

Mass. employers keep benefit despite rising health costs

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BOSTON — While healthcare costs paid out by employers and workers soared 17 percent between 2002 and 2003, businesses continued to offer insurance to employees at the same rate as in previous years, according to new state survey results. About 68 percent of employers offered health insurance to employees, the same percentage as in 2002, the Division of Health Care Finance and Policy reported, citing the results of a statewide employer survey. The so-called take-up rate, the percentage of employees opting to take the coverage offered, also remained the same, at 76 percent. The survey also determined workers in 2003 paid more for office visits, emergency room visits and prescription drugs. □