



Kansas Insurance Department

Sandy Praeger, Commissioner of Insurance

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Health exchange committees will hear vendor presentations

TOPEKA, Kan. — Members of the Steering Committee and Working Groups for the proposed Kansas Health Benefits Exchange will view presentations from insurance exchange marketplace vendors at public meetings March 15 and March 31.

The Tuesday, March 15, vendor presentation will be in the Shawnee Ballroom at the Maner Conference Center, adjacent to the Capitol Plaza Hotel, 1717 SW Topeka Blvd. Presentations begin at 10 a.m.

The Thursday, March 31, presentation will be at 2 p.m. at the Kansas Museum of History, 6425 SW 6th Ave., Topeka.

At each meeting, two vendors are scheduled to show systems capabilities for implementing a Kansas-based exchange, which is an online marketplace for consumers and small businesses to find and compare health insurance plans. The technology built into the exchange would allow Kansans to comparison shop for plans through computer and Internet access.

The exchange, as provided for in the federal Affordable Care Act, would take effect in 2014. If Kansas does not implement an exchange at the state level, the federal government would run it for the state.

Once the exchange is in operation, consumers would be able to make an “apples to apples” comparison of the health insurance benefits in each plan. They would also be able to review cost information, including premiums and out-of-pocket costs, such as deductibles and copayments.

For some consumers, subsidies from the federal government would help pay the cost of the premiums or other costs. In other cases, the exchange would direct a person to a site where they will be able to apply for Kansas Medicaid or HealthWave coverage.

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The Kansas Insurance Department has received federal grants to study plans for the creation of a Kansas exchange and to develop the technology necessary to integrate the exchange with the State's existing Medicaid and HealthWave programs.

The work is in cooperation with the Kansas Health Policy Authority, the Kansas Department of Health and Environment and the Governor's Office. Plans for the development of a new Kansas Medicaid Eligibility System began in 2009.

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The Kansas Insurance Department, established in 1871, assists and educates consumers, regulates and reviews companies and licenses agents selling insurance products in the state. More about the department is online at www.ksinsurance.org.