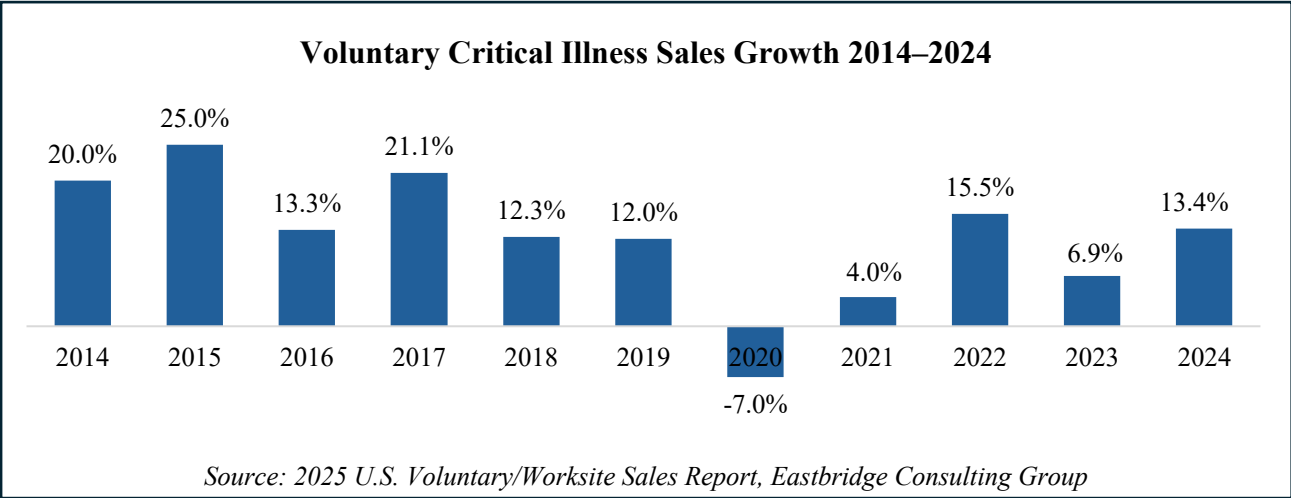


Meeting a critical need

Critical illness insurance continues to rise in voluntary benefits market

The numbers are startling: Nearly half of U.S. adults — 127.9 million people — had some form of cardiovascular disease between 2017 and 2020, according to the [American Heart Association](#). Meanwhile, the [American Cancer Society](#) estimates more than 2 million people will be diagnosed with cancer this year, and the [Centers for Disease Control](#) reports more than one in seven adults suffer from chronic kidney disease. The total costs nationwide of treating these and other critical illnesses run into the hundreds of billions of dollars. And even with the best major medical insurance, patients and their families can face overwhelming out-of-pocket expenses that devastate their financial security.

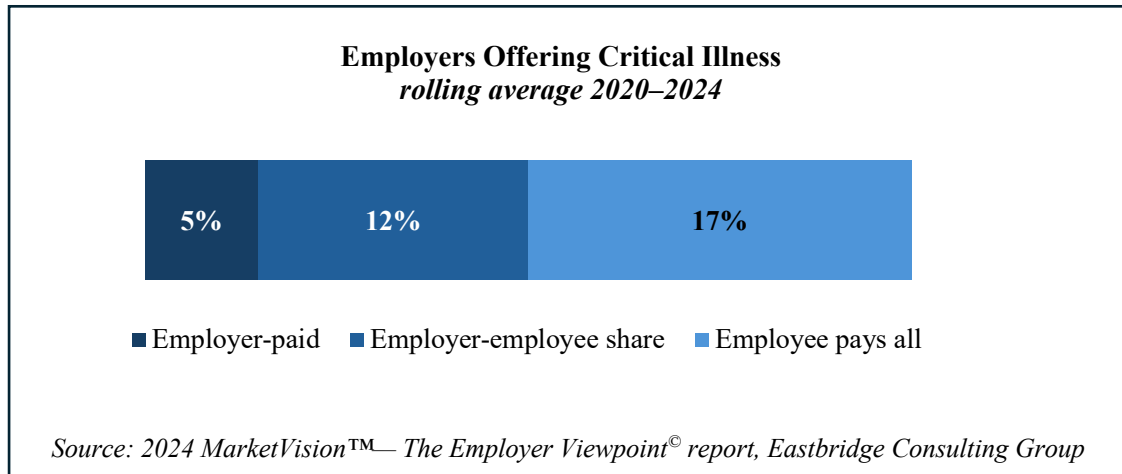
It’s not surprising, then, that critical illness insurance has become one of the industry’s fastest-growing voluntary insurance products. Eastbridge’s most recent “U.S. Voluntary/Worksite Sales Report” shows voluntary critical illness plan sales grew by double-digits from 2014 to 2019, and have rebounded strongly from a 7% pandemic dip to average 12% increases each of the past three years. Critical illness products now account for more than 12% of all voluntary sales.



Employer Perspective

More than a third of U.S. employers offer critical illness coverage, according to Eastbridge’s 2024 “MarketVision™—The Employer Viewpoint®” report. The most common

funding arrangement is voluntary only, although 12% of employers share the cost of premiums with their employees and 5% of employers pay the entire premium.



