

## Survey projects double-digit increases in healthcare costs.

[CFO Magazine](#) (9/11, Taub) reported, "A new survey on future healthcare costs projects double-digit rate increases for the most popular types of healthcare coverage through the remainder of 2008 and into 2009." Using "responses from 79 health insurers," health maintenance organizations (HMOs), "and third-party administrators," researchers at Buck Consultants, "measured the projected average annual increase in employer-provided healthcare benefit costs." Their findings revealed that "costs for preferred provider organizations (PPO) are expected to surge 11.1 percent; for point-of-service (POS) by 10.8 percent...HMO[s] by 11.1 percent; and high-deductible, consumer-driven plans by 10.7 percent." The survey also showed a 6.9 percent increase "for plans that supplement Medicare," which was attributed to "the impact of federal controls on Medicare fees and the lower increases expected in Medicare deductibles and co-payments." And, contrary to findings reported by "a Mercer survey released last week," which indicated that "the increase in 2009 healthcare costs will be at its lowest in a decade," Buck Consultants said that "cost growth is likely to slow to 5.7 percent next year."