

Health Care Reform - Questions and Answers

Health Care Reform Insurance Exchange General Information

Q1 ***What is important about insurance requirements under the Affordable Care Act (ACA) - also known as Health Care Reform?***

- A1
- A provision of the Affordable Care Act requires that all persons have insurance or pay a penalty (called the “individual mandate”).
 - The Affordable Care Act (ACA) provides for the operation of insurance exchanges starting in 2014. Exchanges are national, state-operated, or a combination. Exchanges were established to provide access to health care coverage for all persons.
 - Enrollment for the insurance exchanges for persons eligible begins on October 1, 2013 for effective dates on January 1, 2014. The enrollment period ends on March 31, 2014. More information on the Iowa exchange will be available in the coming weeks.

Q2 ***What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?***

- A2
- The state of Iowa has chosen to establish a state insurance exchange. Eligible individuals may purchase health coverage through the exchange without regard to health status. Plans are currently offered by two insurance carriers. Refer to the State of Iowa Insurance Division web site (links at end of this Q&A) for more details.

Q3 ***Am I eligible to purchase insurance in the state insurance exchange?***

- A3
- Probably. ISU offers many employees health care coverage to many employees who meet the eligibility guidelines for health plans. The university health plans meet all the requirements (minimum value) of health plans per ACA.
- If you are eligible for the university’s health insurance plans, in most situations the contributions you are required to pay under the university plan will be much less than premiums on the exchange. If you are eligible for the university’s plans, you would not be eligible to receive a subsidy to purchase insurance in the exchange market.
 - If you are not currently eligible for health care coverage under a university-sponsored plan, you may be eligible to purchase coverage through the exchange. You may also be eligible for a subsidy to help pay for the coverage through an exchange.
 - You must live in the U.S., be a U.S. citizen or national.

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Q4 *If I am eligible to purchase health coverage through the exchange, will I save money?*

A4 You may. Premiums are based on the plan type you purchase. Plans have smoker and non-smoker premium rates. Premiums will vary based on the region of the state where you reside.

Q5 *What types of health plans are offered through the exchange?*

A5 Health plans must meet certain guidelines to be offered under the state exchange. Plans are structured at four (4) levels of coverage – bronze, silver, gold and platinum based on the value of the plan. A bronze plan will have a lower premium, but individuals will pay a higher share of the costs out-of-pocket.

	Bronze	Silver	Gold	Platinum
Monthly Cost	\$	\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$\$\$
Cost of Care You Pay	\$\$\$\$	\$\$\$	\$\$	\$
Option for:	Those with minimal health care needs	Those who want to balance costs with premiums	Those who want to save on premiums while keeping out-of-pocket costs low	Those who need a lot of health care services

Eligible participants may also be eligible for a tax credit that may lower monthly premiums.

Plans cover a set of preventative health services.

Q6 *What happens if I choose not to enroll in a university health plan or purchase a health plan on an exchange?*

A6 The Affordable Care Act “Individual Mandate” states that you purchase health insurance coverage or pay a tax penalty when you file your income taxes.

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Q8 *Where can I get more information on the health insurance exchanges?*

A8

- www.healthcare.gov General information on health coverage
- <http://www.insuranceinfoexchange.iowa.gov> information on State of Iowa exchange and application process
- <http://www.iid.state.ia.us/node/6684575> information on rates and rating areas
- Call CMS (Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services) at (800) 318-2596