

Personal health care shopper allow members to compare procedure costs and out-of-pocket costs; as well as find physicians, view provider quality and read member reviews

EAGAN, Minn., Sept. 18, 2013 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Today, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota (Blue Cross) announced that SmartSelect™, the first in a family of online health care shopping tools, is now available as part of its standard benefits package for all members. This tool helps address rising health care costs by encouraging members to become more informed health care consumers.

Members can access the SmartSelect shopping tool when they use the Blue Cross "Find a Doctor" web tool via a mobile phone, tablet or computer. The tool helps members choose a physician or hospital in their network, search and compare providers on cost and quality indicators, and, similar to many consumer websites, read and write reviews on providers. The SmartSelect tools offer national cost and quality information for providers, based on data collected from all Blue Cross plans, representing 96 percent of hospitals and 92 percent of doctors nationwide.

"People are used to shopping for product information in everyday life for many things — but it traditionally hasn't been that way in health care," said David Corkum, senior vice president, commercial markets for Blue Cross. "Blue Cross members have a choice in managing their health care, as their decisions affect the total cost of care. SmartSelect helps them make sense of their health care options, ultimately leading to more informed health care decision making."

SmartSelect allows members to easily access:

- Cost information for more than 300 procedures, including office visits, laboratory tests diagnostic imaging, and common outpatient and inpatient procedures
- Comparisons of health care providers based on cost and quality
- Straight-forward explanations of treatments and services
- Estimated, out-of-pocket costs for procedures, based on member's specific benefit information, including summary of their spending account balances with Select Account.*

BlueCross is partnering with Change Healthcare, a market leader in consumer engagement and cost transparency tools the SmartSelect tools.

"BlueCross is dedicated to providing its members with the decision making tools they need to remain successful in today's evolving health care world," said Douglas Ghertner, president and CEO of Change Healthcare. "Blue Cross is a great partner with a long-term vision for superior, innovative cost transparency approaches."

** This functionality is available to all members who have a spending account with Select Account.*

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of MinnesotaBlue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota (bluecrossmn.com), with headquarters in the

St. Paul

suburb of

Eagan

, was chartered in 1933 as

Minnesota's

first health plan and continues to carry out its charter mission today as a health company: to promote a wider, more economical and timely availability of health services for the people of Minnesota

. Blue Cross is a not-for-profit, taxable organization. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Minnesota

is an independent licensee of the Blues Cross and Blue Shield Association, headquartered in Chicago

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About Change HealthcareEstablished in 2007, Change Healthcare is on a mission to transform the way Americans purchase and utilize healthcare services by driving sustainable engagement at the individual level. With a national client base of health plans and employers covering lives in all 50 states, Change Healthcare is the premier national provider of healthcare cost transparency and consumer engagement solutions that enable consumers to: better understand and utilize their healthcare benefits; make informed healthcare purchasing decisions based on quality, cost and convenience; and manage higher out-of-pocket responsibility and realize savings. This, in turn, helps health plans and self-insured employers: control their healthcare cost growth trend; successfully migrate to more cost-effective plan types; optimize existing wellness programs and on-site clinics; and improve member/employee satisfaction and retention. To learn more about Change Healthcare and its consumer engagement solutions,

Written by Australian Business

visit www.changehealthcare.com .

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