



DISB Bulletin

A monthly publication of news and events of the DC Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking

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DISB Vets 301 New Health Plans for DC Health Link

The D.C.'s health care exchange, opening October 1, will offer a variety of affordable, quality plans

In a big step forward for [DC Health Link](#), the city's health insurance exchange, the Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking finished vetting all 301 new health plans.

Also, three of the four insurers on the exchange -- Kaiser Permanente, Aetna and United Healthcare -- have lowered prices since the companies for the first time disclosed their proposed rates publicly in June.

Kaiser Permanente lowered the rates it is proposing to charge cus-

tomers by 4.4 percent for small-business employees and half a percent for individuals. United HealthCare dropped rates more than 10 percent, and recently cut them almost another 5 percent; and Aetna cut more than 5 percent. CareFirst is the fourth company on the exchange.

Because prices on the online exchange will be transparent and easy to compare when it opens Oct. 1, they will be far more competitive for the individuals and small businesses who will buy insurance through DC Health Link.



"These lower rates are more incontrovertible proof DC Health Link is already bringing competition to the insurance market," said DISB Commissioner William P. White. "Kudos to the companies and the way they adjusted quickly and adroitly to this new market."

(See **DC HEALTH LINK**, on page 4)

Students Become Financial Literacy Teachers in Bank on DC Program

Fourteen students participate in Bank on DC's Young Money Manager's Pilot Program

A city pilot program trained a team of 14 student employees from the Mayor's 2013 Summer Youth Employment Program, known as SYEP, to educate their peers on financial literacy. Bank on DC and the D.C. Department of Employment Services created the Bank on DC's Youth Facilitator Initiative. The facilitators, aged 18 to 21, educated their peers on how money affects their daily life and how to make smart financial choices. These participants, unlike other SYEP students, began earlier this summer with Bank on DC's "Financial Boot Camp" June 10 in preparation for the SYEP program,

which began July 1. The goal is for participants to teach at 25 to 30 different places this summer. Bank on DC's facilitators will teach at chartered schools, District and federal government agencies, community and non-profit organizations and D.C. public schools.

Unique to this program is that all the students are using social media like Instagram and Twitter to share and promote savings tips. Bank on DC will measure its effectiveness with before and after testing, and follow-up with phone calls to ensure the quality of the service the facilitators delivered.



Students educate their peers on financial literacy through Bank on DC's Young Money Manager's Pilot Program. (Photo provided by Bank on DC)

DISB Event Roundup

A briefing of some of the recent department events and presentations

Department Holds Third Senior Financial and Insurance Awareness Day

The department held its third “Senior Financial and Insurance Awareness Day” July 29 at Iona’s Active Wellness Program at St. Alban’s at the request of Thelma Hines, the program manager.

The event focused on avoiding financial fraud; understanding insurance needs from automobile accidents to long-term care; wills and estate-planning; and preparing for the opening of DC Health Link, the District’s health-insurance exchange. Speakers included representatives from DISB, AARP’s Legal Counsel for the Elderly, the D.C. Department of Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice. The department provided an interpreter for Spanish-speaking seniors. The city’s cable-television office taped the event and the edited video will be available for public viewing.

You can view the video from the Ward 8 event, our first “Senior Financial and Insurance Awareness Day,” at [this link](#) on the [DISB You Tube page](#). It was held on April 17 at the Congress Heights Senior Wellness Center. The second event was in Ward 7 at Washington Wellness Center on June 12. The series will continue in other parts of the city as the Communications Office, with help from the department’s many experts, continues to reach out to some of the city’s most vulnerable residents.

DISB Educates Local Contractors on Access to Small Business Capital Program

DISB Program Manager IfeanyiChukwu Egbuniwe explained to local small businesses how the District of Columbia Colateral Support Program works at the “Building Capacity for Success” event June 27.

The D.C. Department of General Services sponsored the event at One Judiciary Square as an opportunity for local-business owners to meet District government officials. Egbuniwe explained how the program leverages private lenders’ money and increases capital for District small businesses. View more on the program [here](#).

