

It's Ever Changing...



Debra L. Sears

As I mentioned some time back, the only thing for certain is that nothing is certain. We have concerns in the two markets that I serve; the individual market and the group market. Within the individual market there are two segments; segment one: the under 65, and segment two: the over 65. The group market has two segments also; the small group and the large group.

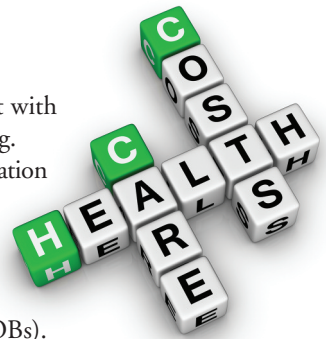
Let's start with the hottest topic, individuals under age 65. Starting January 1, 2018, our state will possibly be without an insurance company to write individual plans for folks under age 65. This for sure will be determined in September, as there is one carrier left that has to decide whether they will participate next year or not. What does this mean? There were approximately 70,000+ people affected by this event. This was a hard decision for the insurance companies to make. But their decision was made to protect the over two million that were on the books, written prior to 2010, when the Affordable Care Act became a Federal law. The unprecedented increases in premiums just did not offset the enormous amount of claims. The premiums could not be determined, as there is no way to assess the risk without underwriting. Health insurance is the only insurance that I am aware of that you can purchase without underwriting. If you insure your car, it is based on the make, model, year, etc. If you insure your home, details are used to determine your premium – companies assess your risk and price the product accordingly. This holds true with life insurance, disability income protection, long term care, etc. You can easily see the issue at hand with the health insurance industry not being able to determine the risk. Folks can seek other opportunities for their insurance coverage. We work with young, elderly, handicapped; Veterans, self-employed persons, everyone and we have been successful in placing all that have sought us out for counseling. Please give me a call. I caution you to be proactive...do not wait until December to learn your options! Planning is the key to a seamless transition.

Our over 65 individuals should be wary of scammers! We are nearing the time of the year that is the Open Enrollment for Medicare supplements and Part D RX Drug plans. The Attorney General, SHIIP and the Better Business Bureau partner together to try to protect Iowans from scams. The most common scams can be seen on www.iowafraudfighters.gov/common-scams-to-watch-out-for/. These lists include investment scams, Medicare scams and consumer scams. I would like to focus on the Medicare scams.

Open enrollment is a time of the year that scammers might go door-to-door or use email or phone calls to try to enroll Iowans in false or inappropriate Medicare coverage plans. Please do not meet with anyone without your advocate with you. I recommend a son or daughter, close friend or neighbor. Have a designated date, a

specific time frame and place to meet with anyone wanting to sell you something. Do not provide your personal identification numbers. False billing occurs when Medicare is charged on your behalf for services, procedures or products you did not receive. Check your monthly Explanation of Benefits (EOBs).

Medicare mail fraud is mail that imitates Medicare mailing in an effort to steal your personal financial information or your Medicare number. Do not provide your Medicare number and personal financial information to anyone over the phone. They do not want to get you a "new" or "updated" card, they want your identity.



Self-employed folks are able to attain quotes in the small business market segment or the large group market segment if they meet the eligibility requirements. This is an opportunity for an individual that may have been caught in the changes to seek a new way of attaining health insurance. Please give me a call.

We are problem solvers – we love our work and the people that we serve. Bring me your dilemma and let me see if I can "fix" it. We do not charge for our consultations. So if I am going to invest the time, I probably can offer you a solution.

If you have not taken advantage of your free annual wellness exam, please think about it. It is the time of the year that school is nearing. You may need a sports physical and your annual wellness exam may meet the criteria. I encourage you to check that out.

We finally did it! – After 39 year in the business, I was asked by the Better Business Bureau to join as an accredited member. I was featured on the *Morning Show* last week for an interview and am proud to say that you can see that "clip" on my website at www.searsinsurance.info. *

Learn more about us on our website www.searsinsurance.info, or follow our RSS feed and "like" us on Facebook to receive the most current information.

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