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NANCY G. GROENWEGEN
COMMISSIONER

TO: New York State Health Benefits Administrators NY08-22

FROM: Employee Benefits Division

SUBJECT: Special Option Transfer Period for CSEA-represented Employees and UCS Employees

DATE: June 26, 2008

In compliance with the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) and United Court Systems (UCS) Collective Bargaining Agreements, a special Option Transfer Period will be conducted **for CSEA and UCS employees only. This special Option Transfer Period is available to those CSEA and UCS employees**, who wish to change from the Empire Plan to an HMO with lower co-payments for third tier Prescription Drugs or Outpatient Surgery. As always, employees must live or work in the service area of the HMO requested. The HMOs to which changes will be permitted are:

Univera-057	Community Blue-067
Aetna-210	MVP-60, 330, 340
Independent Health-059	GHI/HMO-220, 350
HIP-050	
Empire Blue Cross Blue Shield HMO-280, 290, 320	

If enrollees are considering changing their health insurance plan, they should review the 2008 NYSHIP Choices booklet and the 2008 NYSHIP rate chart.

Requests for option changes from the Empire Plan to one of the above HMOs made during the special option transfer period are the **ONLY** requests that will be permitted to CSEA and UCS employees as a result of the July 1, 2008 Empire Plan co payment increases. The PS 404 form must be signed between 7/1/08 and 7/31/08 and returned no later than July 31, 2008 to the agency health benefits administrator. The Empire Plan changes do not create a qualifying event that would allow an enrollee with pre-tax deductions to change coverage type (individual/family) or to cancel coverage.

Any PS 404 form requesting a Special Option change which is returned after the deadline may not be accepted. Unless there is a further qualifying event, an enrollee will not be permitted to have another option change until the next regular option transfer period in November 2008.

No action is necessary for enrollees who continue in the Empire Plan.

August 2008 Benefit Plan Effective Dates

The effective dates for Special Benefit Plan changes are:

08/7/08 for Administration Lag exempt payroll employees

07/31/08 for Institution payroll employees

08/7/08 for Administration Lag payroll employees

NOTE: Any request for earlier effective dates, must be processed by EBD.

To avoid retroactive premium adjustments, Benefit Plan change transactions must be entered by agencies on Administration Lag payrolls no later than 07/22/08. Institution agencies must enter Benefit Plan change transactions no later than 07/15/08. Administration Lag Exempt agencies must enter Benefit Plan change transactions no later than 07/08/08.

HBA INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE SPECIAL OPTION TRANSFER PERIOD

Transaction Type During Special Option Enrollment	Date of Request = Effective date of "New Plan Change"	Transaction Effective Date
Benefit Plan Change Action/Reason PLN/SPC	For Institution: July 31, 2008 For Administration: August 7,2008	For Institution: July 31, 2008 For Administration: August 7,2008

When using this Action / Reason code **PLN/SPC**, you will receive this warning message:
It is OUTSIDE the Benefit Plan Transfer Period-Special requirements apply. Do you want to continue?

The Benefit Plan Change is being processed outside of the benefit plan transfer period.

Select 'YES' if you want to continue with this transaction.

Select 'NO' to cancel this transaction.

Yes	No
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CLICK YES

After completing this PLN/SPC change, you must add a comment on the comment panel in NYBEAS for each enrollee.

In the comment field, please key the following statement:

Option Change was processed due to the 7/1/08 CSEA and UCS collective bargaining agreement. Agency received Special Option request with a signature date of 07/XX/2008". Include your (HBA) complete name and date of submission of PLN/SPC.

Any questions regarding processing these transactions should be directed to your processor.