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**NY08-02**

## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** NYS Agency Health Benefit Administrators  
**FROM:** EBD Communications  
**SUBJECT:** Clean Sweep – clearing off those old publications!  
**DATE:** March 10, 2008

We thank you for all you have done to keep your agency enrollees informed about their New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) benefits.

To help you organize your NYSHIP publications for 2008, we are sending you this guide to what you should have on your shelves, what you should discard as obsolete and how to order what you need for your NYSHIP enrollees.

### In this memo:

- What you should have on your shelves
- What should be off your shelves
- What the Department of Civil Service (DCS) automatically sends to new hires, new retirees and retirees turning 65
- What you should give to a NYSHIP enrollee who is *Planning for Retirement*
- What you need for new retirees (who are leaving and taking their health insurance with them)
- What United States Postal Service (USPS) changes you will see as we return mail to you

### What you should have on your shelves

Let the **Publications Supply Request form** be your guide. Every group has its own form with publications that are current for that group. We update these forms with each new publication and send the new publication and an updated order form in each carton of new materials.

You can see brand new publications and get a current Publications Supply Request form at any time online. As soon as a publication is approved to print, we put it online at HBA Online. Follow the Human Resource professional's path from [www.cs.state.ny.us](http://www.cs.state.ny.us). When something new is printed, we rush you a small supply and enclose an order form. *Because publications are available online so early, we ask that you please not send in orders for new publications until you receive your agency supply. It takes time to get the publication from the press floor to the fulfillment shelves.*

If you don't know how to use HBA Online, please call the NYS Department of Civil Service's Help Desk at 1-800-HBA-EMS-1. It can change your work life! HBA Online is a convenient resource with information you need *at your fingertips*. You can see publications as soon as they are approved to print. You can search for HBA memos and check "You Should Know". If you have several union groups at your agency, HBA Online is the easier resource to use than NYSHIP Online which is now group-specific (and requires you to change your group each time). Plus, you can order all of the NYSHIP publications and most of the DCS forms online. Many claim forms can be downloaded and printed immediately.

If you use a current Publications Supply Request form, you will have a guideline for what NYSHIP publications to have on your shelves and what to order for new employees, but here are some additional suggestions:

## HMO Enrollees:

*General Information Book* and all updates listed below the book  
*NYSHIP Online flyer (Active or Retiree versions)* – a handy tool for finding your way around the web site.

## Empire Plan Enrollees:

*General Information Book and Empire Plan Certificate* (and ALL updates that complete the book). This means ALL of the Empire Plan Reports **and** any additions named *Amendments*. Order the correct group specific book for a new enrollee or for a new retiree.

*Empire Plan Participating Provider Directory* – Active enrollees are given the opportunity to request a directory every year (by returning their postcard) and retirees receive a Directory automatically. But, actives can change their minds and new retirees might be moving to a different region of the country. You may have some books on hand or you may order them with your paper order form or online. On HBA Online you have the choice of ordering directly for the individual and the Directory will be sent out without coming to the agency first. *A bonus!*

*Empire Plan Additional Materials* – There are many helpful Empire Plan publications, including the important annual *At A Glance*. This group specific publication should be on top of your new enrollee package as it is a summary of the group specific Empire Plan benefits. The *Empire Plan Copay cards* are a wallet-friendly list of copays for each group. Every new hire should have some. The popular series of “*Reporting Ons*”: *Centers of Excellence, Asthma, Diabetes, Healthy Babies and HCAP* (pronounced H-Cap and about Durable Medical supplies) and *The Special Rx Report* should go with the *General Information Book/Empire Plan Certificate* updates. *The Empire Plan annual Preferred Drug List*, the *Medco by Mail Order Form* (Medco Mail Service), and *The Empire Plan Rx Enrollee Claim Form* are also on the forms. *The Empire Plan On the Road* is a handy reference for the traveler or the student going to college.

There are a number of special retiree publications. There is a retiree version of *On the Road*. And, *Welcome to EBD* explains the transition to DCS as the Retiree HBA. Look at the **Retiree Publications Supply Request Form** to determine what should be discarded on your shelves. Feel free to order some samples to see what the pieces are so you can be familiar with them.

Don't forget *CHOICES and Rates* for new hires and the Retiree versions for your new retirees! *And soon videos will be available on your regular publications order form!*

## What should be off your shelves

Anything that is not on the current **Publications Supply Request Order Form** should be discarded. (You can always check on HBA Online or look in your new publication cartons, but to get you started, we are sending you current forms with this memo. Note that if you have several union groups at your agency, you should check each form.