DISB Attends Ward 7 Economic Development Summit

DISB was invited to present information on its services and programs at the Ward 7 Economic Development Summit at the H.D. Woodson High School June 29. Residents who came by the department’s information booth wanted to know if we could make presentations at community events and also asked where they could obtain information on the city’s health care exchange, DC Health Link. The purpose of the summit was to learn about key projects in Ward 7 and to give feedback to Mayor Vincent C. Gray and other city officials.

DISB Hosts Summer Youth Employment Program Students

This year, the department hosted two students from the D.C. Department of Employment Services Summer Youth Employment Program to work in various divisions of the department. Daija Cathey, a Montgomery College student, worked in the Office of Systems and Technology. Amira Thomas worked in the Office of Communications. Thomas attends Bennett College.



Amira Thomas (left) and Daija Cathey (right), DISB’s District Summer Youth Employment Program students.

The interns worked on various assignments including updating the information technology help desk system with knowledge-based articles, prepping documents for document imaging, creating weekly reports to executive staff, researching articles for DISB’s Daily Briefing and assisting in community events.

The program is a short-term employment and training opportunity that runs from July 1 – Aug. 9. It introduces District youth ages 14-21 to an enriching and constructive summer work experience through employers who will positively impact their futures. In the program, they earn money and gain meaningful work experience and skills. The department thanks our students for their hard work and wishes them luck as they continue their education.

DISB’s Summer Youth Student Co-Hosts a Podcast on Teen Fraud

Amira Thomas, one of the department’s Summer Youth Employment Program students, co-hosted a podcast on *DISB’s Download*, the department’s audio interview program, on how teens can protect themselves against fraud. Thomas and Public Information Officer Kate Hartig interviewed Steve Perry, associate commissioner for enforcement and investigations, about credit card solicitations, common scams on the internet, and what to do if you are a victim of identity theft.

“Amira did an excellent job preparing for the podcast by researching information on teen fraud and helping to produce the script in addition to co-hosting,” said Hartig.

The podcast “How Teens Can Protect Themselves Against Fraud” will be available on the department’s website next week. You can listen to all department podcasts [at this link](#). Have an idea for a podcast? Email Kathryn.Hartig@dc.gov.

D.C. Agrees to Settle with DC Chartered Health for \$48 Mil

A judge and federal Medicaid agency must still approve the deal before the Medicaid insurer's health-care providers will begin seeing payment.

The department's special deputy rehabilitator overseeing the receivership of D.C. Chartered Health Plan Inc. and the District's Department of Health Care Finance agreed to settle for \$48 million claims that the District under-reimbursed Chartered.

The settlement is subject to approval by the D.C. Superior Court and authorization by the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services.

Chartered, once the District's largest Medicaid insurer, had filed claims with the District for more than \$60 million, saying the department had under-reimbursed it for providing HIV/AIDS drugs to patients and for other medical and dental care.

The settlement agreement says the parties reached this agreement "in order to avoid the delay, uncertainty,

inconvenience and expense of protracted litigation of the claims asserted or that could have been asserted by Chartered...." The settlement is intended to resolve all Chartered's claims, including claims it had not yet filed. The District denies all Chartered's claims. The settlement agreement states that it is "neither an admission of liability nor a concession by the District."

The settlement agreement provides that the entire \$48 million settlement will be used to pay what Chartered owes the medical-care providers who treated its clients.

Chartered estimates it owes hospitals, clinics and doctors more than \$50 million for undisputed claims. Chartered intends to set aside funds already in its bank accounts for disputed claims, the largest of which is with MedStar Health, the large regional not-for-profit chain of hospitals and doctors' offices.

A Superior Court judge supervising the receivership must now determine whether the agreement can be approved. The next court hearing is scheduled for Aug. 21, but the court can schedule a hearing sooner.

(See CHARTERED on page 4)

Department Employee Represents D.C. at National Union Women's Conference

Darniece Shirley shares updates on activism and advocacy work from national conference

Darniece Shirley, a DISB actuary, represented the District in June at the first Women's Leadership Academy held by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees in St. Louis, Mo.

