

Peace, Love & Goodwill

*T*here's More to Christmas...

*T*here's more, much more to Christmas, than candle-light and cheer;
It's the spirit of sweet friendship, that brightens up the year;
It's thoughtfulness and kindness, it's hope reborn again,
For peace, for understanding, and for goodwill to men!

*A*t this joyful time of season, we understand the thrill
Of wishing friends and clients, Peace, Love & Goodwill.

*W*e wish to thank you and profess, not only now, but always,
The very best throughout the year, to all our customers good cheer.

*W*e wish your business growth & success, this happy Holiday Season
Remember Ameriben is always there, for insurance help & constant care.

*O*ne of the real joys of the Holiday Season is the opportunity to say
Thank You, and we at Ameriben wish you and your families peace,
goodwill, and the very best for the coming New Year.

insurance
AMERIBEN
American Benefits Alliance Alliance, LLC

"Caring through action"

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The Life Insurance Corner

This article will appear for several issues, giving you a short read on life insurance. It will look at the types, uses of and additional issues surrounding life insurance. In Ameriben's prior issue, we discussed the uses of **Group Life Insurance**; today's read is **Individual Life Insurance**. As stated in previous articles the question is not "Should I own life insurance", but rather what type and how much? This is even more important with **Individual Life Insurance**. First, there are several types of Individual policies:

Permanent Life Insurance this type usually continues for life; can be paid for a limited period of your whole life. Therefore, you will hear the term used to identify a permanent policy as **Whole Life**. A whole life policy develops a cash value. **Universal Life** is a type of **permanent insurance** that was developed in 1986. This is a policy that can have flexible premiums as well as flexible death benefits that build a cash value based on competitive interest rates. Shortly after that came **Variable Universal Life** with the same benefits described above, having a cash value based on equity products. The most popular type of life insurance still remains to be **Term Life Insurance**. **Term Life** is exactly what the names states. The death benefit continues for a certain term period such as 10, 15, 20, 25, 30 years. The longer the term period, the more costly the coverage. The premium is usually guaranteed for the same period and the cost of term insurance can be considerably less than any of the policies already mentioned. The latest product in the market place today is a **Term Life** Policy. At the end of the term period, an individual can get all his/her money back that was originally put in to the policy. **Return of Premium Term Policy** – This policy makes an individual eligible for a return of part of his/her premium starting before the end of the period; all premiums are returned at the end.

Many financial planners will tell you that you should own seven to ten times your income in Life Insurance. The purpose for life insurance is very basic. In all events, this type of insurance is meant to replace a breadwinner's income in the case of death. There are many articles found on line or in publications such as "Consumer Reports" that

can help you understand the reasons and how to determine what amount of life insurance to obtain. One of the most important features of individual policies is that you own and control the insurance and therefore making it portable throughout your life no matter how your health changes. So, besides determining how much and what type of coverage to purchase, the last questions you must ask yourself is "Do I qualify?" Most **Individual Life Insurance** requires at minimum, a submission of a Health Statement reviewed by an underwriter, although many companies even require a blood and urine test. Very large amounts of insurance may require an exam, EKG and even a financial statement. Individual policies are rated if you smoke. They are also rated for health conditions such cancer, heart disease and diabetes, etc.

Please contact your Ameriben agent as they can better advise you on how to qualify as well as provide rates and explain coverage limits. We represent the top AAA rated companies in the industry and can email you a personalized quote listing the top companies. Our next issue will cover **Business Life Insurance**.
Call your Ameriben Agent today!

Carrier Websites

Did you know that by accessing the web sites below you can gain valuable information regarding your health plan benefits as well as finding up-to-date, physicians and health care facilities in your area.

Some of the carriers also allow for the printing of temporary ID cards, as well as changing personal information i.e. address, name, etc.

Please feel free to contact Ameriben if you have any questions or need help accessing your medical carrier's site.

Aetna	www.aetna.com
Anthem	www.anthem.com
CIGNA	www.cigna.com
ConnectiCare	www.connecticare.com
Healthnet	www.healthnet.com
Oxford	www.oxhp.com

Carrier News and Information

ConnectiCare:

A new program is available for ConnectiCare members called the Special Care Case Management Program. This program was put together for members to better understand and manage their health conditions – diabetes, asthma, stroke, heart conditions, etc. Case Managers are available to assist you. This is a benefit provided at no charge to ConnectiCare members. To enroll please call toll free at 1-866-897-1038.

