

## The Cigna Group

## I-day: Specialty pharmacy the growth driver

Reiterate Rating: BUY | PO: 400.00 USD | Price: 342.74 USD

## Company is getting more bullish on Evernorth (again)

The tone of the analyst day was bullish with CI raising its LT EPS growth outlook to 10-14% (vs 10-13% previously). The clear focus of the day was on the Evernorth segment, which the company now expects to grow 5-8% (vs 5-7% previously). Notably this is the 3rd time the company has raised the outlook since the closing of the ESRX deal, which originally outlined just 3-5% growth, and has meaningfully outperformed since then. While CI's growth outlook is still the lowest of any major MCO, it appears to be the most easily achievable as it is largely driven by growth in end markets in which CI has strong market share, as well as capital deployment, and is not exposed to MA cost trend/rate concerns. Reiterate Buy.

## Sees specialty drugs as a more attractive market than MA

CI emphasized a large fraction (30%) of earnings comes from Specialty and Care Solutions, a subsegment it will break out separately from the core PBM, and which it sees growing 8-12%. Unlike other MCOs which are more focused on the vertical integration of care delivery, CI sees specialty drugs as the largest driver of this growth. Market to grow 7-9% over the next decade, with modest share gains and wraparound care services (behavioral, telehealth, home health, VBC) driving the rest. Eventually expects 10-15% of specialty drugs will have generic/biosimilar competition, fueling part of that outlook. Believes it is differentiated and positioned to take share due to unique 'end to end' national suite of capabilities (ability to formulate drugs, home infusion, mail order, site of care optimization, complex care management). Has access to 98% of specialty drugs on formulary today, more than any competitor. Core PBM represents another 30% of earnings, is only expected to grow 2-4% (similar to standalone ESRX).

## Expects continued share gains in commercial business

The last 40% of earnings comes from the MCO segment, which the company expects to grow 7-10%, vs 8-10% previously due to divestiture of MA business. The largest component is comprised of the employer business which CI expects to grow 4-6% as a market and take some share driving 6-8% LT (has grown 7-8% over past decade), particularly as it shifts smaller employers to ASO. Noted that it has doubled the serviceable TAM where it believes it is 'price competitive' to 60% of markets, up from 30% over the last 5 years. Remainder of segment growth to come from Individual and International which are both growing faster.

## Capital deployment big piece, but M&amp;A not needed

CI expects 4-5% of 10-14% EPS growth to come from capital deployment, in the form of targeted M&A and share repo, in addition to a 1-2% dividend yield. It sees M&A as a 'nice to have' rather than a 'need to have'. Would want it to be 1) Strategically aligned, but open to 'service expansion M&A', 2) accretive to EPS 3) Higher return on capital vs WAAC 4) Provide reasonable visibility into quickly de-leveraging 5) Have a high probability of closing both from a shareholder vote perspective as well as antitrust.

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## Stock Data

Price	342.74 USD
Price Objective	400.00 USD
Date Established	5-Feb-2024
Investment Opinion	B-1-7
52-Week Range	240.50 USD - 347.99 USD
Mkt Val (mn) / Shares Out (mn)	100,959 USD / 294.6
Free Float	99.7%
Average Daily Value (mn)	591.89 USD
BofA Ticker / Exchange	CI / NYS
Bloomberg / Reuters	CI US / CI.N
ROE (2024E)	17.8%
Net Dbt to Eqty (Dec-2023A)	49.9%
ESGMeter™	High

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I-day = Investor Day; ESRX = Express Scripts; CI = Cigna; MCO = Managed Care Organization; MA = Medicare Advantage; PBM = Pharmacy Benefits Manager; VBC = Value Based Care; ASO = Administrative Services Only; WAAC = Weighted Average Cost of Capital

## Price objective basis & risk

### The Cigna Group (CI)

Our \$400 PO is based on 14.1x our 2024 EPS estimate, a premium to the average NTM PE ratio since the Express Scripts (ESRX) deal closed (10x). We see this as justified as over the next few years we expect an acceleration in commercial enrollment, PBM earnings (from biosimilars and CNC contract win), and rotation from growth stocks to value. All of these factors should lead to modest multiple expansion in the near term.

Upside risks to our PO are a faster-than-expected recovery from COVID, commercial/PBM market share gains, and stronger-than-expected growth in government or high margin service oriented businesses. Additionally, there is potential upside from capital deployment.

Downside risks are recessionary risks, market share losses, commercial MLR pressure, low visibility into growth.

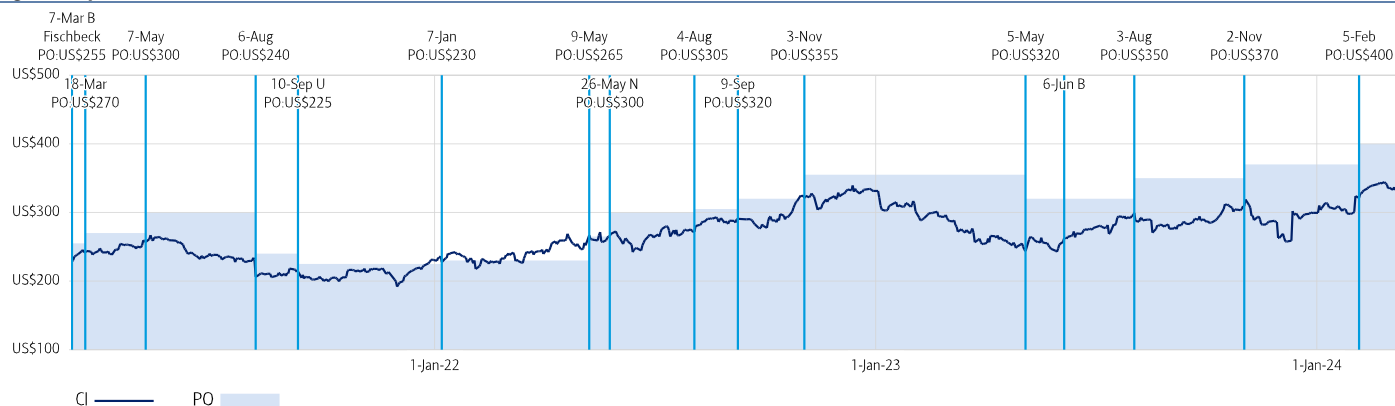
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### The Cigna Group (CI) Price Chart



B: Buy, N: Neutral, U: Underperform, PO: Price Objective, NA: No longer valid, NR: No Rating

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### Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Health Care Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)

Coverage Universe	Count	Percent	Inv. Banking Relationships <sup>R1</sup>	Count	Percent
Buy	234	60.94%	Buy	115	49.15%
Hold	80	20.83%	Hold	36	45.00%
Sell	70	18.23%	Sell	29	41.43%

### Equity Investment Rating Distribution: Global Group (as of 31 Dec 2023)

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Buy	1895	53.62%	Buy	1083	57.15%
Hold	832	23.54%	Hold	454	54.57%
Sell	807	22.84%	Sell	383	47.46%

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Neutral	≥ 0%	≤ 30%
Underperform	N/A	≥ 20%

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