TO: All Eligible Employees

FR: Jack Burke, Benefits Director

RE: Medical and Dental Open Enrollment Period

Accompanying this memo are:

- Schedule of the new medical and dental plan rates that will be effective January 1
- General Information regarding coverage and a potential Dependent Audit
- Notice about “COBRA” rights when an employee’s or a dependent’s coverage ends
- Notice about Medicaid Premium Assistance and the Children’s Health Insurance Program

NOTE: January 1 is the new annual Open Enrollment date for Medical and Dental plans. There will no longer be an open enrollment period in July.

NEW MEDICAL RATES – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015

The good news is that our rates have remained constant for 18 months instead of the normal 12. Last July 1, our previous annual Open Enrollment date, we did not increase our rates, hoping that a recent increasing claims trend would level off. The bad news is that, unfortunately, we experienced over the year a spike in the number of high-cost claimants that drove our costs up considerably more than anticipated. Primarily for that reason – the cost and trend of our participants’ claims – we regrettably need to increase our rates by 9.2% in January. Other contributing factors to the increase are the higher costs of provider contracts with Harvard Pilgrim and significant new fees imposed on large employers by the federal Affordable Care Act.

Some other good news is that data from Harvard Pilgrim indicate the great majority of our participants are generally healthy and utilize preventive health benefits, such as routine physicals and screenings, and cost-containment practices, such as generic drugs, at a high level. Hopefully, these practices will help to mitigate cost increases in the future.

THE DENTAL PLAN RATES – EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2015

We are pleased to say that there will be no change in the premiums for either the DeltaPremier plan or the DeltaCare plan.

OPEN ENROLLMENT PERIOD

During the Open Enrollment period, now through December 5th, eligible employees may switch coverage from one plan to another, enroll in a medical or dental plan for the first time, add or remove dependents, or change membership from individual to family (or vice versa), with the transaction effective January 1, 2015. [Note: Changing membership is not permitted at other times unless qualifying conditions set by IRS regulations are met – for example, marriage, birth of a child, a spouse’s involuntary loss of coverage due to termination of employment, etc.]
Information about the plans may be obtained from the Benefits Office in the 129 Lake St. building on the Brighton Campus. The Harvard Pilgrim and Delta Dental enrollment forms are also available on the Human Resources website [www.bc.edu/hr] – click on the Open Enrollment link under “News.”

To change medical or dental plans or to enroll in a plan for the first time, you must submit the appropriate paper enrollment form to the Benefits Office. We need the forms no later than Friday, December 5, 2014, in order for ID cards to be received by the January 1st effective date. Note: If you change to or enroll in a family membership and include your spouse on the plan(s), you will need to submit a copy of your marriage certificate to the Benefits Office before your enrollment request can be processed. 

[Also note that if you make no change, your current coverage will simply continue.]

THE PRESCRIPTION MAIL ORDER OPTION

Harvard Pilgrim’s Mail Service Prescription Drug Program can provide cost savings on 90-day prescriptions, with free standard delivery. Anyone who utilizes maintenance medications should consider this alternative. The benefit is that, for Tier 1, Tier 2, and Tier 3 prescriptions, you can get a 90-day supply by paying only two copay amounts instead of three (saving $5, $20, or $30 respectively. (Tier 4 prescriptions will still cost three copays for a 90-day supply.)

Harvard Pilgrim’s mail service provider is Walgreens. To register for the service go to www.walgreens.com/mailservice. You can also register by mail (contact the Benefits Office to obtain the form), and you can call Walgreens at 1-877-347-3216.

RULES FOR DEPENDENT CHILD COVERAGE

Children may remain on a medical or dental family membership until their 26th birthday. If you have a child under age 26 who is not on your plan but who needs coverage, you may add the child as of January 1, 2015. You will need to complete and sign a Harvard Pilgrim and/or Delta Dental enrollment/change form giving us your child’s information. You may also remove a child who is on your plan but no longer needs coverage. The forms are available in the Benefits Office or you can go to www.bc.edu/hr and click on the Open Enrollment link under “News.” The form must be received in the Benefits Office by December 5th.