



***Retirement and Insurance Service
Benefits Administration Letter***

Number: 99-220

Date: November 4, 1999

**Subject: Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program: Termination of
Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of New England, Code 70**

This is to advise you that Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of New England, Inc. (HPHCNE), Code 70, an HMO serving all of Rhode Island and certain adjacent towns in the State of Massachusetts, is under rehabilitation by the State of Rhode Island and will no longer participate in the FEHB Program, effective December 31, 1999 (12 midnight).

Employees may not newly enroll in HPHCNE. In addition, we are authorizing a special open season for employees enrolled in the plan to allow them to choose new plans. Employees who wish to maintain FEHB coverage **must** enroll in new plans during this special open season. This open season is effective immediately and will continue through December 18, 1999. Agencies are, however, asked to apply this cut-off date liberally if necessary.

HPHCNE will send its enrollees a letter on Office of Personnel Management (OPM) stationery (see attachment), advising them of this special open season. Only Federal enrollees enrolled in HPHCNE, Code 70, are eligible to enroll in another health plan during this special open season. Federal enrollees enrolled in Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Inc., Code 68, **are not** eligible for this special open season.

Because the plan will cease operations on December 31, 1999, enrollment changes made during this open season should be made effective the pay period beginning on or after November 1, 1999, and no later than December 19, 1999. Since this special open season overlaps the regular open season, agencies will need to identify their employees enrolled in Code 70, **to ensure that these changes are not processed as a regular open season change resulting in a year 2000 effective date.**

*Civil Service
Retirement
System*

*Federal Employees
Group Life
Insurance*

*Federal Employees
Health Benefits
Program*

*Federal Employees
Retirement
System*

It is important to note, enrollees in HPHCNE, Code 70, will retain their new Plan selection for both calendar years 1999 and 2000. Therefore, they should pay particular attention to the benefits and premiums for both calendar years, 1999 and 2000.

Lastly, please be aware that the United Healthcare of New England, Inc., enrollment Code VF, will not participate in the FEHB Program in calendar year 2000.

Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Abby L. Block". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Abby L. Block, Chief
Insurance Policy Division
and Information Division

Attachment



United States
**Office of
Personnel Management**

Washington, D.C. 20415

**TO ALL FEDERAL ENROLLEES OF
HARVARD PILGRIM HEALTH CARE OF NEW ENGLAND, INC.**

This **important** notice is being sent to you by **Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of New England, Inc. (HPHCNE)** at the request of the United States Office of Personnel Management (OPM).

HPHCNE, enrollment code 70, is under rehabilitation by the State of Rhode Island and will no longer participate in the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) Program, effective December 31, 1999. To continue to receive benefits under the FEHB Program, you **MUST** transfer to another participating health plan **IMMEDIATELY**.

We have scheduled a special open enrollment period effective immediately and continuing through December 18, 1999. Be advised that the effective date of the change will be in calendar year 1999. Because your new health plan selection will not change for calendar year 2000, it is important to consider the new health plan's premium and benefits for both calendar years 1999 and 2000. Please contact your personnel office to obtain a 2000 Guide to Federal Employees Health Benefits Plans. You may request brochures directly from the health plans at the phone numbers appearing in the Guide. You may also visit our 2000 FEHB web site (www.opm.gov/insure) to view a plan's brochure. Only Federal enrollees enrolled in Harvard Pilgrim Health Care of New England are eligible to enroll in another health plan during this special open season.

Please be aware that United Healthcare of New England, Inc., enrollment code VF, will not participate in the FEHB Program in 2000.

TRANSITIONAL CARE UNDER THE PATIENTS' BILL OF RIGHTS

If you (or a family member) have a chronic or disabling condition, or are in the second or third trimester of pregnancy, you will be able to continue seeing your specialist. The plan that gets a new member from a plan that leaves the FEHB Program must pay for or provide remaining transitional care. Contact your new health plan so it can help coordinate your care.

IF YOU ARE AN EMPLOYEE

You should take a copy of this letter to your personnel office and complete a new Health Benefits Registration Form (SF 2809). The effective date of the new coverage you choose will be the first day of the pay period beginning on or after November 7, 1999 and no later than December 19, 1999. **If you do not enroll by that date, you will not have any health benefits coverage for 2000.**

IF YOU ARE AN ANNUITANT

Annuitants under the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) or Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS), should call the toll-free number at 1-888-767-6738 to make their enrollment changes. Please have available your CSRS or FERS annuity claim number and your social security number when calling our toll-free number. If you are an annuitant of another Federal retirement retiree system, you must contact that system for assistance. Coverage under your new plan will be made retroactive to November 1, 1999 or December 1, 1999.

We apologize for the inconvenience, and thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

U.S. Office of Personnel Management
Office of Insurance Programs