**Please Recycle!**

## What the Department of Civil Service automatically sends to New Hires, New Retirees and Retirees turning 65:

**Mandated Packages:** Certain notices that are grouped together and sent monthly to new enrollees. This includes new hires, option changers and new retirees. The “Mandated Packages” include HIPAA and COBRA information and carrier and Department of Civil Service Privacy Notices. There is a special M/C Life Insurance package that goes out weekly with the M/C Life book and an enrollment and beneficiary form. Please see HBA Memo NY07-26 for details.

**HMO Medicare Advantage Letters:** Retirees who are about to turn 65 and are enrolled in an HMO with a Medicare Advantage component are sent a letter to say that they must enroll in the HMO's Medicare Advantage plan or switch to another HMO or The Empire Plan.

**65<sup>th</sup> Birthday Letters:** Retirees who are close to their 65<sup>th</sup> birthday are sent a letter to remind them that they must enroll in Medicare three months before they turn 65. A Medicare Part D letter and a Creditable Coverage Letter are enclosed as attachments with the 65<sup>th</sup> Birthday Letters.

### **What you should give to a NYSHIP enrollee who is Planning for Retirement**

“Planning for Retirement” is an excellent publication that can help an enrollee work through the question of how to qualify for health insurance in retirement and how to be sure they follow the steps that will keep them up-to-date on benefits, when it is time to enroll in Medicare, etc. Additionally, we have a popular companion video “Planning for Retirement”, which is available in VHS or DVD format. It can be ordered with a complete print package that includes the booklet plus forms to be completed and returned to the Agency Health Benefits Administrator (HBA) and a *Benefits Checklist*. These Planning for Retirement materials can be ordered on your Publications Supply Order form (select an active group form or look for the special video section on HBA Online), or an enrollee may order online through the public website [www.cs.state.ny.us](http://www.cs.state.ny.us) in the Planning for Retirement section.

### **What you need for New Retirees (who are leaving and taking their health insurance with them)**

Again, let the **Retiree Publications Supply Request Order Form** be your guide. See the section above about “What you should have on your Shelves” for what you should give Empire Plan or HMO enrollees who are retiring. There is a Q & A that explains the change from a scheduled Option Transfer period to a one change in a calendar year policy for Retirees. Don’t forget the Medicare booklet and video. Even if the retiree is 10 years away from Medicare, they should understand that there is a change required of them at that time. Encourage them to read the publications the Department of Civil Service mails to their home and to keep their address up-to-date with EBD. Don’t forget Retiree CHOICES and rates and the Q & A about the once in every calendar option transfer policy!

### **What United States Postal Service (USPS) changes you will see as we return mail to you**

Speaking of keeping addresses up-to-date, that includes current employees, too. We know you are all familiar with the mail we return to you that has been returned from the USPS. The Department of Civil Service works closely with vendors and the USPS to obtain the best postal discounts while making sure that essential NYSHIP materials reach every enrollee. You are a part of this process. We **always** mail using NYBEAS addresses. Some changes happen as the address file goes through USPS required standardization and some returns are due to bad addresses, temporary addresses and forwarded or expired forwarded addresses. You will notice we are moving into a more automated way of sending you the information and when we can, we will resend certain materials. For other materials, we ask that you give to the enrollee and check with them as to why the Post Office returned our mail to them. Our enclosure with each package of returns will tell you what action you need to take. If the address is currently correct on NYBEAS (and that includes ZIP codes, apartment numbers, etc.), then other than giving the new materials to the enrollee, or sometimes if you fill out a form that we send you we will resend it for you, there is nothing else you need to do.

### **Dental and Vision publications**

**State Vision Plan:** For employees enrolled in the State Vision Plan, benefit booklets for each participating union group are located online or can be ordered by HBAs using the New York State Vision Plan Benefit Booklet Order Form located online under Publication and Forms.

**State Dental Plan:** For employees enrolled in the State Dental Plan, replacement certificates may be requested from the GHI Customer Service Department at 1-800-947-0101.

We hope this memo is helpful. If you have questions about publications or this memo, please call EBD Communications at 518-457-7577. If you have questions about NYSHIP benefits or transactions, or to check something on NYBEAS, please call your EBD processor.