

Agent Exchange



American Reinvestment Recovery Act (ARRA): COBRA

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed the American Reinvestment Recovery Act (ARRA). This law includes some important changes to COBRA.

Special Election Period: The law provides for a special COBRA election period for individuals involuntarily terminated from employment between September 1, 2008, and February 16, 2009, who didn't elect COBRA or mini COBRA or elected it but no longer had it on February 17, 2009.

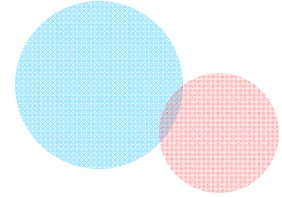
Subsidy: The law provides a 65% subsidy for COBRA and qualifying mini-COBRA premiums for up to 9 months for "assistance-eligible individuals." If the employer group is subject to COBRA, they will be responsible for paying the full COBRA premiums to Regence for eligible employees who choose to enroll and take advantage of the subsidy. They will also be responsible to recover the 65% subsidy from the IRS.

In an insured plan that is subject to mini-COBRA (and is not a multiemployer plan), Regence will pay the 65% subsidy amount and claim the payroll tax credit. The employer is responsible for the remainder of the premium.

This law requires that employers provide new and revised notices relating to the subsidy and special election period to their employees. Letters, forms and an FAQ have been sent to all Regence groups and information was e-mailed to Regence agents. Links to these documents are available online at www.regence.com/cobra.

If you have questions about this law, please contact your sales representative.

What's New...



\$3,000 Deductible Option Added to Innova and Engage.

Effective July 1, 2009, a \$3,000 deductible option will be added to the Innova and Engage products for all group sizes. This option is currently available to quote.

Member Choice Account (MCA) Rollover Rule Changed for Activate.

All Activate members will be allowed to roll over their MCA funds into the next year. The MCA balance will still be capped at the deductible amount.

Provider Network Name Change

What's in a name? A network name is important to the Regence member selecting a provider or if a member is calling an out-of-state BlueCross and/or BlueShield Plan (Blue Plan) to receive benefit or eligibility information. Nationwide, Blue Plans refer to the "Traditional" network providers as **Participating** or **Par** and "Preferred Provider Organization (PPO)" providers as **Preferred** or **PPO**.

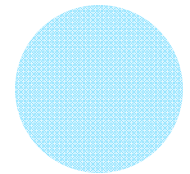
What's changing? In order to be consistent with Regence and other Blue Plans, Regence BlueCross BlueShield is making the following changes:

Old name: Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah **BlueCross** or **Traditional** network

New name: Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah **Participating** network

Old name: Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah **ValueCare** network

New name: Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah **Preferred** network



As we transition to the new network names, our provider directories, Web sites and literature will all reference **Participating** (BlueCross or Traditional) and **Preferred** (ValueCare) networks. The HealthWise network name will not change.

For our Innova, Engage, Activate and HSA Healthplan 2.0 products, Category 1 providers are in the Preferred network, and Category 2 providers are in the Participating network.

New Features on myRegence.com



Regence members now have the ability to review network average cost estimates for select treatments in their geographical area using the **Treatment Cost Estimator** tool on **myRegence.com**. Additionally, members will be able to compare providers using the enhanced **Provider Search** function.

As part of the Regence Transparency efforts, the goal of these new features is to give our members access to the kinds of information they need to make informed decisions.

The **Treatment Cost Estimator** has been developed to give our members information on a variety of treatments for common conditions. With the **Treatment Cost Estimator**, they can:

- Understand care options for some of the most common types of routine exams, surgery and other treatments.
- Get an idea of the average total cost of care before, during and after treatment—including the costs of different types of in-network care.
- Determine the average time a treatment requires, from initial office visits to finishing a care plan.

Regence members on our suite of new products will also be able to view their estimated out-of-pocket costs for these treatments. They will be able to print this information and take it to their next doctor visit in order to discuss their options.

Licensed physicians, dentists and behavioral health experts have reviewed the medical information we created for our Estimator. We've also partnered with online health encyclopedias such as [Healthline](#) and the award-winning [A.D.A.M.](#) to give you access to their health information.

The **Provider Search** tool has been enhanced to allow our members to refine their provider search by specialty, sort by distance from their location and number of member reviews. The Member Feedback feature gives members the ability to share feedback about their experiences with the health care system. There are now more than 30,000 member reviews. Thousands of our providers have logged on to complete their Enhanced Provider Profile. This tool will allow members to compare up to five providers side by side, enabling a more effective way to select a provider based on what a member values most.

Errors & Omission Coverage

Regence recently discovered the need to clarify the requirements related to the Errors & Omission (E&O) coverage you are required to carry in order to serve as a Producer with us. As a result, we wanted to notify you that we will be conducting a clean up effort of our existing E&O coverage records, as well as an ongoing maintenance audit to take place monthly.

Below is a summary of Regence E&O Coverage requirements:

Regence requires any insurance agency or stand alone agent with whom Regence contracts to be covered by an E&O policy issued in the name of the insurance agency or stand alone agent.

