

The hand of change

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By **Paul Wilson, Editor-in-Chief, BenefitsPRO** | August 31, 2021



Over the past few years, the world has experienced enormous turmoil and change. We've watched as long-standing systems and traditions have crumbled or been turned on their heads, and as our workplaces, careers and even the ways we live our lives each day have been transformed in ways we'd never have imagined just a few years ago.

During times like these, it can be valuable to try to put things in perspective, which often involves taking the long view. In this month's feature, "[The rise of workplace wellness](#)," we look back on the changing face of the workplace over the last 70 years. Through the lens of wellness, Cheryl Brown Merriwether takes us on a fascinating journey, from the post-war years of the 1950s, to the hard-drinking, chain-smoking office environment of the 60s, to the growing focus on work-life balance, nutrition and other emerging trends that have slowly made their way into our collective awareness in the years since.

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But while it's vital that we use history as a gauge, of course we must also continue to look to the future and do our best to adapt and innovate. In his piece, "[The disappearing primary practice.](#)" Dan Cook examines a key trend that is currently shaping the face of our industry: health care consolidation. He describes the current environment succinctly: "Behemoth insurers, health systems, and private equity investment groups are racing to ingest as many clinics as possible. Meanwhile, DPC groups like Everside are expanding through acquisitions or mergers as quickly as they can in an attempt to preserve independent medical practices."

Check out the full digital edition of our [September issue.](#) In this month's [Face of Change column](#), Stephanie Berger talks a lot about how difficult times create opportunity and differentiation for benefits advisors. "Every time there's a big disruption, [some] people fade away and then you have the core group of people who really want to be impactful and they're the ones who succeed and take advantage of the new opportunities." She also expresses optimism, because "there are so many innovative brokers, benefits professionals and companies out there who are forcing the hand of change."

Which is a perfect segue to our 2021 BenefitsPRO Broker of the Year, [Edwige Ligonde](#), whose adaptability, creativity and passion for helping people exemplify everything that is going right in the benefits industry. As he puts it, "There's just so much opportunity for people who may have gone down a completely different path to come into this industry. And if those people are coming into this industry with a completely different set of ideas and thoughts, we could see a massive shift that might steer the industry in a whole new direction."