She was one of 26 women selected to participate in the academy, which focuses on developing more women leaders in local unions.

Almost 60 percent of the union's 1.6 million members are women, but women only hold eight national positions. The federation has committed

to increasing the number of women at all levels and hosted this conference for women to work on effective communication methods and other strategies to improve advocacy efforts.

During the conference, Darniece and the other women shared stories of why they became activists and learned ways to promote unions. For instance, they manned a phone bank to organize Vermont Homecare Workers.

"This training is especially important in light of major issues confronting unions — privatization of government jobs, elimination of pensions and collective bargaining," Darniece said. "It's critical for union members to know and understand that what affects one group of organized workers can affect all organized workers."

Each participant must deliver a project to their local union. Darniece's is

"AFSCME for Dummies," a guide for members of the local. "It is my hope that this guide will eventually be released to all union employees District-wide," she said.

DISB is part of Local 2743, which includes three other District agencies: the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, the Department of Health and the D.C. Alcoholic Beverage Regulation Administration.

If you are interested in learning more about the "AFSCME for Dummies" project, joining Local 2743's Women's Committee or being a male ally, email Darniece at darniece.shirley@dc.gov.



Event Calendar

Senior Wellness Center Financial Fraud Prevention

Presentation – Wednesday, August 14, Noon - 1:30 p.m.,
Hayes Senior Wellness Center, 500 K Street, NE.

Senior Wellness Center Financial Fraud Prevention

Presentation – Tuesday, August 21, 10 a.m.-11:30 a.m.,
Institute of Gerontology, 4200 Connecticut Avenue, NW,
Building 41, Room A03.

Reverse Mortgage Presentation - Tuesday, August 21,
11:30 a.m. – 1 p.m., Washington Seniors Wellness Center,
3001 Alabama Avenue, SE.

CHARTERED, *cont. from page 3*

If the judge and the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services approve the agreement, Chartered could begin paying doctors, clinics and hospitals shortly afterward. The District intends to administer its payments through a grant program; the details will come from the [D.C. Department of Health Care Finance](#).

Chartered was by far the largest of the city's handful of Medicaid insurers, covering more than 100,000 of the District's poorest people, before it ran into financial troubles and DISB took it into receivership.

The receiver sold most of Chartered's assets to AmeriHealth Group of Companies headquartered in Philadelphia, which operates as AmeriHealth Caritas here, transferring the 100,000 enrollees from Chartered to AmeriHealth with no interruption in their health care.

To view the notice filing and other related documents, visit disb.dc.gov/chartered.

DC HEALTH LINK, *cont. from page 1*

While it is difficult to directly compare plans on the exchange, with their required benefits, to plans the insurers sell now, the rates conform to the department's experience of what customers now pay without the additional benefits.

The federal Department of Health and Human Services surveyed exchange rates recently, including in the District, and while the department said more research is needed, "the results strongly suggest that greater competition and transparency are leading to substantial benefits for both consumers and employers in these markets."

The report shows that employers looking for coverage in the small group market can find rates for full benefit plans in DC Health Link more than a third lower than today's rates. (View the Department of Health and Human Services report [PDF])

For people below certain income levels, the federal Affordable Care Act will provide subsidies. Among other benefits to consumers: Insurers cannot deny coverage for pre-existing conditions; and all plans must cover that new set of essential health benefits.

United Healthcare is offering the most plans, 177; CareFirst is next with 69; Kaiser, one of the nation's largest not-for-profit health insurers, 32; and Aetna, 23.

Health maintenance organizations, or HMOs, in which patients must usually seek approval before seeing a specialist, account for 174 of the plans; preferred provider organizations, or PPOs, which are less restrictive, total 127.

To see the rates, go to disb.dc.gov/hbxplans.

Because Kaiser added children's dental benefits to their revised plans, the old rates in the table would have to be adjusted to compare them directly with the new rates – a true comparison that shows the rates dropping. And Kaiser added seven new plans, which also affected direct comparisons. Taking these factors into account explains why the rate drops are not apparent in the tables comparing the original rates to the new rates.

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