BHI Analysis Reveals Slight Drop in U.S. Breast Cancer Rates from 2016 to 2019

CHICAGO (October 26, 2020) – In observance of National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, Blue Health Intelligence® (BHI®) examined breast cancer rates in women between 40 and 64 years of age using four years of national commercial claims data from 2016 through 2019. While the average annual rate of breast cancer decreased slightly by 0.1% during that timeframe, rates in women between ages 45 and 49 increased slightly to 1.2%.

In BHI’s recent Report on Breast Cancer, analysis shows that approximately 21 out of every 1,000 females ages 40 to 64 (2.1%) were diagnosed with or treated for breast cancer in 2019. Women between 60 and 64 years of age experienced the highest disease rate at 3.3%.

Across the U.S., the state of Hawaii had the most women (27 out of 1,000) who fought breast cancer in 2019. Conversely, Rhode Island reduced its breast cancer rate by 50% since 2016, dropping from 49 to 24 out of 1,000 females.

Other key highlights from BHI’s analysis include:

- Most breast cancer diagnoses were found in women over the age of 50.
- Roughly two-thirds of treatment costs in 2019 were for facility-related procedures, such as chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and inpatient hospitalizations. Only 2.9% of total treatment costs were related to pharmaceuticals.
- As shelter-in-place orders took effect due to the COVID-19 pandemic in spring 2020, rates of breast cancer screenings and mammograms decreased dramatically, dropping 87.5% in April 2020 compared to April 2019.

“By examining cost and utilization data from the nation’s largest commercial claims data repository, BHI can readily identify trends and variances in specific diseases that are important elements of larger public health conversations,” said Swati Abbott, BHI’s CEO. “We also are privileged to leverage our data in producing predictive and prescriptive healthcare analytics that help healthcare stakeholders lower costs and improve care quality in the fight against breast cancer and other diseases.”

About Blue Health Intelligence®

Leveraging the power of medical and pharmacy claims data from more than 200 million Americans, Blue Health Intelligence® (BHI®) delivers insights that empower healthcare organizations to improve patient care, reduce costs, and optimize performance. With the largest, most up-to-date, and uniform data set in healthcare, BHI provides an accurate representation of the health profile of commercially insured Americans. Our team of data analysts, clinicians, IT
experts, and epidemiologists provide analytics, software as a service, and in-depth consulting to payors, providers, employers, medical device companies, and other healthcare stakeholders. Blue Health Intelligence is an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association and carries the trade name of Health Intelligence Company, LLC. For more information, visit www.bluehealthintelligence.com.

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