Wearable Health Tech Keeps Users Safe and Healthy

As Congress continues to promote value-based healthcare and put patients back in control of their health, the Connected Health Initiative urges Members to advance H.R. 6279, the Wearable Equipment Adoption and Reinvestment in Technology Act (WEAR IT Act). This bill would clarify that wearable health devices and associated software are eligible for reimbursement through flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and health savings accounts (HSAs). These devices have many uses in the detection, mitigation, treatment, and prevention of health conditions. HSAs and FSAs already generally cover wearable devices with single functions like electrocardiogram (EKG) monitors, pulse oximeters, and heart rate monitors. But last year, the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) deemed two multi-function wearables eligible for FSA and HSA, and Congress must ensure it covers the full scope of wearable health technology. Multi-function wearables routinely catch critical and previously undetected conditions and even save American lives. These individual stories illustrate that the WEAR IT Act is long overdue.

Don Morrell was a healthy army veteran when his Fitbit began to alert him to problems with his heart. The device had detected a state of atrial fibrillation (AFib), a condition in which the upper chambers of the heart do not beat properly and cannot pump blood to the lower chambers of the heart like normal. The condition has several causes and can lead to a variety of concerning complications. Don decided to make an appointment with his primary care doctor, who referred him to a cardiologist. That specialist found an aortic aneurysm—a bulge that occurs in the aorta, blocking proper blood flow and impeding function of different organs. Don now monitors this condition with his doctors and through continued use of his Fitbit. Read more about Fitbit's AFib detection here: Fitbit detects aFib and leads to aortic aneurysm detection, 2022

Fitbit's mission is to help everyone live a healthier life – and to do that, they're focused on bringing these key health signals to products across all price points.

70 percent of people with AFib are between the ages of 65 and 85. At the same time, one in eight cases go undetected, more than half of which are at moderate to high risk of stroke. When applied to a high-risk group like this, adding accurate and reliable AFib detection has tremendous potential for population-level health. It can save lives, and it drastically reduces the cost of care.

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