Local Impact

AEHC's leadership continued to rise on the national stage in 2025. AEHC President & CEO, Michael Howard, was elected Secretary/Treasurer of the National Alliance Board of Governors, and Russell DuBose, VP of HR at Phifer, received the prestigious Rosetta Award. DuBose represented Phifer at two national events in 2025, while Michael presented in North and South Alabama. AEHC remained the AL Regional Leapfrog Leader, and AEHC members and staff represented AL at several national meetings, strengthening our coalition's visibility and voice.



Advocacy That Moves the Needle



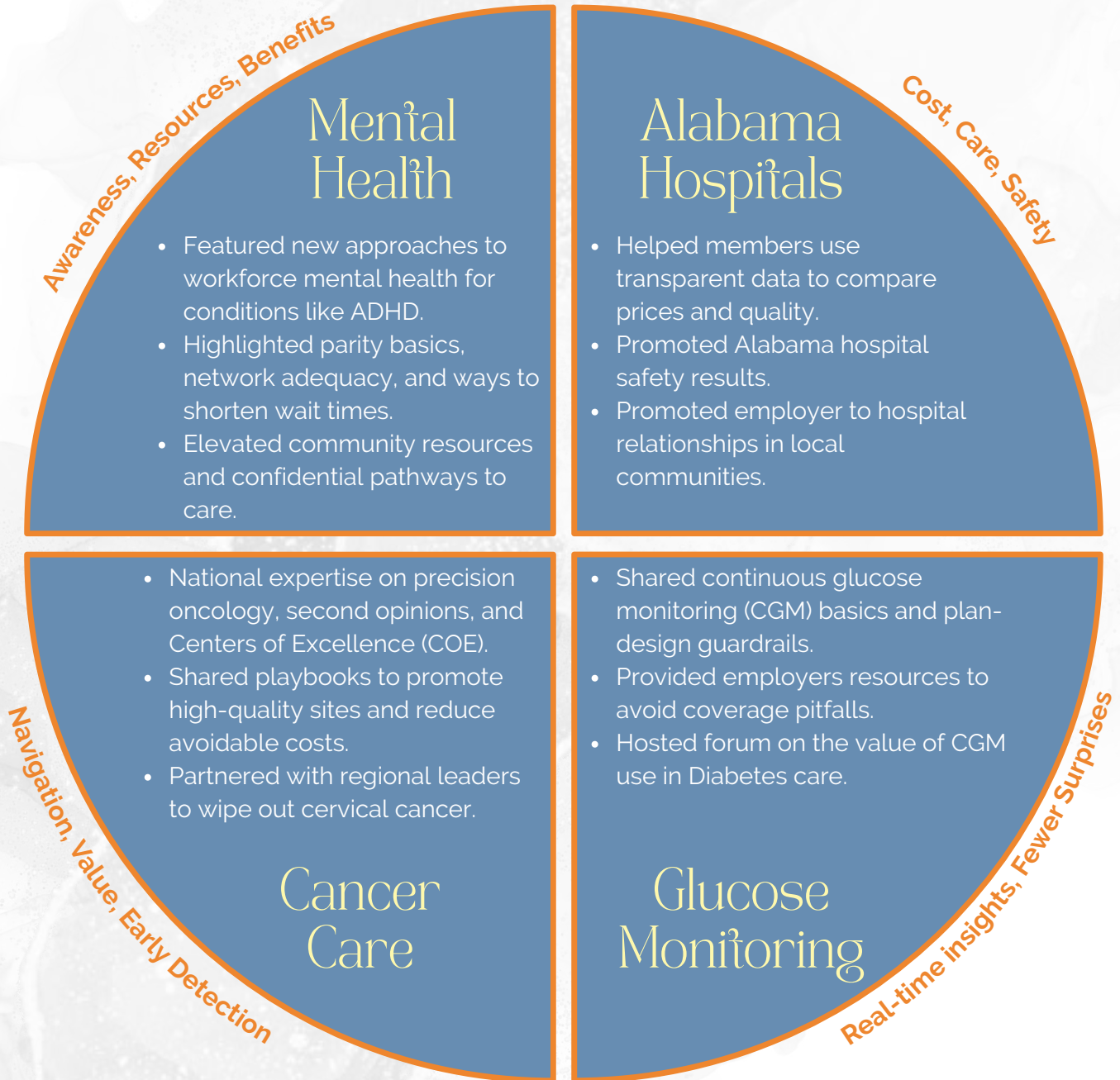
In 2025, employers traveled to Washington, D.C. twice for direct conversations with lawmakers on the Hill, ensuring Alabama's employer voice was heard clearly and consistently. Members also contributed to the annual Pulse of the Purchaser Survey, shaping the national dialogue around affordability, transparency, and benefit design. This was a year of showing up, speaking out, and pushing for meaningful change.

A Year of Stronger Engagement + Record Participation

AEHC delivered more opportunities than ever for members to learn, connect, and take action. We hosted four in-person events, two educational webinars, five Member Huddles, and welcomed two expert guest speakers. Our quarterly newsletters provided timely insights and resources, while participation across events and initiatives reached an all-time high. Member engagement continues to be the heartbeat of our coalition.