CBIA HealthConnections:

Effective 10/01/2007 CBIA is offering a new line of Dental Benefits – **Dental Suite 1, Dental Suite 2 and Dental Suite 3 with Orthodontia.**

This allows your employees to choose any plan in the applicable chosen Suite. Contact us with any questions you may have concerning these dental plans!

All Carriers:

Prior Authorization/Quantity Limits for Prescriptions Medications It is important to know that a variety of physician prescribed medications now require **Prior Authorization (PA)**. When you go to fill a prescription your pharmacist will advise, when trying to submit the Rx claim electronically to the carrier, that **PA** is required or if there is a **Quantity Limit (QL)** associated with the drug.

Should this occur, your physician will have to obtain authorization from your medical carrier. Sometimes the carriers will require that another similar drug be tried first before allowing coverage for the 1st drug prescribed. If this similar drug doesn't appear to be effective then **PA** can be attempted a second time.

Medical Claims:

Please be sure to provide your physicians' with up-to-date ID card information. During renewal time, when an individual changes plans or carriers, it is easy to forget to inform your health care providers. Generally, all medical carriers allow for a 6 month claim filing limit. If your physician has incorrect information and doesn't bill the carrier within the 6 month limit, the carrier does not have to honor the medical claim. This will result in direct billing to your home, or worst, receiving a letter from a collection agency.

Service Requests:

End of the year proves to be one of the busiest times of the year for Ameriben, we want to ensure you that all service requests will be handled accordingly.

All service requests will be handled on a first come, first serve basis. At times it may take up to 24 hours for a return phone call. We thank you for your patience and understanding.

Health Savings Accounts (HSA)

Annual Contribution Limitation – For calendar year 2008, the limitation on deductions for an individual with self-only coverage under a high deductible health plan is \$2,900. For calendar year 2008, the limitation on deductions under an individual with family coverage under a high deductible health plan is \$5,800.

How much can an individual (55 or older) contribute an HSA? - Individuals age 55 and above that have coverage through a HDHP are allowed to contribute extra funds or "catch-up" contributions. Effective 2008, HSA "catch-up" contributions will be \$800.

Please feel free to contact your Ameriben Agent with any questions or concerns.

Legislative Corner

Ameriben is involved with local, state and Federal legislators keeping an eye on what's happening with healthcare and will keep you informed.

Starting October 1, 2007, businesses that provide health insurance benefits to employees taking premium deductions from their paychecks, must now allow employees to make benefit contributions with pretax dollars. (Reference Public Act 07-185 as amended by Public Act 07-02)

Connecticut State mandates affecting 2008 open enrollment season: Hospitalization at an out-of-network facility during cancer clinical trials:

- ◆ Effective May 30, 2007
- ◆ Requires that member costs at out-of-network facilities be the same as in-network facilities
- ◆ Carrier is responsible for negotiation and payment with out-of-network facility.

Specialized formulas for children:

- ◆ Effective October 1, 2007
- ◆ Requires that group and individual HMO and health insurance policies cover specialized formulas up to age 12

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“The only certain means of success is to render more and better service than is expected of you, no matter what the task may be. This is a habit followed by all successful people since the beginning of time. Therefore I saith the surest way to doom yourself to mediocrity is to perform only the work for which you are paid.”

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We Need Your Help...

Since we are in the age of technology, we would like to periodically send you information via e-mail. The information we would like to send is newsletters, important carrier changes/updates and industry updates. We need your help in order to do this, we need you to give us your e-mail address(es) of the person(s) you would like to receive this valuable information.

Please call our office at 860.704.8020 and ask for Richelle or Laura or, you can e-mail them at richelle@ameribenalliance.com laura@ameribenalliance.com. They will be happy to take your information and enter it into our database.

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AmeriBen has the capabilities and offerings that the larger agencies have. We offer ancillary coverage, individual coverage, payroll services, Section 125, and a real time web based HR system. Call us today to inquire about these benefits.

