

*****NEWS RELEASE*****

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Health Care Sharing Ministries offer members the freedom to choose holistic treatment

Unlike health insurance, many HCSMs allow members to share costs of alternative therapies

WASHINGTON, D.C. — More and more Americans are turning to alternative medicine, either to complement standard medical care or to use non-Western treatment methods as an alternative to standard medical approaches.

As many as one third of American adults are using some form of alternative medical care, according to a National Health Interview Survey reported on [CNN](#).

The data come from the [National Health Statistics Report](#), a survey of more than 89,000 American adults and more than 17,000 children four to 17 years old.

“This is one of the most striking advantages offered by many Health Care Sharing Ministries,” says Katy Talento, executive director of the Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries (The Alliance, ahcsm.org). “Most insurance plans outright exclude or narrowly limit access to alternative care such as chiropractors, naturopathic providers, nutrition and health coaches, acupuncturists and others. But members of many Health Care Sharing Ministries are free to seek these types of services and have the expenses shared by other members.”

Among adults 18 and over, increases were seen from 2012 to 2017 in the use of alternative and complementary care models such as chiropractic care and acupuncture during the preceding 12 months, according to the [National Health Interview Survey](#) in 2018.

“Whether people use it as their main form of health care or in conjunction with a standard health care approach, the use of non-Western and or naturopathic health care approaches are surging in popularity,” Talento says. “Rather than relying on strict physician networks, many HCSM members are able to access the practices and treatments that best suit their needs.”

“Complementary” and “alternative medicine” include holistic, non-Western and homeopathic health practices that are not usually used in Western treatment protocols, according to the [Centers for Disease Control](#). “Complementary medicine” is care that is used along with standard medical protocols, while “alternative medicine” is used in place of standard medical protocols.

Examples of both include acupuncture, chiropractic care, naturopathy, homeopathy, herbalism, tai chi, other mind-body therapies, vitamins, herbs, and other nutritional therapies.

“Health Care Sharing Ministries champion the freedom to choose what is best among the many health care options that exist for ourselves and our families,” Talento says.

Founded in 2007 and headquartered in Washington, D.C., ***The Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries*** was created through a collaborative effort of Samaritan Ministries International of Peoria, Illinois and Christian Care Ministry of Melbourne, Florida for the purpose of protecting and preserving the rights of their members, and Christians in general, to engage in healthcare cost sharing as a viable alternative for their medical needs. ***The Alliance*** was established as a 501(c)(6) trade organization to represent the common interests of Health Care Sharing Ministry organizations which are facilitating the sharing of health care needs (financial, emotional, and spiritual) by individuals and families, and their participants. ***The Alliance*** engages with federal and state regulators, members of the media, and the Christian community to provide accurate and timely information on medical cost sharing.

Learn more about the ***Alliance of Health Care Sharing Ministries*** visit www.ahcsm.org or follow the ministry on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

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