



South Carolina Department of Insurance

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UPDATED **MEDIA RELEASE**

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For Immediate Release

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South Carolina Health Insurance Cooperative Health Insurance Fairs *Revised to Include Details for Thursday's Charleston Fair*

Today, the South Carolina Department of Insurance and the South Carolina Alliance of Health Plans announced a series of health insurance fairs that have been scheduled for later this week for small businesses that are members of the South Carolina Health Cooperative. "We are pleased to see the continued outpouring of support offered by both the industry and community alike as we work to locate coverage for the South Carolinians impacted by this issue," said Ray Farmer, Director of the South Carolina Department of Insurance.

To date, the Department has identified four carriers that are able to write small group coverage with a 12/1/2014 effective date:

BlueChoice HealthPlan
BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina
Coventry
United Healthcare

The above carriers have committed to writing small group coverage with a December 1st effective date for any SCHC member employer that secures a quote by Friday, December 12th. In order to assist SCHC member employers with securing quotes and coverage, the SCAHP has offered to host health insurance fairs for the impacted small businesses. These Fairs will allow the SCHC's members the opportunity to talk one-on-one with representatives of these four carriers at one time and in a centralized location so that they may take advantage of the retroactive effective date.

The South Carolina Alliance of Health Plans will host Health Insurance Fairs for SCHC members as follows:

When: Wednesday, December 3, 2014 | 3:00 p.m.-5:00 p.m.

City: Columbia, SC

Location: South Carolina Chamber of Commerce
11th Floor of the IT-ology Building on the Corner of Main Street and Sumter Street
1301 Gervais Street, Suite 1100, Columbia, SC 29201

When: Thursday, December 4, 2014 | 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.

City: Charleston, SC

Location: Charleston Metro Chamber of Commerce
4500 Leeds Avenue, Suite 100, North Charleston, SC 29405

When: Friday, December 5, 2014 | 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m.
City: Greenville, SC
Location: Greenville Chamber of Commerce
24 Cleveland Street, Greenville, SC 29601

“Hosting these Health Insurance Fairs is just one small way that we can help the Department help those impacted. We are glad to stand with them and also to have the help of the state’s Chambers of Commerce as we hope to be a part of the solution for the benefit of our fellow South Carolinians,” said Jim Ritchie, Executive Director of the South Carolina Alliance of Health Plans.

The South Carolina Health Cooperative (SCHC) was licensed as a MEWA in June 2012. A MEWA is an arrangement where a group of employers pool their contributions in a self-funded health plan for their employees. Claims liabilities are borne by the employer members and, as with any self-funded plan, there is no guaranty fund protection. MEWAs are subject to regulation by state insurance departments and the United States Department of Labor. The South Carolina Health Cooperative is the only MEWA currently licensed by the SCDOI and is licensed under Chapter 41, Title 38 of the South Carolina Code of Laws. The SCHC offers self-funded health benefits to more than 500 small businesses in South Carolina.

Due to the lack of guaranty fund protection for these policyholders, the Department’s main priority has been and continues to be finding coverage for the SCHC’s members and minimizing the claims liability that will be borne by their employers. Over the course of the last few weeks, the Department has been engaging health insurers in an effort to find such a solution. The South Carolina Department of Insurance has been working with the health insurance industry to identify carriers that are able to write small group health insurance coverage for members of the South Carolina Health Cooperative with a 12/1/2014 effective date even if they do not sign up for coverage on or before December 1, 2014.

Additional updates will be posted to the SCHC dedicate webpage on the Department’s website, which is accessible at <http://doi.sc.gov/840/SCHC>.



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