

quick connections

July 28, 2000

New GBU footprint set

The “new” footprint of the North and South Geographic Business Units (GBUs) becomes effective Aug. 1. The alignment maintains the boundaries of the former East Central and West Central regions and preserves the “natural markets” as viewed by provider referrals and patterns of care. It is designed to minimize disruption to members, providers and operations.

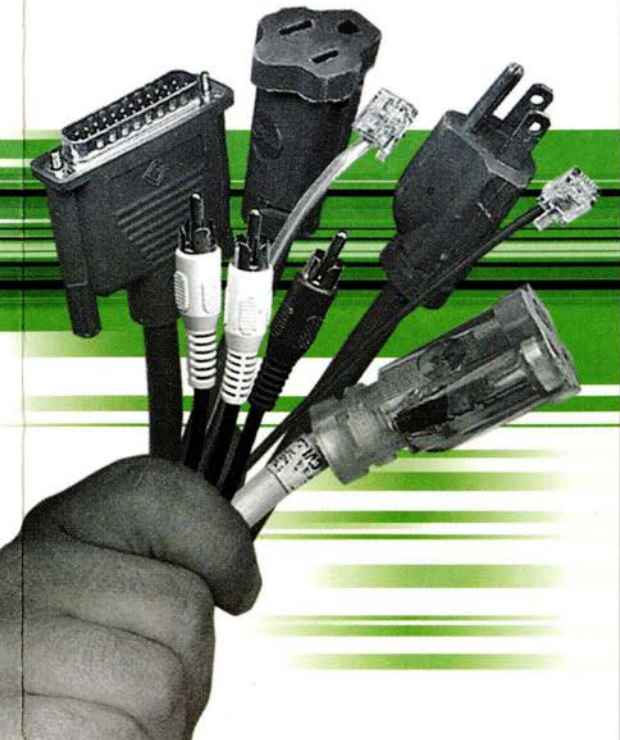
The North GBU, led by Ernie Brodsky, will add the West Central and South Central counties of Charlotte, Collier, De Soto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Hernando, Highlands, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pasco, Pinellas and Sarasota counties.

The South GBU, led by Bruce Davidson, will add the East Central counties of Brevard, Flagler, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, Sumter; and Volusia.

The new North GBU will serve a population of 7.1 million with membership of 1.6 million; the South GBU, a population of 8.2 million and membership of 1.2 million.

Organizational blueprinting work for the Health Business Sector is expected to be completed in early August. The blueprinting team is determining locations of the consolidated areas, responsibilities, reporting relationships and staffing plans. The team consists of GBU and corporate representatives.

Quick Connections is available online at Corporate Information/Blue Views on the company Intranet.



Sprint PCS offers 'Wireless Blues'

Waiting for a really great deal on wireless service before you sign up? Your wait may be over: Employees can take advantage of a new Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association arrangement with Sprint PCS for nationwide wireless service.

The Wireless Blues Program offers employees and their families a 15 percent discount on monthly plans. Discounts on handsets vary depending on the length of the service agreement (up to a 90 percent discount for a three-year commitment).

A variety of monthly packages is available. At the low end is a basic package for \$9.99 per month with \$.35 a minute. At the high end is a 4,000-minutes-per-month package. One of the most popular packages offers 180 minutes for \$25.49 a month.

Among the available phones, the most popular is a Samsung that can function as a wireless modem for Web access and that features voice activation.

Sprint PCS service is 100 percent digital, offering clear reception and security. (Calls can't be monitored.) All monthly packages include call waiting, call forwarding and caller I.D. There are no domestic long distance or roaming charges if you place calls from the Sprint PCS network; you can usually make calls from outside your usual service area at no extra cost. You can change plans at any time.

To view available phones and find your service area, check out the Sprint Web site, www.sprintpcs.com. To sign up for new service, call 877-306-BLUE (2583). Existing Sprint PCS customers should call 888-328-4252.

Earnings up again

BCBSF continued to perform positively during the first half of 2000, with consolidated net income of \$39.9 million, compared with consolidated net income of \$14.6 million for the same period a year ago. Total revenue was \$2.4 billion for the half of 2000, compared with \$2.1 billion for the same period of 1999—a 15 percent increase. BCBSF also experienced positive enrollment gains, especially compared to our competitors, helping us to achieve a strong balance in terms of financial performance and membership growth.

"Despite the continuing shakeout of health care companies doing business in Florida, we are successfully bucking negative industry trends and continuing to show financial strength and stability midway through 2000," said R. Chris Doerr, chief financial officer.

BCBSF increased policyholders' equity by \$92.0 million during the past 12 months, bringing the total to \$931.9 million—an 11 percent increase over the \$839.9 million reported for June 30, 1999. Policyholders' equity provides a strong foundation to support capability development.

Read the entire earnings news release on the Blue Views site on the company Intranet on or after July 31. Go to Corporate Information/Blue Views/Blue Views Programs/Employee Bulletins.



Customer Satisfaction



Market Leadership



Financial Strength



Public Understanding



Org. Effectiveness



Delivery Systems



National Association

FCSO partners with BCBSF to provide services

First Coast Service Options, a wholly owned subsidiary of BCBSF that provides Medicare administration services, has expanded operations to provide its parent with claims processing, mail and document imaging services.

Since January, FCSO's Medicare B claims processing area has provided scanning and data verification services for BCBSF's Private Business Operations (PBO), Federal Employee Plan and ITS claims—more than 500,000 claims a month—and expects to take over Managed Healthcare System claims this summer.

FCSO Operations Support has handled more than two million pieces of mail since April for several types of PBO claims and inquiries and has been scanning and storing claims documents since May. FCSO anticipates scanning more than 100,000 pages of BCBSF documents daily.



BlueCross BlueShield of Florida

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association



State Group launches PPO Plan Web site

State of Florida employees can now access information they need about their health coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week online. Among other features, BCBSF's Web site for the State Employees' PPO Plan provides:

- a link to the BCBSF PPO provider directory, which enables employees to review and locate participating providers in their area;
- State Employees' PPO Plan benefit information;
- a customer relations page that includes a comprehensive telephone and address directory; and
- a frequently asked questions page.

The Web site is one more way BCBSF is enhancing the support services we provide to our members, business decision-makers and other stakeholders.

To get to the site, log on to [www.bcb\\$fl.com](http://www.bcb$fl.com), select Products and Plans, then click on State Group.

Tips on identifying fraud, how to report fraud are online

Fraud is big business. The Special Investigations Unit (SIU) identified more than \$5 million in overpayments in 1999. Now, the SIU has launched a new Intranet Web site with tips on how to identify fraud and how to report suspicious activities. Employees also can read about actual cases from the SIU's files.

To visit the new site on the BCBSF Intranet, go to Organizational Pages/Legal Affairs/Special Investigations Unit. Help fight fraud!

Flu vaccine shortage possible this fall

There may be a shortage of influenza vaccine this fall, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Vaccines also may arrive a month later than usual because of production problems. The CDC does expect, however, sufficient supplies to immunize people normally at high risk, such as the elderly and those in nursing homes. The CDC will recommend making the vaccination of those at risk a priority should a shortfall occur.

Our horizon is never quite at our elbows.

— Henry David Thoreau

Publications available online; feedback welcome

For your convenience, BCBSF's publications are available for your reading pleasure online. Check out the Blue Views site on the Intranet for the latest issues of Quick Connections, Perspectives, and Florida Blue. Go to Corporate Information/Blue Views Programs.

And don't forget that your feedback is always welcome. Just email your comments on any publication or communications campaign to Blue Views.

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