



Educators Health Alliance

Inside the EHA

**Nebraska Educators Health Alliance
April 2008, Issue 4**

Welcome to *Inside the EHA*, the newsletter for quick updates on timely EHA topics of interest, issues and decisions before the EHA Board, and information about your health insurance plan.

In this issue:

- Premium Rates for 2008-2009
- Benefit Plans for 2008-2009
- New Lower-Cost Plan Option
- Upcoming Open Enrollment Period
- New Rating Rule Appeal and Appeal Extension

Premium Rates for 2008-2009

The EHA Board is pleased to announce for the sixth consecutive year that the average rate increase, computed on all EHA plans and rate categories, will be below 10%:

The Medical Plans rates will increase an average of 5.16%.

The Dental Plans rates will decrease an average of 1.82%.

The overall composite rates will increase an average of 4.79%.

The premium rates will be in a 4-tier structure as previously announced. The 4-tier structure will provide premium rates for employee-only coverage, employee-plus-spouse-only coverage, employee-plus-children-only coverage, and employee-plus-spouse-and-children coverage.

The complete table of 2008-2009 premium rates can be found on the EHA website:

http://educatorshhealthalliance.org/pdfs/2008-2009_Rates.PDF

Benefit Plans for 2008-2009

The EHA Board on February 12, 2008, approved the continued offering for the 2008-2009 plan year of the current 4 PPO options and Health Savings Account (HSA) eligible High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) for 2008-09 without any changes in deductible amounts or member copayments. The PPO deductibles are \$150, \$300, \$550, and \$1,050. The HDHP deductible remains at \$1,250. Further description of the benefit plans can be found on the EHA website at the following URL:

[http://educatorshealthalliance.org/pdfs/HSA-Eligible_\\$5000_High_Deductible_Health_Plan.08.PDF](http://educatorshealthalliance.org/pdfs/HSA-Eligible_$5000_High_Deductible_Health_Plan.08.PDF)

The EHA Board also directed the development of further low-cost options for consideration at the April 2008 meeting (see below).

New Lower-Cost Option Added

The EHA Board at its April 9, 2008, meeting approved the addition of the lower-cost plan option effective September 1, 2008. The lower-cost option plan will have a \$5,000 employee-only and \$10,000 family annual deductible. The plan will pay 100% of covered expenses above the deductible. The plan includes a \$500 annual benefit not subject to the deductible for approved preventative care. A more complete description of the benefits is available on the EHA web site.

The new benefit plan is designed to meet Federal requirements to be eligible for use in conjunction with a Health Savings Account (HSA). However, it is not a requirement to have an HSA to offer or enroll in this new benefit plan.

The plan is available on a subgroup-wide basis only. It is not available for individual choice as a part of cafeteria or multi-option benefit plan. The plan is being made available in response to demand for a lower-cost option. The standard monthly group premium rates for this plan are approximately 36% below the current \$300 deductible plan premium rates and are listed below for the 2008-09 plan year.

Employee only	\$286.41
Employee and Child(ren) only	\$529.87
Employee and Spouse only	\$601.47
Employee, Spouse, and Child(ren)	\$772.31

Upcoming Open Enrollment Period

There will be an Open Enrollment period for employees and dependents that are eligible to participate but have not previously enrolled in the EHA medical plan. Individuals who would be classified as “Late Enrollees” under the EHA Underwriting Guidelines will have the opportunity to enroll, add dependents, or add dependent coverage in one of the three new rate tiers that include dependents. In addition to

opening up the eligibility to enroll in the plan, the “Late Enrollee” penalties of pre-existing conditions exclusions, coverage waiting periods, and late fees will not be applied to individuals enrolling during this period. The enrollment period will be open from May 1, 2008, through September 30, 2008, with a coverage effective date of September 1, 2008.

New Rating Rule Appeal and Appeal Extension

The EHA Board at its April 9, 2008, meeting approved an additional appeal of the rating rule results for the 2008-09 plan year premium rates. The new appeal is intended to accommodate changes in enrollment that may result from several sources including changes in contribution structures enacted after the current appeal deadline (June 1, 2008), the September 2008 open enrollment, and the availability of the 4-tier rate structure.

This appeal will be available until November 1, 2008, and will require initiation by the EHA subgroup. Any rate adjustments resulting from this appeal will be effective on the first of the month following the conclusion of the evaluation of the appeal.

The current appeal procedure and timetable remains in place. The following outlines the current and new additional appeal timelines:

Current Appeal Timeline

Completion Date	Explanation
6/1/2008	Requests for Appeal Due From Subgroup
7/15/2008	Appeal Decision Due to Subgroup

New Additional Appeal Timeline

Completion Date	Explanation
11/1/2008	Requests for Appeal Due From Subgroup Due to Post 6/1/08 Changes