Employers with more than 500 employees are the most likely to offer critical illness coverage to employees on any funding basis, although about a third of smaller employers also offer this coverage. Mid-sized employers with 500–9,999 employees are the most likely to offer critical illness coverage on a voluntary-only basis.

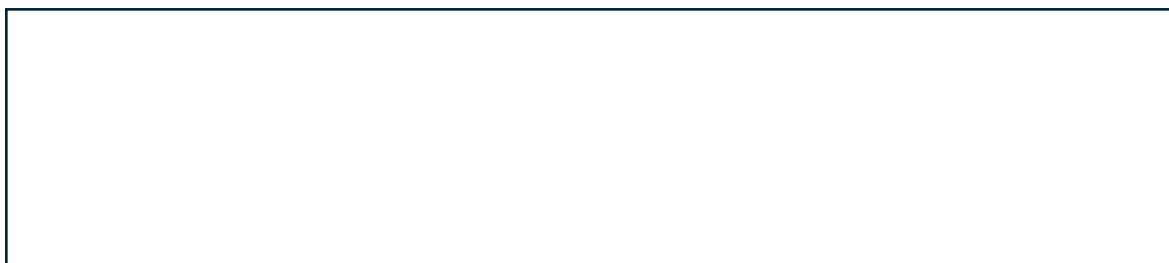
Percent of Employers Offering Critical Illness Coverage by Size

	10–49 EEs	50–99 EEs	100–499 EEs	500–999 EEs	1,000–2,499 EEs	2,500–9,999 EEs	10,000+ EEs	Weighted Average
Any funding basis	26%	32%	33%	49%	50%	49%	63%	34%
Voluntary basis	16%	8%	18%	27%	21%	22%	17%	17%

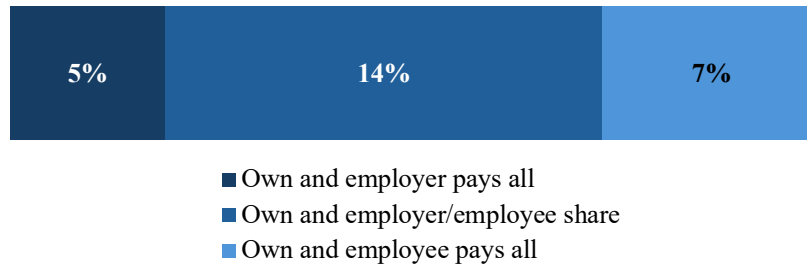
Source: 2024 MarketVision™— The Employer Viewpoint® report, Eastbridge Consulting Group

Employee Perspective

About a quarter (26%) of employees own a critical illness plan provided through their employer on any funding basis, according to participants in Eastbridge’s 2025 “MarketVision™—The Employee Viewpoint®” report. Most of these employees (14%) share the cost of the coverage with their employer. Just 7% pay the full cost of the coverage, and 5% say their employer pays the full premium.



Employee Ownership of Critical Illness (2025)



Source: 2025 MarketVision™— The Employee Viewpoint® Report, Eastbridge Consulting Group

Employees in businesses of all sizes have similar ownership levels of voluntary critical illness insurance, ranging from 4% to 8%. Employees across employer size groups also show consistently strong interest in purchasing this coverage on a voluntary basis. Interest is highest in groups with 100–499 employees.

Employee Ownership or Interest in Buying Voluntary Critical Illness Coverage by Employer Size

	10–49 EEs	50–99 EEs	100–499 EEs	500–999 EEs	1,000–2,499 EEs	2,500–9,999 EEs	10,000+ EEs	Weighted Average
Own voluntary	4%	7%	6%	7%	7%	6%	8%	7%
Interested in purchasing voluntary	37%	32%	40%	31%	29%	35%	32%	34%

Source: 2025 MarketVision™— The Employee Viewpoint® Report, Eastbridge Consulting Group

Broker Perspective

Brokers also continue to value critical illness as one of the top voluntary offerings for their clients. Eastbridge’s 2025 “Broker Perspectives on the Voluntary/Worksite Market” Spotlight™ report shows both benefit brokers — those who sell mainly employer-funded employee benefits but also offer voluntary products — and voluntary brokers who mainly sell voluntary/worksite benefits list critical illness as one of the top five voluntary products they sell.

Top Five Voluntary Products Brokers Sold in 2024

Product Rank	Benefit Brokers	Voluntary Brokers
1	Term life	Accidental injury
2	Short-term disability	Critical illness
3	Accidental injury	Hospital indemnity
4	Dental	Universal/whole life
5	Critical illness	Short-term disability

Source: 2025 “Broker Perspectives on the Voluntary/Worksite Market” Spotlight™ report, Eastbridge Consulting Group

Critical need continues

Medical care continues to advance, bringing earlier diagnoses, new treatments and better outcomes for many serious illnesses — but alongside those improvements come ever-rising health care expenses and out-of-pocket costs for millions of Americans. The interest in and demand for critical illness insurance shows brokers, employers and employees are finding value in this solution to protect their financial well-being.

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