



United States
Office of Personnel Management
Retirement and Insurance Service

Benefits Administration Letter

Number: 97-413

Date: December 11, 1997

Subject: 1997 Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program Open Season: Blue Cross Blue Shield Service benefit Plan - Change of Preferred Providers in Northeastern Pennsylvania

We have been informed that Blue Cross of Northeastern Pennsylvania, which administers the Blue Cross Blue Shield Service Benefit Plan (Code 10) in the Wilkes-Barre, PA, area, just announced to its enrollees that it has changed its Preferred Provider hospital network for 1998.

While we do not know how significant these changes may be -- we understand there are still plenty of hospitals available -- we do know that the notice was distributed too late for many employees to make an informed decision about the Service Benefit Plan before this year's open season ended on December 8. In view of this, please remind your employing offices in the Wilkes-Barre area that they have the authority to accept belated open season changes in individual cases. This is an occasion that warrants the approval of belated changes, and we encourage you to urge your installations in the area to do so.

Please bring this matter to the attention of your local installations as quickly as possible.

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