

News Release



May 14, 1996

CONTACT: S. Martin Filipowski
(904) 791-8075

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida Announces New Medicare HMO Plan in Central Florida

ORLANDO -- Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) today introduced new HMO coverage for Medicare beneficiaries in Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties.

"Beneficiaries are seeking alternatives to Medicare that provide quality, affordable care with an emphasis on prevention," said Peter Burchett, BCBSF's vice president for Central Florida. "BCBSF's plan provides access to doctors who have been screened for quality, covers services that detect illness early and makes the cost of quality health care more predictable."

Several studies confirm HMOs' success in providing quality preventive health care. One report by the Health Care Financing Administration, which was published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, said elderly HMO members with cancer are more likely to be diagnosed at an early stage than seniors in old-style plans.

BCBSF's new plan is called Medicare & More. In addition to the benefits described above, the plan provides Medicare beneficiaries with:

- the freedom to personally choose their primary care physician from the plan's network of contracting providers;
- the flexibility to change doctors;
- a network of doctors that helps patients make informed decisions about their care; and
- quality, affordable health care because the plan does not have monthly premiums, deductibles or primary care physician co-payments.

Medicare & More is available through Health Options, the company's HMO subsidiary. BCBSF and Health Options are independent licensees of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, an association of independent Blue Cross and Blue Shield companies nationwide. A financially strong, tax-paying mutual insurance company, BCBSF is subject to the same regulation by the Department of Insurance as other insurers operating in the state.

For more information about Medicare & More, beneficiaries may call BCBSF at **1-800-753-8857**.

--30--

