



Chamber To Launch Benefits Group Providing Health Care Options For Members



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Being a Queens Chamber of Commerce member just got even better as the organization will soon roll out a new benefit for members that will allow members to purchase health insurance through a new Chamber program.

The Queens Chamber Benefits Group, which will debut shortly through a link on the Queens Chamber of Commerce's website, will give many different options for Chamber members through established health insurance providers such as Aetna, Atlantis, EmblemHealth and UnitedHealthcare.

"The Queens Chamber of Commerce is looking to become a resource for the sole proprietor, the self-employed and the small business person to find the medical insurance deal that fits them," said Norm Michaels, President of Michaels & Associates, who is setting up the group for the Chamber. "The whole purpose is to bring more opportunities for small businesses or any business to be able to help their employees."

Many businesses rank healthcare as their biggest expense, and the high cost has forced some businesses to scale back their health care options or even eliminate them entirely for their employees.

"These programs offer multiple options for employees from catastrophic health coverage through fully comprehensive programs," said Chamber Executive Vice President Jack Friedman. "Costs start at very affordable levels; there is single form enrollment, and we will be able to offer the chance for more Queens workers to become insured."

While the plans that the insurance providers will offer give options for all different business types, they can be especially beneficial to small businesses, which represent a significant percentage of Queens Chamber members.

"The only way we can make a dent in the uninsured medical issues is to work through as many different pathways as we can," Michaels said.

In addition to being a great value for Chamber members looking to offer medical insurance to their employees, it is also a plan that is a win-win for the Chamber health providers who are participating in the group. It is also an opportunity for all of the health insurance brokers who are members of the Chamber to sell an innovative marketing program along with other products they may sell.

"We are pleased to partner with the Queens Chamber of



The Chamber Benefits Group will offer Chamber members different health plan options for their employees.

Commerce as a sponsor of this health insurance initiative. We understand how important it is for small business owners to have access to affordable health insurance options that will allow them to attract and retain their key employees," said Miguel Centeno, Vice President of Strategic Market Development for Aetna. "Working with the Chamber, we are making available products specially designed to meet the needs of small business owners. We applaud the Queens Chamber for its important efforts to bring this program to the Queens business community."

Atlantis Health Plan, New York's only doctor-founded health insurance company, was established by 12 physicians to provide cost-effective delivery of high-quality health care in the five boroughs. Atlantis harnesses the experience and knowledge of health professionals at every phase of the medical delivery process to help keep costs low and premiums affordable.

Small business owners comprise half of Atlantis's membership, which also includes freelancers, part-time workers, college students and others previously without health coverage.

Atlantis members have access to 33,000 physician locations located in Queens and the other boroughs.

"Atlantis offers small businesses a comprehensive plan at an affordable price because we can manage medical care by using accurate, evidence-based medicine," said Dr. Sury Anand, CEO of Atlantis Health Plan. "We try to minimize incidents of over-treatment and bring costs in line. We then pass that savings onto our members. That is particularly important in the current economic climate."

When the Queens Chamber Benefits Group is set up, Chamber members will be able to log onto the Chamber homepage and click on a link that will bring them directly to a page set up entirely for the benefits group. That page will contain information about all of the different plans available to Chamber members as well as website links to follow to allow them to access additional information.

Check back in future issues of *Queensborough* as well as www.queenschamber.org for more information about the Queens Chamber Benefits Group