How Well Do You Know Your Health Plan?

The University of Louisville offers four health plans. But do you really know how each plan works and the basic differences? While there is no “right plan,” employees can choose a “best fit” plan based on their own health, family and financial situation. Here’s a run-down of the plans to showcase their similarities and differences:

The EPO and PPO Plans
The EPO (Exclusive Provider Organization) and PPO (Preferred Provider Organization) plans are what many people consider traditional health care plans. Their features include network coverage, deductible, copayments and coinsurance.

Network
Both the EPO and PPO offer coverage for providers and services that are part of the Anthem Blue Access PPO network (also referred to as in-network). However, the EPO does not provide coverage out-of-network except when there is a health or life-threatening emergency.

Deductible
With the PPO plan, you have a deductible of $250 for an individual and $750 for family before coinsurance begins. The EPO Plan does not have a deductible.

Copayments
Both the EPO and PPO plans have copayments required for select services, such as doctor’s visits. For the PPO, the copayment will count towards your deductible. There is no deductible with the EPO.

Coinsurance
After you have met your deductible under the PPO plan, coinsurance will kick in. This is your share of the costs for covered services, calculated as a percentage. Since there is no deductible with an EPO, coinsurance will start immediately.

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PCA High and Low Plans
The PCA High and Low plans are quite different from the EPO and PPO plans. They are consumer-driven health plans that can save you money with careful management. PCA High and Low plans have higher deductibles. However, participants are given a preloaded debit card—the HealthEquity card—to help meet that deductible. It is very important to use this money to maximize the benefits of the PCA High and Low plans. These plans have both in-network and out-of-network coverage. Here’s a scenario to show how the plan works:

Sally has elected the PCA High plan. She is only covering herself. Her deductible is $1,000. She must pay that amount before insurance coverage begins to pay a percentage of her health care costs. To help with the deductible, the university provides $500 on a debit card that she can use towards the deductible. This lowers her actual out-of-pocket deductible to $500. Let’s say Sally only spends $200 of the debit card amount in a given year. That means the remaining $300 will roll forward to the next year’s debit card (up to three times the annual amount). The next year, she would still have the deductible to meet, but have $800 on her debit card ($500 for the new year plus $300 rolled over from the previous year).

For more details on each plan, including a helpful comparison chart and summary of benefits, please visit the benefits website (louisville.edu/hr/benefits/health).

August is National Immunization Awareness Month
Back-to-school time is a great time to think about family health—especially vaccinations that protect kids against common diseases such as measles, polio and other children’s illnesses.

Those who have had the first dose of the Hepatitis A vaccine must remember to follow-up with the second dose. Even young adults going to college need certain immunizations, including the Hepatitis A and meningococcal meningitis vaccines. Adults should keep vaccines up-to-date too. Some recommended immunizations for adults include the flu vaccine (get the flu shot before the season begins) and the pneumonia vaccine. The great news is that UofL’s health insurance covers all of these vaccines at no charge.
How a Health Care Flexible Spending Account Can Help You

Money set aside in a Health Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) comes out of your paycheck before taxes. So how can this help you? Since you will likely pay for health care items or services that are FSA-eligible each year, using pre-tax dollars can save you money. Employees are encouraged to look over what they have spent this year—and estimate next year—to maximize the value of an FSA.

To determine if an FSA will benefit you, and how much you should put into one, look at the list of eligible expenses at https://www.discoverybenefits.com/employees/eligible-expenses. Remember, FSAs supplement your out-of-pocket costs for all areas of health care, including vision, dental care, copayments and deductibles. However, it does not stop there. You can use them for a wide variety of items and expenses beyond doctor’s visits, including many types of chiropractic care, acupuncture, bandages and sunscreen (over 30 SPF), just to name a few. Do you have a little one at home or expecting a new addition to your family? Baby thermometers, prenatal vitamins and lactation-assistance products are also eligible. Reviewing the eligible expenses can help you to determine what you will probably purchase anyway so you can decide how much to set aside next year.

Tips for Submitting FSA Receipts

If you have an FSA, be prepared to provide receipts to show that your charges were for an eligible service or product. Discovery Benefits follows IRS rules that only certain services and products are eligible under an FSA. Make sure any receipts you submit contain ALL of the following information: name of provider, date of service, type of service and dollar amount. Keep in mind that credit card receipts are not accepted because they do not contain that information. Many times, an Explanation Of Benefits (EOB) will have what you need. You can submit receipts online, through the app, via fax or mail. For more information about document requirements from UofL’s FSA provider, Discovery Benefits, visit https://www.discoverybenefits.com/blog/posts/2016/11/16/understanding-documentation-requirements.