

November 2008

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Employer Update

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In this Issue:

[Wellness News: Preventing Back Pain](#)
[Key Dates for January 2009 Renewals](#)
[Changes to provider tiers for Patient Choice Insights](#)
[Changes to Medica's list of preferred drugs](#)
[Comparing providers now easier with Find a Doctor](#)
[Nominate a Healthcare Hero](#)
[Tools to promote healthy living to your employees](#)
[Health club reimbursement program adds locations](#)
[We want your feedback about Medica online resources](#)

Wellness News: Preventing Back Pain

Back pain is a common reason for trips to the doctor and missed days at work. This month's issue of *Wellness News* provides facts about back pain and its causes, and tips for using proper body mechanics and practicing good posture to keep your back healthy.

[Download Wellness News to share with your employees](#)

[Return to top](#)

Key Dates for January 2009 Renewals

	Large Group	Small Group
Medica offices closed for holiday	Nov. 27-28	Nov. 27-28
Deadline for employers and brokers to notify Medica of decisions on any outstanding renewals; an additional two weeks' notice is needed for Passport plan designs	Nov. 26	Dec. 19
Last day to send Medica any enrollment forms on any additions, changes, or deletions of membership to ensure that ID cards are correct and will be received before Jan. 1, 2009.	Dec. 1	Dec. 1
Medica offices closed for holiday	Dec. 25	Dec. 25
Medica offices closed for holiday	Jan. 1	Jan. 1

[Return to top](#)

Changes to provider tiers for Patient Choice InsightsSM by Medica

Each year on January 1, a small percentage of providers in the Patient Choice Insights by Medica network are reassigned to a new tier. The new tiers are based on updated data about providers' cost, quality and efficiency. Members enrolled in Patient Choice Insights by Medica should review the 2009 provider directory to determine if their physician or hospital moved to a new tier. Placement in a new tier can affect members' copayment and/or coinsurance amounts for services obtained from these providers.

Members can check the 2009 status of their providers by using Find A Doctor and selecting the 2009 plan year button.

[Visit Find A Doctor - Patient Choice Insights Web site](#)

[Return to top](#)

Changes to Medica's list of preferred drugs

Medica's pharmacy team routinely reviews and evaluates FDA guidelines for generic and brand name drugs to ensure our members' prescription drug benefits cover the most effective, lowest cost prescription drugs. As a result, we've made some changes to our list of preferred drugs, effective January 1, 2009. Medica has sent letters to affected members notifying them of generic or over-the-counter alternatives to these drugs.

The following drugs are being removed from Medica's list of preferred drugs:

- Allegra-D (and fexofenadine, a generic of Allegra) - used for allergies and colds
- Azmacort - used for asthma
- Nasacort - used for seasonal allergies
- Zoloft - used for depression and other behavioral health conditions

If you have any questions on the changes to Medica's list of preferred drugs, please contact your broker or Medica representative.

[Sample member letter](#)

[Search Medica's list of preferred drugs](#)

[Return to top](#)

Comparing providers now easier with Find a Doctor

In response to member feedback and our continuous effort to provide quality resources so members can get the information they need fast, Medica has made notable changes to the Find A Doctor tool. The upgrade offers:

- An updated look with more intuitive, icon-based navigation
- More provider search options
- The ability to perform side-by-side comparisons of doctors
- More drill-down information on a clinic and its affiliates
- A new left-hand menu to easily refresh results
- Enhanced Google mapping technology with the ability to view pharmacy, clinic, and hospital locations all on one map.

[Check it out at Find A Doctor](#)

[Return to top](#)

Nominate a Health Care Hero

Would you like to recognize an individual or company that has made a substantial contribution to the quality of health care in our community? Nominate them for the third annual Health Care Heroes Awards, sponsored by Medica and *Twin Cities Business* magazine. The awards are open to organizations, businesses and individuals making a significant impact on the quality of health care in Minnesota.

Award categories include:

- Innovation in Health Care
- Corporate Achievement in Health Care
- Physician
- Nurse
- Health Care Staff
- Administrative Excellence
- Volunteer
- Community Outreach

Honorees will be featured in a special supplement in the June 2009 issue of *Twin Cities Business*. The nomination deadline is January 9, 2009.

