

**MSHA creates new network option to help CIGNA patients**

JOHNSON CITY, Tenn. – In an effort to create affordable options for local residents affected by the ending of the contract between CIGNA and Mountain States Health Alliance (MSHA), health system officials have come up with an innovative solution that will allow patients with CIGNA insurance to continue accessing MSHA services at lower, in-network rates, even after CIGNA’s network changes to exclude MSHA on Jan. 1, 2012.

“We were deeply disappointed that we were unable to reach a contract agreement with CIGNA,” said Marvin Eichorn, MSHA’s chief financial officer. “We have heard from many patients who were concerned that they would have to change doctors as a result of CIGNA’s network exclusion, and it was very important to us to find a way to continue serving those patients. Once you’ve found a doctor you know and trust, it can be a huge burden to have to switch, and we did not want any of those relationships to be disrupted.”

MSHA, through its subsidiary, Integrated Solutions Health Network (ISHN), has created a new network called Mountain States Preferred, which includes all MSHA facilities and physicians. Instead of being limited to CIGNA’s network of providers, employers who carry CIGNA insurance can contract directly with Mountain States Preferred to secure in-network rates for their covered employees. When an employer chooses to add the Mountain States Preferred network to its plan, CIGNA remains the administrator of insurance claims for that employer, and employees can continue using MSHA physicians and facilities just as they have in the past. The employees’ other benefits managed through CIGNA would remain unaffected.

“We have met with every area employer that currently offers CIGNA insurance to their employees, and have made them aware of this new option. Many of them have gladly signed on, saying that they are happy to be able to offer a solution that not only allows their employees to keep those important relationships with their doctors, but also has the potential to save the company money in the long run,” said Eichorn.

ISHN is in the process of forming the region’s first and only accountable care organization (ACO). Progressive health care providers across the nation are forming ACOs in order to provide better care at lower costs. The “triple aim” of accountable care includes better patient outcomes, lower overall costs, and improved patient satisfaction.

“When health care providers work together with the patient’s best interest at the forefront, we can make a big impact on the health of individuals and of the region at large,” said Rob Slattery, CEO of ISHN. “The goal of the accountable care organization is not just to treat patients when they are sick, but to help individuals improve their overall health so that they don’t get sick in the first place. This results in fewer hospital visits, lower costs, and a better quality of life for every patient.”

ISHN also offers its own third-party insurance administrator, CrestPoint Health, which is currently serving [NUMBER] businesses in the Tri-Cities region. For more information on ISHN or CrestPoint, call Sharon Dicorato at (423) 952-2116.

**About Mountain States Health Alliance**

Mountain States Health Alliance, a not-for-profit health care organization based in Johnson City, Tenn., operates a family of hospitals serving a 29-county, four-state region (Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, Southeastern Kentucky and Western North Carolina). MSHA offers a large tertiary hospital, several community hospitals, two critical access hospitals, rehabilitation, a children’s hospital, a behavioral health hospital, home care and hospice services as well as a comprehensive medical management corporation. Its 13,500 team members, associated physicians and volunteers are committed to its mission of bringing loving care to health care. For more information, visit [www.msha.com](http://www.msha.com).

**About Integrated Solutions Health Network**

Integrated Solutions Health Network is a regional health solutions company based in Johnson City, Tenn. Its primary stakeholder is Mountain States Health Alliance, a not-for-profit health care organization that operates a family of 13 hospitals serving a 29-county, four-state region in Northeast Tennessee, Southwest Virginia, Southeastern Kentucky and Western North Carolina. ISHN comprises community hospitals, skilled nursing facilities, orthotic/prosthetic providers, durable medical equipment providers, home health agencies, hospice, laboratories, rehabilitation facilities, ambulatory surgery centers and approximately 2,000 physicians, including primary care, specialists and allied health.

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