2025 Initiatives

In 2025, AEHC focused education where Alabama employers told us it mattered: getting the right care, at the right price, with support for the whole person. Through member huddles, webinars, and regional partnerships, AEHC turned complex topics into practical steps employers could use the next day.



Educational opportunities like these provide actionable tools for healthcare benefit management success!

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Where Leadership Meets Action: Russell DuBose

Russell DuBose, Vice President of Human Resources at Phifer, Inc., and AEHC Board Chair, has been a driving force. His leadership is defined not only by vision, but by action, expertise, and a deep commitment to advancing the employer's voice in healthcare.

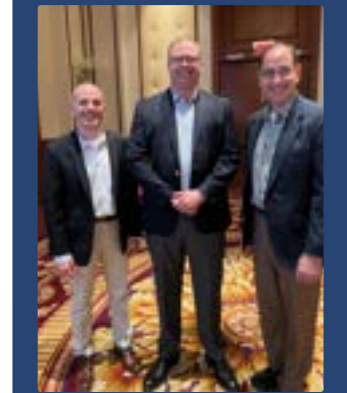
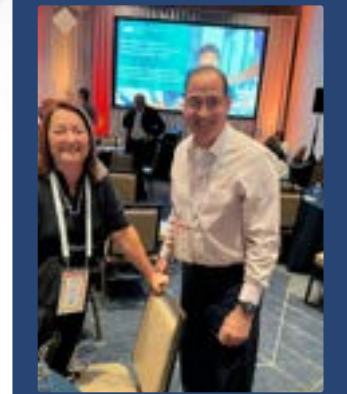
In 2025, Phifer, Inc., and DuBose were recognized with the inaugural Harris Rosen Rosie Ward for Best Use of Rosetta Dividend. The award is a direct reflection of DuBose's leadership, his ability to translate employer priorities into measurable outcomes, and to foster a culture of innovation and accountability. Under his guidance, Phifer, Inc. has demonstrated what is possible when employers take an active, informed role in healthcare purchasing.

His impact also extends into public policy. In 2024, he provided congressional testimony on ERISA, bringing a clear, employer-centered perspective to a critical national discussion. His testimony helped articulate the real-world implications of federal policy decisions on self-funded employers and reinforced the importance of protecting employer flexibility and fiduciary responsibility. Few employer leaders are willing, or prepared, to engage at this level, and DuBose did so with clarity, credibility, and conviction.

Throughout the years, he has served as a sought-after speaker at numerous state and national events, sharing insights on healthcare purchasing, transparency, and employer-led reform. Through these engagements, he consistently elevated AEHC's work, strengthened connections with peer coalitions, and brought national best practices back to our members.

Within AEHC, Russell is known not only for his insight but also for his generosity. He consistently shares knowledge, asks thoughtful questions, and encourages other members to engage more deeply. His leadership fosters an environment where employers learn from one another and move forward together with greater confidence.

AEHC is grateful for his contributions that shape our work, strengthen our membership, and inspire others to lead. As you review the 2025 Timeline, you'll see time and again where he has strengthened the voice of employers.



2025 Timeline

February

- **South AL Member Lunch**

March

- Health Policy Summit in DC
- **WEBINAR: Navigating Cancer Care**

April

- Leapfrog Group Spring Survey
- **Huntsville Employer Meeting**
- **Quarterly Newsletter**

May

- **Mental Health Awareness Campaign**
- **WEBINAR: Beyond Benefits- Developing a Culture of Mental Well-Being**
- **Member Huddle**
- FL Alliance for Healthcare Conference
 - Russell DuBose, speaker

June

- **Member Huddle**
- National Alliance Strategic Leadership Summit
- HCTN 2025 Employer Conference Series

July

- Capitol Hill Fly-In
- **Quarterly Newsletter**
- Pulse of the Purchaser Survey
- Rosetta Fest 2025
 - Russell DuBose, speaker
 - Phifer, Rosie Award Winner



Events hosted by AEHC denoted in blue

2025 Timeline

August

- **South AL: Continuous Glucose Monitors**
- **Member Huddle**
- Calhoun County SHRM Meeting
 - Michael Howard, speaker



September

- **Member Huddle**
- Operation Wipe Out Partnership

October

- **Member Huddle**

November

- National Alliance Annual Forum
- National Purchaser Leadership Council
- From Momentum to Action: Activating Employers on Hospital and Health Systems Prices
- Capitol Hill visits



December

- HCTN 2025 Employer Conference Series
 - Russell DuBose, speaker
- Dave Chase Podcast
 - Russell DuBose, guest
- **Holiday Mixer**
- **Quarterly Newsletter**



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Alabama Employer Health Consortium

AEHC is an employer-led coalition that engages all stakeholders in the healthcare equation.

We welcome three membership groups:
Employers, Hospitals, and Associates.

Not a member? Harness the strength of solidarity—AEHC unites leaders, providing a platform where challenges are tackled collectively, fostering resilience and innovation.

Prepared by Alabama Employer Health Consortium
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The Alabama Employer Health Consortium (AEHC) is an employer-led non-profit organization established in 2018.

Our board includes leading Alabama employers that are vital stakeholders in the purchasing of healthcare.

AEHC provides important resources to members to optimize the value of their healthcare dollars.

Our goal is to shine a light on health benefit trends and the governmental activities that affect them.

We promote quality and value for the benefit of our member companies, their employees, and the bottom line.