[2009 Health Care Heroes Awards nomination form](#)
[Read about the 2008 Health Care Heroes](#)

[Return to top](#)

Simple tools to promote healthy living to your employees

Get ready to help your employees embrace a healthier lifestyle! Employers attending the October 29 event at Medica's Corporate Office were the first to hear about the 2009 *Take Action...Get Rewarded* program, designed to help get your employees moving in a healthy direction.

All *Take Action...Get Rewarded* activities are featured on My Health Manager from MedicaSM, the online health management resource for members. Activities include:

- Health assessments
- Healthy Living Programs
- Health challenges

Each of these activities has easy ready-made tools for you to use for promotion to your employees. You'll find everything you need at Medica.com, including:

- A handy calendar to map out your 2009 workplace activities
- A list of 10 simple ways to promote a healthy workplace
- Downloadable newsletters, flyers and payroll stuffers

To help motivate your employees to Take Action, Medica has made significant improvements to the program that rewards members for participating in wellness activities on My Health Manager from Medica. Starting January 1, 2009, members can earn up to \$125 in gift cards each year, including a \$25 gift card just for completing the health assessment. See the fact sheet below for more information on these and other exciting changes that are being made for 2009.

Simply by engaging your employees in healthier living, you create a healthier workforce and reduce your medical costs. Our wellness consultants are available to assist you throughout the year with helpful tips, encouragement and support. Download the materials or call your Medica representative today to get started.

[Download Take Action...Get Rewarded materials](#)
[View 2009 Member Incentive Program - fact sheet for employers](#)

[Return to top](#)

More members are completing health assessments

A simple health assessment can help employees identify and act on their potential health risks—and reduce your medical trend. As part of our ongoing 2008 promotion of health assessments, Medica recently completed a member-direct campaign that resulted in over 1,400 additional members completing an assessment in October. There's still time for your employees to complete a health assessment before the end of 2009.

[Download ready-made promotional materials](#)

[Return to top](#)

Provider groups receive innovation award from Medica

Medica recently awarded four provider groups for their innovations in patient care delivery. Winners of the "Raising the Bar" awards were selected from nearly 40 applications. Here are the award winners:

- **Access Psychiatric Home Health (Grand Rapids, MN)** for implementing a program where its home care nurses provide follow-up home care for patients with serious persistent mental illness. Program results show acute care hospitalizations were reduced by 13% in just two-years.
- **Saint Mary's Duluth Clinic (Duluth, MN)** for an outreach program for Medicaid-covered well-child care. The clinic increased the number of children who received regular well-care exams from 57% to 80%.
- **Western Wisconsin Medical Associates** (includes all five WWMA clinics: Ellsworth Medical Clinic, Hudson Physicians, New Richmond Clinic, River Falls Medical Clinic and Spring Valley Medical Clinic) for a program that makes patient visits more efficient and customized. Starting in 2005, WWMA implemented a new treatment approach whereby all office visits are now combined for both chronic and preventive care needs. The result is that additional tests, exams and immunizations are offered during all patient visits, as opposed to offering the services separately in the past.
- **WestHealth (Plymouth, MN)** for a quality improvement program designed to increase patient satisfaction measures. In just two years, they bumped up their patient satisfaction rating by nearly 10%—with a final satisfaction rating of 96%.

Medica created this award program to support network providers who are creating new ways to model care delivery. Applications were sent to all network providers in the spring.

[View Medica press release](#)

[Return to top](#)

Health club reimbursement program adds new locations

Fit ChoicesSM by Medica, our popular health club reimbursement program has added three new health club locations in Minnesota as of November 1, 2008. The new locations are:

- L.I.F.E. Fitness Pros in Breckenridge
- The Workout Center in Waseca
- YMCA in Elk River

The program recently expanded to over 8,000 locations last with the addition of four nationwide clubs: Life Time Fitness[®], Anytime Fitness[®], Snap Fitness[™], and Curves[®].

By enrolling in a participating facility and working out at least 8 days per month, eligible Medica members receive a \$20 credit towards their monthly dues. Similar programs by other health plans require 12 visits per month.

[Find participating fitness facilities](#)

Fit Choices by Medica is included with fully insured plans; available for purchase by self-insured groups.

[Return to top](#)

We want your feedback about Medica online resources!

Please tell us what you think about Medica's Web resources, and we'll enter your name in a drawing for a \$100 gift card.

[Take the Online Resources Survey](#)

[Return to top](#)

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401 Carlson Parkway Minnetonka, MN 55305 USA



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