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A new CMO is joining the C-Suite at non-healthcare employers

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<https://www.chartis.com/insights/new-cmo-joining-c-suite-non-healthcare-employers>

Health Ecosystem of the Future

The Buzz This Week

An increasing number of businesses are adding a new CMO to their C-suite: not to be confused with the Chief Marketing Officer, this new CMO is the Chief Medical Officer, also referred to as a Chief Health Officer. The trend is in part spurred by the pandemic—employers have always had an interest in their employees' health, but the pandemic has underscored the importance and the cascading negative impact resulting from poor employee health. As was recently stated in Fortune, "The spread of COVID-19 has made it a C-suite must-have for companies as varied as PepsiCo Inc. and Tyson Foods Inc., which added the newest kind of 'CMO' to their ranks in the past year."

Through the pandemic, widespread workplace absences and vacant positions have slowed and complicated business operations. They have also affected employee mental health and morale, and in many cases, they have increased the workload for those who aren't sick or who are returning to the workplace.

While the CMO's scope of responsibilities varies between businesses, most have introduced the role in an effort to develop more comprehensive wellness and health-related services beyond commercial health plan coverage. Companies wish to find new ways to optimize employee health and see the unique contributions and value a physician can provide in the C-suite. An article in Managed Healthcare Executive stated, "the role of the chief medical officer...really shifted from being focused on the goals of the healthcare organization to becoming a business strategy role of 'How do we stay open?' 'How do we keep our employees safe?' 'How do we get them back to work now?' 'How do we think about vaccinations?' All of these questions that are integral to our economy getting back on track, became part of the role of the chief medical officer."

Why It Matters

As an increasing number of businesses hire CMOs, there is an opportunity to make a meaningful impact on population health. Physician executives can develop health programs and/or guide employers toward existing programs that will improve and maintain the health of their employees. As executives in the C-suite, CMOs can also inform business decisions that could affect employee health and wellness.

Healthcare systems can partner with these CMOs to build programs that support employees' health and healthcare needs. This can include direct-to-employer contracts, providing on-site primary care and wellness clinics, and creating health-related education sessions. It is also an opportunity to better align physicians and other providers with employers and their employees' needs.

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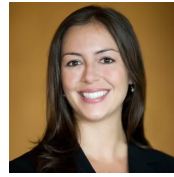
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