Additionally, each of the insurance agency's authorized producers must be covered at all times under an E&O policy. The E&O policy covering the insurance agency's authorized producers can either be coverage as an "additional insured" under the insurance agency's policy or coverage under a separate E&O policy issued in the name of the individual authorized producer. In order to contract with Regence we require a minimum of \$1,000,000 per occurrence coverage.

In the coming months we will contact each agent or agency whose E&O policy will soon expire and request compliance with the above requirement. For additional information a FAQ has been posted at www.ut.regence.com/agent/communication.

We are here to support you through this process so please do not hesitate to contact our Agent Desk by email at agentdesk@regence.com or call (503) 225-4960 or toll free 1 (800) 452-7278 x 4960.

IMPORTANT REMINDER

Be sure to submit both new group and renewal paperwork by the 15th of the month prior to the effective date. This will ensure that the group's information will be processed in time for their effective date.

Future Automation Enhancement

Within the next few weeks you will see a change in our forms posted to the Web site. These forms will now include anchors at the top and a barcode at the bottom of the form.

This change is to accommodate a future enhancement which will streamline our paper based processing and support greater automation across Regence.

We value our partnership with you and appreciate your continued support. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact your Sales Team.

Are You Taking Your Groups to the Next Level in Health Care Coverage?

Innova and Engage have been, and continue to be well received by our market as the latest in product innovation. These new generation products provide groups with solutions for their health care needs and wants, including:

- Flexibility in product design
- Unmatched provider choice
- Competitive pricing
- Competitive renewals
- Wellness Programs
- Preventive Care coverage with no annual limit

For groups that are ready to fully dive into consumer products like HSA 2.0 or Activate, we offer new and appealing product designs as well as tools to help our members make the most of their health care coverage.

Regence is best suited to help you transition your groups into this new era of health care. We are anxious to tell you more. Please contact your sales or account executive for more information.

Privacy Critical

We cannot stress enough the importance of protecting the privacy of a member or customer when collecting, handling, or submitting forms that contain personal and/or health information. Please be very aware of the sensitive information involved.

We recently received a complaint from a member whose employer was in the process of applying for health coverage for their company. She cited a situation where the completed health statements were left on the copy machine in their office. Please reinforce the need for privacy to your clients.

Tobacco Cessation Programs Available to Regence Members

Regence offers several programs and resources to help our members become tobacco-free:

Programs and resources available on myRegence.com

- **The Smoke-Free program**– A six-week online program that includes a weekly “to-do” list and area of focus
- **My Community**-Includes a topical message board giving members a support system of other Regence members who have successfully quit or are trying to quit tobacco use.
- **My Advisor**-Features several tobacco-cessation resources, including interactive articles, medication information and more.

Regence Health CoachSM Program

Members with access to a Regence Health Coach are assigned a personal coach who will help them set and meet their goals for tobacco cessation. Health coaches support members during weekly phone calls and emails. Each enrollee receives a tobacco-cessation packet. The packet includes three kits based upon the following phases:

- Developing a plan to quit, evaluation and progress through motivational stages, interactive information and tools.
- Quitting smoking, which includes an interactive booklet and journal; information on healthy eating; and how to avoid weight gain.
- Measuring progress and maintenance, including information about health coaches.

New Online Wellness Programs for Kids and Seniors

Two new online wellness programs just launched on **myRegence.com**-specifically designed for kids and seniors.

Healthy Kids Program and *Health Seniors Program* are both part of the Healthy Living Programs and each last six weeks in length.

The Healthy Kids Program provides parents with the tools and resources they need to encourage healthier diet and lifestyle choices, whether they are raising toddlers or teenagers. The program will help parents identify their children’s health risks, learn how to encourage healthier eating habits, practice habits that promote weight control and encourage physical activity for their entire family.

The *Healthy Seniors Program* can help those over the age of 65 continue to take steps to improve their health by providing resources and advice for navigating the health care system and preparing for emergencies. This program can also be used by caregivers who provide assistance for older individuals. The program includes simple guides to managing medications, tips on maximizing memory, easy ways to get more active and stay strong, information on bone and joint issues and tips on balance and avoiding falls.

Congratulations Sue Luman

2008 ended with a bang for Sue Luman of GBS! Sue won our contest for being the top-selling producer of Innova, Engage & Activate. The prize was a trip of her choice.

Sue has been with GBS Benefits for 13 years. She started as a Service Representative and is now part of their motivated sales team! She is an asset to their company and to Regence alike.

When discussing Innova, Engage and Activate with Sue, she explains that groups are excited about the \$750 deductible as well as the middle tier for prescriptions. She further explains that employee meetings are key and having a Regence representative attend the meeting really seals the deal.

Sue concludes that she enjoys working with Regence because we listen and we are proactive.

New Agent Training Information

If you are a newly appointed Agent, it is **mandatory** to attend **both** group and individual product training within 90 days of receiving your writing number.

If you need to brush up on our new products these trainings are ideal for you as well!

9:00 AM

Meet in the Sales Lobby
Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Utah
2890 East Cottonwood Parkway
Salt Lake City, Utah

Group Product Training

May 13
June 10
July 8

Individual Product Training

May 14
June 11
July 9

RSVP to Desiree.Dudleston@Regence.com