

Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association Applauds Efforts To Make Tax Credits More Available For Small Businesses

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WASHINGTON – Scott P. Serota, president and CEO of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association (BCBSA), issued the following statement regarding guidance on the small business tax credits for purchasing health insurance coverage that was issued today by the U.S. Department of Treasury:

"We applaud today's guidance from the Obama administration that will make it easier for small employers to take advantage of the new tax credit.

We are committed to making coverage more accessible and affordable for small employers. This is why we are working with H&R Block to offer a small business tax calculator to help small businesses understand the tax credits available to them and make informed decisions on their health insurance options.

Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies have been reaching out to employers, partnering with their local Chambers of Commerce and hosting seminars to help small businesses understand how the new healthcare reform law will impact them."

Some examples of BCBS companies' efforts to help small businesses as they implement healthcare reform law include:

- **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Kansas City** is a leading innovator with a promotion campaign built around the H&R Block tax calculator and the small business tax credit. Since April 2010, they have enrolled over 9,000 new members covered in over 400 new employers. Thirty-eight percent of these employers previously did not offer insurance. Over 9,300 unique users have visited www.BlueKCTaxCredit.com.
- **Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina** has seen significant results in a campaign to existing and prospective small business customers. Their tax credit campaign website has

seen over 6,500 total visits from June through mid-October. A second phase of the campaign started in mid-October. Across both phases, BCBSNC has seen approximately 260 requests for quotes just from their tax credit campaign site alone.

- **CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield** is promoting the tax credit to small businesses on its site www.CareFirstTaxCredit.com by sending a sales flash (e-mail communication) to brokers; adding a link to the tax credit site from broker and employer portals, and through print and online advertising.

In addition, many BCBS companies across the country are engaging in extensive education and outreach to make sure small employers are aware of the tax credit – and ultimately taking advantage of it. Some examples of activities BCBS companies have underway include:

- Offering online webinars and in-person seminars for employer accounts and brokers.
- Running ads on TV, in newspapers and on the Web.
- Presenting to influential local organizations including Chambers of Commerce, state business conferences, United Way and other interested groups that can reach small employers.
- Undertaking direct mail campaigns to customers and posting noticeable information on their websites, with links to the H&R Block tax calculator.

The Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association is a national federation of 39 independent, community-based and locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies that collectively provide healthcare coverage for nearly 98 million members - one-in-three Americans. For more information on the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association and its member companies, please visit www.BCBS.com.