

TO: Benefits-Eligible Employees  
FROM: Human Resources  
DATE: September 18, 2013  
SUBJECT: 2014 Health Insurance Update and Timeline

As announced in WHOI Headlines (Aug. 29, 2013), after a comprehensive review of potential medical plan carriers and feedback received from employees, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (BCBS) will remain the Institution's medical plan carrier for 2014. This communication provides information on the 2014 medical plan options, plan rates for 2014, upcoming opportunities to learn more and ask questions about the plan options, and some details on this year's Open Enrollment period (Oct. 21 – Nov. 15).

### **2014 Medical Plan Options**

During the upcoming Open Enrollment period, benefits-eligible employees and their families will be asked to select one of three plan options offered through BCBS. The selection will be effective January 1, 2014. The three plan choices are:

- Choice 1: High Deductible Health Plan with Health Reimbursement Account
- Choice 2: High Deductible Health Plan with Health Savings Account
- Choice 3: Low Deductible Health Plan

To help with your selection, HR has assembled a comparison of the 2014 medical plan options. The 2014 Medical Plan Comparison is posted to the HR/Benefits website (link provided below).

### **2014 Medical Plan Rates**

Medical plan rates are based on a variety of factors such as expected claims (based on actual utilization from the prior 24 months), regulatory fees associated with Health Care Reform, stop-loss fees (insurance coverage for large claims), and administrative fees. The final rates are very favorable given the national trend in medical costs. The 2014 Benefits Rate Sheet is posted to the HR/Benefits website.

### **New Administrator for the Health Reimbursement Account, Health Savings Account, and Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts**

Effective January 1, 2014, the Institution will be replacing Benefit Strategies with Health Equity for the administration of the Health Reimbursement Account (HRA), Health Care Flexible Spending Account(s) (FSA) and the new Health Savings Account (HSA). Health Equity has an integrated relationship with BCBS that will allow employees direct access to their HRA, HSA, and FSA accounts right from their BCBS member account. This change to Health Equity will also ease the process of paying your medical claims, which has been a concern for employees when managing their out-of-pocket expenses under the deductible medical plans.

## Open Enrollment

This year's annual **Open Enrollment will take place from October 21 to November 15**. With the new medical plan options for 2014, it will be critical for all benefits-eligible employees who want to participate in the Institution's medical plan to complete a new enrollment form electing their medical plan of choice for 2014, as well as electing any other benefits offered. Forms will need to be submitted to Human Resources by Friday, November 15<sup>th</sup>; however, employees are encouraged to return their forms earlier, if possible. If you know that you are not going to be onsite during Open Enrollment or by the form deadline date, please contact Human Resources to make other arrangements.

## Employee Informational Meetings – Mark Your Calendars!

In advance of the Open Enrollment period, Human Resources will be holding Institution-wide employee meetings on September 26 and October 2, to introduce and explain the new medical plan options for 2014. Representatives from BCBS will also be present to address and field questions about the new medical plans as well as the tools and resources available to assist with managing your healthcare.

Date	Location	Time
Thursday, September 26	Clark 507	10:30am – 12:00pm
Thursday, September 26	Clark 507	2:00pm – 3:30pm
Wednesday, October 2	Redfield Auditorium	10:30am – 12:00pm
Wednesday, October 2	Redfield Auditorium	2:00pm – 3:30pm

In addition to the Institution-wide meetings, further educational opportunities will be provided over the coming weeks and months. The following is a highlight of calendar events and educational resources:

- October 8 – BCBS representatives onsite for lobby hours (times & locations to be determined)
- October 21 – Benefits, Health & Wellness Fair, 10:00am – 2:00pm in Clark 507
- Open Enrollment Q &A sessions:

Date	Location	Time
October 29	Smith Conference	12:15pm – 1:15pm
October 30	Clark 507	11:15am – 12:15pm
November 5	Redfield Auditorium	12:15pm – 1:15pm
November 7	Clark 507	12:15pm – 1:15pm

- Recorded webinar presentations for Health Reimbursement Account, Health Savings Account, and Health Care Flexible Spending Accounts (links will be sent out once available)

For more information about the 2014 Medical Plan options, please visit the HR/Benefits website at <http://www.whoi.edu/website/HR/2014-medical-plan-changes>. If you have specific questions that are not addressed on the website, please contact Human Resources at [hr@whoi.edu](mailto:hr@whoi.edu) or ext. 2253.