

Deborah L. Rice-Johnson Biography

LinkedIn Profile: [linkedin.com/in/deborah-rice-johnson-81072678/](https://www.linkedin.com/in/deborah-rice-johnson-81072678/)



Deborah Rice-Johnson is president of Highmark Inc. and chief growth officer of Highmark Health. She is an innovative health insurance leader, driven by a passion for reinventing health care experiences and pioneering provider relationships designed to keep care close to home and change antiquated reimbursement methods. Through diverse and inventive relationships ranging from joint ventures to equity interest partnerships, she has spearheaded affiliations and clinical alliances with Penn State Health, Geisinger Health System, Lehigh Valley and many regionally-based health care providers.

As president of Highmark Inc., she is responsible for providing senior leadership and strategic direction for the company's multi-state health insurance organization and diversified businesses, totaling over \$18B in revenue. Highmark Health Plans remains among the largest Blue Plans in the country serving more than 6 million members. Ms. Rice-Johnson is also responsible for Highmark's insurance-based subsidiaries: United Concordia Dental, the sixth largest dental plan nationally that serves the largest voluntary dental program in the world with TRICARE, and HM Insurance Group, a top ten national stop loss carrier with additional managed care reinsurance solutions.

As chief growth officer, Ms. Rice-Johnson is responsible for pursuing a range of strategic partnerships, affiliations and acquisitions that will allow Highmark Health to realize the potential of its Living Health model, which builds a better system for its customers and clinicians through innovative solutions and partnerships to deliver them.

Ms. Rice-Johnson has more than 30 years of experience in the health insurance industry. She has held a variety of management positions at Highmark and its predecessor company. Her leadership has not only redefined the payer-provider relationship and yielded unparalleled financial performance, but she has also delivered innovative clinical solutions that aim to improve health outcomes for Highmark's members. She is also keenly focused and committed to positively impacting the employment situation of our nation's military veterans through championing private-sector hiring efforts.

Ms. Rice-Johnson holds a bachelor's degree in business management from Carlow University. In 2014 she was named a Carlow Laureate, the university's most prestigious alumni award recognizing those whose work, thought, and action demonstrate the highest standards of professional accomplishment and leadership.

Current Board Affiliations:

- Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation
- The United Way of Southwestern Pennsylvania
- Carlow University
- Blue Health Intelligence
- Epilepsy Association of Western and Central PA, Chairman (Emeritus)
- Variety the Children's Charity, President

Thought Leadership Topics:

Creating community-based networks of care

- Developing a continuum of provider partnerships, clinical joint ventures, and integrations that bring primary and specialty care closer to where people work and live. These efforts include Highmark's ongoing investments in Allegheny Health Network and partnerships with Penn State Health, Geisinger and Lehigh Valley.

Forging innovative payer-provider partnerships

- Collaborating with providers to align financial incentives and identify ways to improve patient outcomes and satisfaction. This includes Highmark's signature True Performance program, which rewards primary care physicians for delivering high-value care. More than 2,000 primary care practices, covering more than 2 million members, participate in True Performance across Pennsylvania, West Virginia and Delaware. Highmark's claims data for 2017-19 shows that the program has helped to avoid a total of more than \$1 billion in health care costs.

Improving health care affordability

- Combatting the rising cost of prescription drugs through value-based agreements that hold pharmaceutical companies accountable for clinical and cost effectiveness.
- Ensuring our members and patients receive evidence-based, high-quality care in the most cost-effective and convenient care settings.
- Partnering with employers to create products that meet the particular needs of their employees and businesses.

Creating a remarkable health experience

- Investing in technology, care navigation tools and other resources that make it easier for our members and patients to manage their health and access the right care at the right time.

Helping veterans reach their full potential

- Applying veterans' unique skills, experiences and commitment to teamwork to new employment opportunities at Highmark and in all of the communities that we serve

Interviews/Articles:

Pittsburgh Business Times, March 2021:

Highmark president sees growth, opportunity in New York

<https://www.bizjournals.com/pittsburgh/news/2021/03/01/highmark-president-sees-growth-new-york.html>

"We believe so strongly in that strategy to transform health care, how it's delivered, how it's paid for, so the customers and clinicians have better outcomes, better experiences."

Forbes, March 2021: Highmark Completes Deal With HealthNow To Become Fourth-Largest Blue Cross Plan

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/brucejapsen/2021/03/01/highmark-completes-deal-with-healthnow-to-become-fourth-largest-blue-cross-plan/?sh=73def84d4df5>

"We look forward to bringing our resources, tools and advanced technologies to Western and Northeastern New York. With this affiliation, we begin our path forward to enhance customer and clinician engagement, create better health outcomes, control costs and improve affordability for members in Western and Northeastern New York."

Pittsburgh Business Times, July 2020: Deb Rice-Johnson discusses creating a remarkable health experience for customers

<https://wwwtest.highmarkhealth.org/annualreport2020/highlights/healthplans/debRiceInsight.pdf>

Strategic partnerships and affiliations will allow us to invest in new capabilities for our Living Health model, and improve our cost competitiveness. That translates to better care, lower cost and greater access for our members.

AHIP Blog, August 2020: School's Back, and Highmark is Here to Help

<https://www.ahip.org/schools-back-and-highmark-is-here-to-help/>

These back-to-school initiatives are part of Highmark's larger efforts to help the communities that we serve during and beyond the COVID-19 pandemic. We have also provided funding to address food insecurity, financial stability, and safety-net health care across Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Delaware; partnered with minority and woman-owned small businesses to distribute and manufacture more than 1 million face coverings for Highmark members, community organizations in need, health care professionals, and businesses; donated more than 40,000 cloth face coverings to EMS professionals; reduced out-of-pocket costs for COVID-19 testing and treatment; extended care via telemedicine and mobile testing units; and created tools like a dedicated COVID-19 hotline and online symptom checker.

About Highmark Inc.

One of America's leading health insurance organizations and an independent licensee of the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association, Highmark Inc. (the Health Plan) and its affiliated health plans (collectively, the Health Plans) work passionately to deliver high-quality, accessible, understandable, and affordable experiences, outcomes, and solutions to customers. As the fourth-largest overall Blue Cross Blue Shield-affiliated organization, Highmark Inc. and its Blue-branded affiliates proudly cover the insurance needs of more than 6 million members in Pennsylvania, Delaware, and West Virginia. Its diversified businesses serve group customer and individual needs across the United States through dental insurance and other related businesses. For more information, visit www.highmark.com.