

# **HEALTH BENEFITS E-NEWS**

## ***Department of Human Resource Management Office of Health Benefits***

***January 6, 2010***

### ***New Obesity Pre-Education Program Begins in February***

COVA Care and COVA Connect will introduce a pre-education program on February 15, 2010 designed for plan members contemplating bariatric or lap band surgery to treat obesity. The program was developed in response to a 2009 General Assembly request for a progressive weight management program as an alternative to proposed elimination of coverage for the surgery. The new program will hopefully improve health outcomes and help members select the best options to deal with obesity issues. It has several components, including prior authorization for surgery, weight management, disease management and individual coaching. If the surgery is approved, the program provides continued involvement after surgery to ensure the best possible health outcomes.

Please distribute this information to employees at your agency. The COVA Care and COVA Connect member handbooks will be updated online to include more details on the program.

### ***H1N1 Flu Shot Update***

Virginia Health departments, doctor's offices and many pharmacies are now administering H1N1 flu shots to the general public. Updated information for state employees is available on the DHRM Web site home page at [www.dhrm.virginia.gov](http://www.dhrm.virginia.gov). The H1N1 flu shot itself is free and paid for by the federal government. The state health plans will cover any additional administrative fee that flu shot locations may charge to give the shot. Here are steps for plan members to take at participating pharmacies:

- Be sure to present your state plan ID card and ask the pharmacist to run it through the system.
- If the pharmacist has questions or the card still shows a charge for the administrative fee, ask the pharmacist to call the prescription drug vendor's pharmacy services number shown on the back of your ID card (Medco for COVA Care, Optima for COVA Connect or Anthem for COVA HDHP).
- Remember that you must visit a pharmacy that participates in the state's free flu shot pharmacy program to have the administrative fee waived. See the list of pharmacies by plan and Frequently Asked Questions under Hot Topics, "Free Flu Shots Offered During Flu Season," on the front page of the DHRM Web site.

Have other questions? Contact OHB at [ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov), in Richmond at (804) 225-3642 or outside Richmond toll free at 1-888-642-4414.

### ***COVA Connect Rewards Program Posters Will Be Mailed This Week***

Each state agency location will be mailed a supply of posters beginning January 7 to encourage COVA Connect members to participate in the COVA Connect Rewards Program. A sample poster is attached. Employees enrolled in COVA Connect who take part in the program have several chances to enter random drawings to win large prizes...starting at a \$1,000 value when 30 percent of those who qualify complete a Personal Health Profile!

When you receive your supply, be sure that the posters are placed in prominent areas where they will be visible to employees. Benefits Administrators at agency locations with just a few employees in COVA Connect may want to make the individual employees aware again of the rewards program.

**Important note:** Benefits Administrators listed for more than one agency payroll number will be sent a supply for all locations in one mailing at the address shown in the OHB contacts database. If you have questions, contact Anne Waring at [anne.waring@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:anne.waring@dhrm.virginia.gov) or (804) 371-2578.

### ***Carrol Kerrigan's Retirement***

It is with mixed feelings that we announce the retirement of Carrol Kerrigan, a long-time employee of the Office of Health Benefits (OHB). We are both pleased for her and sad to see her go. Carrol's last day in the office was December 29, 2009.

If you have been accustomed to contacting Carrol directly when you needed assistance from OHB, please be aware that you can no longer do so. We'd also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that the most effective way to get assistance from OHB is by calling (804) 225-3642 in Richmond, or toll-free outside Richmond at 1-888-642-4414, or e-mailing our office at [ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov](mailto:ohb@dhrm.virginia.gov) for assistance.