



P.O. Box 3248
Omaha, Nebraska 68180-0001
nebraskablue.com

June 2, 2014

Dear Group Leader:

For more than 75 years, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska (BCBSNE) has been an integral part of our health care community—working to protect the financial security and stability of our members, while providing coverage in the most cost-effective way possible.

BCBSNE has been negotiating a new contract with Denver-based Catholic Health Initiatives (CHI)—a health care provider group that includes Alegent Creighton Health facilities and physicians in the Omaha area. CHI is affiliated with 3,000+ Omaha-area providers, and owns several Nebraska hospitals, including:

- Alegent Creighton Health (Omaha, Council Bluffs, Schuyler, Plainview)
- Good Samaritan Hospital (Kearney)
- Nebraska Heart Hospital (Lincoln)
- Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center (Lincoln)
- Saint Francis Medical Center (Grand Island)
- St. Mary's Community Hospital (Nebraska City)

While other health care providers in our statewide network have worked with us to control rising health care costs, that has not been the case with CHI, and particularly Alegent Creighton. Today, Alegent Creighton costs significantly more than other providers and facilities in Omaha, and they continue to ask for annual increases.

To help manage costs and protect the financial security of our employer groups and members, we have issued a Notice of Termination to CHI with a negotiation period through August 31, 2014. Between now and that date, we will make every attempt to reach an agreement that is fair and beneficial for our members.

We are sending you this letter to keep you informed about the negotiation process, and to let you know we are also informing members who have utilized CHI providers within the past 18 months. **You and your employees don't need to take any action at this time**; BCBSNE coverage remains the same, and all members will continue to have in-network benefits when visiting a CHI facility or physician.

If an agreement is not reached by August 31, 2014, we will notify you prior to the network termination and provide necessary resources to ensure minimal disruption of care. Should this happen, members with certain medical conditions will be eligible to continue to receive in-network benefits for covered services received from their current physician for a specified period of time to help ease their transition of care.

Some conditions that may qualify for continuity of care coverage include:

- Members currently undergoing surgical or non-surgical treatment for cancer
- Members in the second or third trimester of pregnancy or those considered to have a high-risk pregnancy
- Members currently undergoing active treatment for severe or end-stage renal disease or dialysis
- Members who had a recent bone marrow or organ transplant, or those on the waiting list to receive an organ
- Members receiving inpatient services at a facility on August 31
- Members currently receiving inpatient or outpatient treatment for mental illness and/or substance abuse by a licensed mental health provider
- Members currently undergoing treatment for HIV and/or AIDS

Members who are receiving this letter from us are also receiving a copy of the Continuity of Care application to complete and submit if they feel they are eligible.

We have established a dedicated website at www.nebraskablue.com/update and hotline **(844.286.0855)** to answer any questions members may have. Please provide these resources to your employees. We have also included two sets of Frequently Asked Questions; one for your background and information and another version for you to provide to your employees. The employee FAQs will be posted on the website and updated regularly.

If you have any questions, please contact your broker or BCBSNE account executive. Your account executive will work closely with you and your broker to discuss any impact the negotiation deadline may have on your group, and will keep you up-to-date regarding the negotiation process.

We also have scheduled **twice-daily webinars beginning Wednesday, June 4 through Tuesday, June 10** (content will be identical for each webinar) to give you more information and answer any questions you have.

You can register for one of the webinars by going to this link: www.nebraskablue.com/webinar.

We value the relationship we have with you and our other employer groups across Nebraska, and appreciate your support of BCBSNE's ongoing efforts to protect members' financial security while providing cost-effective coverage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pat Bourne', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Pat Bourne
Senior Vice President, Sales and Account Services