

Fact Sheet: State of Illinois Managed Care Decision

Impact on University of Illinois

Prepared for April 27, 2011 Legislative Hearing

The University of Illinois has 25,000 employees who are eligible for State benefits. Nearly 10,000 of our employees are currently covered under HMOs being discontinued, as well as over 9,000 dependents of employees. The number of employees who must select a new health plan for themselves and their families is:

Employees Current Provider

7,321	Health Alliance HMO & Health Alliance Illinois
2,095	PersonalCare HMO
261	Humana Health Plan
100	Humana-Winnebago

Lack of Coverage: The majority of impacted employees live in parts of the State that are not served by Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS). BCBS currently provides coverage in only 38 of the 102 Illinois counties. We have employees in at least 77 counties. No coverage is available in east-central, southeast, southern, and western Illinois. Employees of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign campus will have no HMO option available. This puts us at a disadvantage in recruiting and retaining world-class faculty and employees, many of whom view an HMO as a key benefit.

Distance and Cost: Because of the distance, it would be unreasonable for impacted employees and their families to travel to a BCBS provider for medical care. Choices available to these employees include an OAP (tiered plan) or Quality Care Health Plan (traditional indemnity plan), which are more expensive to both the employee and the State. The July 2010 through June 2011 monthly State contribution for a single employee making \$40,000 is \$727.18 for QCHP, \$649.28 for HealthLink OAP, and \$539.74 for Health Alliance HMO.

Downstate Provider Access: Urbana-Champaign and the surrounding area do not have independent physicians and clinics that accept a variety of insurance as found in other areas. Health Alliance is the exclusive provider for Carle Hospital and Carle Physician group. Similarly, PersonalCare HMO services Provena Covenant Hospital and Christie Clinics. However, this is not just an Urbana issue. Many employees at the University of Illinois at Springfield campus will also be impacted, as Health Alliance is also the predominant provider for Memorial Hospital, St. John's Hospital, and Springfield Clinic. Further, employees in Winnebago County and those with Humana coverage will be impacted.

It is not sufficient to simply say that a particular HMO is available to employees throughout the entire state. The benefits on paper may be attractive, but there must indeed be a significant number of Primary Care Physicians (PCPs) and specialists available within the HMO, spread geographically throughout the state, to in fact make it a viable option.

What University of Illinois Employees are Saying:

- "I have been dealing with glaucoma as a result of a sarcoid condition for more than 30 years. Carle Clinic has the only glaucoma specialist in the area, and my monthly treatments are covered under Health Alliance. I am seriously concerned that I will be left without coverage for this condition, since my doctors are in the Health Alliance network."
- "I am particularly interested in retaining my Health Alliance HMO status and do not want to choose another plan. I would rather pay more and maintain my current coverage."

What University of Illinois Employees are Saying:

- “Access to Carle is why we chose to live in Urbana. Both of my children were born at Carle Hospital, and all of us have primary care at Carle Clinic. The loss of Health Alliance would be inconvenient and financially disruptive. I’m worried about a negative effect on the health of our children with limited access to care.”
- “I don't earn lots of money and I provide health care for my husband and me. The only thing that keeps us afloat is having Health Alliance HMO. We are too old to change doctors nor do we wish to. We cannot travel out of the area to get care if we are ill. I have not received a pay increase for at least 2 years. The HMO is a notable part of my pay. It gives reasonable cost healthcare from known, quality local providers and a sense of security that we should not lose.”
- “I am disturbed and furious at the states' decision to remove local HMOs from our options. If they are a bit more expensive, then let us pay the extra costs. I have a 6-year-old son with Autism who is under the care of MULTIPLE pediatric specialists at Carle Clinic, and now my family is faced with having to find other specialists to care for him! OUTRAGEOUS is the only word that comes to my mind to describe this situation. Yet again, the State's fiscal decisions are now coming to rest on my back and the backs of thousands of others.”
- “Health Alliance is VERY easy to deal with, and importantly, has exclusive HMO coverage with Carle. I would be willing to increase my contribution to health care premium (within reason) to keep HA. Please let me know if there is anything that can be done to avert this.”
- “Please continue to fight for Health Alliance. We've fought for them before, and won. I think it says a great deal about the quality of a company when its customers fight so hard to keep it.”
- “I have Humana insurance and will need to choose a new provider. Next week, I’m being evaluated for a liver transplant. I’m worried about the insurance change, will it impact if and when I can get the transplant.”
- “There is currently no BCBS provider network in Champaign-Urbana. People will have to travel approximately 90 miles for routine doctor appointments. My 8 year old son was diagnosed with allergies and asthma last fall. Although this is usually a very manageable condition, it has potential to become acute very quickly and without warning. I would hate to think that my child could die because our health care insurance would not cover a local emergency room.”
- “I have long standing relationships with my doctors at Carle, extremely important relationships. And yet I read that there is almost no way that I will be able to see the doctors I presently have. I believe my health is at risk because of this decision.”
- “I am on the research staff and my wife is a full time student. We do not have enough money to pay for additional out-of-pocket expenses. We receive amazing care through the Carle Clinic network. We have been trying for 6+ years, and not able to have children. During the past 8 months, we have been so fortunate to find the first doctors and nurses who have been able to help us get some answers at Carle Clinic. These years have been very hard, and the staff at Health Alliance and Carle Clinic have been outstanding. The ONLY reason that we have been able to access these specialists is because they are fully covered by Health Alliance. We researched the other State of Illinois plans and we would NOT be able to receive the same benefits on any other plan. Please do what you can to keep Health Alliance as an option so that we can keep these wonderful doctors at Carle Clinic. I know that we are not the only ones who feel this way. If Health Alliance is cut, it will be devastating to the central Illinois region. Even if our premiums needed to go up a few dollars a month, this plan saves us so much money. I know that we will NOT be able to afford to pay for any of our current doctors if this change takes place.”