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e-news for Producers

December 2009



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Best wishes for a happy and healthy holiday season!

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ALL MARKETS

* BCBSIL Unveils New Web Site *

Redesign Focuses on Guidance and Support

More than ever, it is important to help your employer groups and individual consumers understand health insurance and find a plan to meet their needs. Our www.bcbsil.com Web site redesign, launched in early December, focuses on providing this guidance and support.

[See what's new.](#)

* **Network Update: Contract Agreement Reached with University of Chicago Provider Network** *

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois (BCBSIL) is pleased to announce that a three-year agreement has

been reached with University of Chicago Hospitals to remain in the BCBSIL contracting provider network, effective Jan. 1, 2010. This agreement extends to the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC), physicians, and all satellite clinics that are associated with UCMC.

*** Illinois Legislative Council: Fall Veto Legislative Session 2009 Update ***

The Illinois Fall Veto Legislative Session adjourned the end of October after a six-day session focusing on campaign finance reform, state budget issues and action on bills that were previously vetoed by the governor. Filing has also begun for the upcoming 2010 Illinois primary election. Also, Illinois legislators have begun filing legislation addressing "health care reforms" to be considered in January when the state Legislature returns.

[See overview of bills affecting the insurance industry and health care.](#)

*** Pharmacy Program Updates: Formulary Change ***

Due to recent industry events, Ocella™, a popular oral contraceptive previously considered a generic product (generic of Yasmin®), is now classified as a brand medication and will be adjudicated at the non-formulary brand copayment level. As a result, Yasmin has been added to the BCBSIL formulary.

[Read more.](#)

*** HCSC Wins Two Awards ***

Recently, Health Care Service Corporation (HCSC), a Mutual Legal Reserve Company that operates Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans in Illinois, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas, received recognition for excellence in compliance and ethics, and being one of the country's top military-friendly employers.

[Learn more.](#)

*** BCBSIL Holiday Schedule ***

BCBSIL will observe the following holiday schedule. Offices will be closed on:

- Christmas Eve, Thursday, Dec. 24
- Christmas Day, Friday, Dec. 25
- New Year's Day, Friday, Jan. 1

Please note that some departments may close early the afternoon before the scheduled holiday.

*** Do We Have Your Correct Contact Information? ***

If you have recently moved offices, added new agents, changed companies or have new contact information, please contact your BCBSIL representative to give us your updated information. Or log into [Blue Access® for Producers](#) and click on the User Profile to provide your new contact information electronically.

GROUP MARKETS

*** BCBSIL Uses Facebook to Assist Employees with Open Enrollment ***

To provide multiple options to interact with prospective and current members, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois uses social media such as Facebook and Twitter to provide answers and information in real-time, with instant exchanges or negligible wait times. This fall we launched a new section on Facebook specifically designed to be used during open enrollment.

[Get the details.](#)

*** Certificate Booklets Now Available on Blue Access for Producers ***

All standard, open-plan, non-HMO electronic certificate booklets, benefit highlight inserts and prescription drug riders are now available under the *Product Information* section of [Blue Access for Producers](#).

[Read more.](#)

*** Updated Matrix for Medicare Secondary Payer Rules Is Now Available ***

An updated [Medicare Secondary Payer \(MSP\) matrix](#) showing how MSP rules apply in different scenarios is now available. This document simplifies the application of MSP rules and helps to identify the primary claims payer in most Medicare situations.

[Learn more.](#)

*** New Employer Acknowledgment Form Available ***

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois has modified the Employer Acknowledgment Form (EAF) used to collect data for determining Medicare secondary payer status, as required by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services. The new form should be used for all new and renewing groups effective Dec. 1, 2009 and after.

[Read more and view the form.](#)

*** ERISA Form 5500 Update ***

As previously communicated, beginning with the 2009 plan year, the Department of Labor (DOL) enacted changes to the ERISA Form 5500 annual reporting. One of the primary changes was the expansion of the amounts and types of expenses to be reported.

[Get the details.](#)

*** New Hire Application Processing Simplified for Dental HMO Coverage ***

Effective January 2010, dental HMO (DHMO) information can be included on the medical application/policy change form when submitted to the medical Full Service Unit for processing. Now that DHMO account and membership information is housed on BCBSIL's primary membership and billing system, *only one submission is needed.*

[Learn more.](#)

*** Step Therapy Program Change, OTC Exclusion Program Addition ***

The generic equivalent and an over-the-counter (OTC) formulation of oral Prevacid[®] capsules, or lansoprazole, have been launched. Prevacid is a proton pump inhibitor used to treat ulcers and gastroesophageal reflux disease. The other highly utilized medication available generically in this class is omeprazole. The use of generic medications as first-line therapy is encouraged, whenever appropriate.

[Get the details.](#)

*** New Phone Number, Extended Hours of Service for Special Beginnings[®] Maternity Program ***

Special Beginnings, BCBSIL's maternity program, offers participants support and education, pregnancy risk factor identification and ongoing communications/monitoring from early pregnancy to six weeks after delivery. To help serve members better, a new phone number and extended hours of operation have been added.

[Learn more about enrolling members.](#)

*** Blue Access[®] for Employers Tip: How Employers Can Change Their Profile Information ***

Your employer group clients have the ability to update the contact information BCBSIL has on file for them with just a few clicks in Blue Access for Employers. Pass this tip on to your groups as an easy and convenient way to stay up to date.

[Follow these easy steps.](#)

*** Winter Issue of Benefits Management Briefing Coming Soon ***

The winter issue of *Benefits Management Briefing*, BCBSIL's quarterly employer newsletter, will be distributed later this month. Look for this issue on [Blue Access for Producers](#) soon.

INDIVIDUAL MARKETS

*** November-December Issue of LifeTimes Distributed ***

The November-December issue of [LifeTimes](#), the bi-monthly health and wellness newsletter mailed to Medicare Supplement and Part D prescription drug members, is available. Each issue features articles on health and wellness, and includes a crossword puzzle, book reviews and news briefs about medical research.

Reminder:

- [Use the Current BCBSIL Medicare Supplement Form](#)



In the Know is an electronic publication for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois producers. *In the Know* is published by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Illinois for informational purposes only. Editor: Shelley Fox - producer_news@bcbsil.com

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