



Debra L. Sears

MANY REINVENTIONS ARE HAPPENING

IN THE *Health Insurance World..*

It would be remiss for me not to mention all that is happening in the health insurance world this fourth quarter and on into the first quarter of 2015. The timing of this issue is so appropriate that I would like to enlighten you on some highlights for the different market segments associated with health care and the ACA and Medicare

Open Enrollment opportunities. Be prepared to experience more acronyms than you can even believe. I always use them and then offer the definition. If I weren't in this business, I could be lost! I am here to help you navigate through your options.

ACA Updates (Affordable Care Act)

The maximum out-of-pocket limit for essential health benefits in-network is set for \$6,600 single/ \$13,200 for family. Small groups (2-50) deductible limits of \$2,000 single/ \$4,000 family have been removed. Regarding the Plan Year Extensions; the Insurance Department approved an option to extend all non-grandfathered plans (written pre 3.23.2010 through 12.31.2013) into 2016. Wellmark has also offered to extend individual and small group plans. This means that eligible individuals and employers can continue to keep the plan that they have, know and trust or exercise their option to move to an ACA plan. The ACA Fees continue to be included in the 2015 premiums. There are several and they do add up. My feeling is that there are always pros and cons to be considered. What is appropriate for one individual or group may not hold true for the other. Please call me for a free assessment. If you should stay put, I will be the first to tell you that. If you should consider a move, I will present all options and the numbers will literally be your best guide. The MLR (Medical Loss Ratio) established in 2011 requires insurers to spend 80% of health care premiums on medical costs and quality improvements. Wellmark issued rebates to individuals on certain policies in August.

Exciting New Product from Wellmark - Blue Rewards

Wellmark created a product that will change the consumer expectations and will shift the high volume of care to more personalized experiences, while at the same time standardizing the insurance benefits. This unique product offers coordinated care among UnityPoint Health Physicians, Hy-Vee pharmacists and dieticians and Wellmark care management. There are great rewards for members for healthy behaviors. This product has distinct markets in Iowa, healthy choice rewards point system, a member engagement portal, a Blue Rewards welcome call with full details and a new tiered network solution. I am thrilled to be able to offer such a unique and beneficial product from a company we and our providers all trust.

Medicare

There are several important dates coming soon which enable you to first enroll in Medicare Supplement and RX plans as well as make changes if you are currently over 65 with Medicare. The Initial Enrollment Period (IEP) is when you are first eligible, typically age 65 or under age 65 with The Annual Enrollment Period (AEP), which

runs from October 15 through December 7, allows you to reassess and make changes appropriate for you effective 1.1.2015. There is also a Special Enrollment Period (SEP) and a Medicare Annual Disenrollment Period (MADP). The disenrollment period allows you to disenroll from January 1 through February 14. We also have a new offering for the RX plans referred to as Value Plus. For certain prescription drug lists this could save some premium and out of pocket dollars for you. Each person's needs are different based on the RXs that they require – the best advice is for you to have an agent that will offer you unconditional service when you feel you have questions or are just downright confused by the process.



Individuals

For coverage starting in 2015, the Open Enrollment Period is November 15, 2014 through February 15, 2015. Individuals may also qualify for Special Enrollment Periods outside of Open Enrollment if they experience certain events.

As you can see, there is a need to reassess your insurance choices. Business owners offer policies to attract and retain quality employees. We offer all ancillary products, life insurance, disability, IRA and 401(k) rollovers, and Tax-Deferred Annuities. We were established over 40 years ago and as an independent agency offering only quality companies with a huge array of choices. There is something for everyone. I offer personalized service for all. We have consistently been recognized as a top producer with several companies and I thank you for the trust you place in me. Please give me a call for a FREE consultation! *

Learn about us on our website www.searsinsurance.info. We have an RSS feed and/or feel free to "like" us on Facebook to receive the most current information.

Sears Insurance has been recognized again in 2013 as being in the Top 1% for Wellmark Blue Cross and Blue Shield in Iowa.

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