

BCBS Delaware parent: Impact on local economy reaches \$135 million

Peter Osborne March 5, 2019



Highmark Health released a report this morning that says its impact on the Delaware economy has reached \$135 million between direct in-area spending and such secondary spending as employee wages. In addition, the parent of Blue Cross Blue Shield

Delaware says it supports just over 1,000 jobs in the state, including 592 direct employees.

“Success in Delaware is about partnering with others to deliver new kinds of health care solutions and increasing our speed to market,” said Highmark Health President and CEO David Holmberg.

Nationwide, Highmark’s economic impact has reached \$18.7 billion. That includes \$12.3 billion in Pennsylvania — a figure it says is bigger than the impact from all professional sports times in the state as well as the Pennsylvania airline industry. It also noted that even though it’s a not-for-profit organization, it paid \$924.6 million in taxes in 2017. Highmark Delaware provided more than \$1.5 million in grants and sponsorships to Delaware nonprofits and \$6.7 million in tax revenue in 2018, according to local spokesman Matt Stehl.

“Health care is one of the few areas where we have to conform to the system,” Holmberg said, adding that the study reinforces that Hallmark “has a seat at the table on a national level as we seek to be a leader in care transformation. We’re working to improve quality and safety; seek better outcomes; and make effective use of health care resources.”

The last time Highmark completed a study of this nature was 2006 when it assessed its nationwide economic impact at \$1.7 billion. Holmberg said the company wanted to ensure its impact was consistent with its mission to “make high-quality health care readily available, easily understandable, and truly affordable in the communities we serve.”

“We wanted to get a better understanding of our key customers, to understand the organizations and partnerships with whom we work and our impact on the community,” Holmberg said. “We’re looking for new and innovative ways to deliver health care. As we develop intellectual property across the company, we’re sharing that in Delaware.”