



BROKERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Health Insurance Agents Help Consumers and Employers
Secure Affordable Health Insurance



**NEW
HAMPSHIRE**



National Association of Health Underwriters
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Personal Testimonials on Why Brokers Make a Difference

For more than 85 years, professionally licensed health insurance agents, brokers and consultants have provided valuable healthcare financing services to individuals and employers. Professional agents have extensive knowledge about health insurance plan design, benefits, and pricing. Many small employers can't afford to have this level of expertise in-house, nor do they have the time to administer a comprehensive, compliant benefits package for their employees.

In fact, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has reported that agents and brokers often “handle the responsibilities that larger firms generally delegate to their human resources departments — such as finding plans and negotiating premiums, providing information about the selected plans, and processing enrollees.”

With HIPAA, COBRA, ERISA, and federal and state tax requirements to contend with, not to mention all of the new requirements stemming from ACA, professional agents spend a great deal of time helping their clients understand the regulations, complex products and compliance issues.

Health insurance customers who use agents report being satisfied not just with their insurance, but also with the work performed by their agents – especially when it comes to the agent's role in finding the right policy.

A recent Kaiser survey found that brokers and agents have a 92 percent approval rating when helping healthcare consumers in the new marketplace.

Professional agents work extremely hard and need to be very knowledgeable in order to stay abreast of the rapid changes in the healthcare system. It would be very costly for a governmental agency in some far off location to match the service and value agents bring to their clients, and it would not be able to replace the personal relationships agents develop with their clients.

Ongoing Support from an Agent

Individuals and business owners typically don't pay any more for employee benefits purchased through an agent or broker than if they purchased the coverage directly from an insurance company. Insurance carriers set aside a small portion of the premium to pay brokers a commission, which covers not only the selling of the plan but also much of the servicing required. In today's declining commission environment, agents spend more time than ever before servicing their clients – a testament to their commitment and dedication.

Agent Associations

NAHU is the only national association working solely on behalf of health insurance agents and benefit professionals. NAHU requires each of its members to always make healthcare coverage recommendations with the customers' best interest in mind.

For more testimonials on NAHU members helping individuals and employers find appropriate health insurance, please go to www.brokersmakingadifference.org.

BROKERS MAKING A DIFFERENCE

"As a life and health insurance broker in small town New Hampshire, I can confidently say that I have been providing my clients with valuable information, professional opinion and outstanding customer service for over two decades.

Based upon my efforts to educate, my clients are able to make a decision to purchase a health insurance policy that best suits their needs. When I am asked to consult with someone regarding their needs, or the needs of their employees, I begin by asking questions. Once I am educated about their needs, I shop the insurance market for them and prepare a spreadsheet of costs and benefits of the various options.

Once this part of my job is complete, I schedule a meeting and begin to educate my prospective client. I review everything from the cost factors to the state and federal laws that affect their coverage. Most consumers are so busy with daily life and do not understand why health care costs are so high or what choices they have. Most small business owners have no idea how to administer COBRA (or the state continuation). Some do not even know what it is. Small town America and small employers in general do not have HR departments. When it comes to insurance, they rely on their insurance professional for advice. When it comes to taxes, they rely on their accountant for advice etc. My clients rely on me for many things. I do not just sell a policy. I educate and I provide outstanding service.

When my small-business clients (less than 20 employees) began to look at the Health Savings Ac-

count concept, not only did I educate them about all aspects of the idea, I met with and explained every detail to the employees. I provide a service that can never be matched by a website or a government employee on the other end of the phone. Once a policy is in force, my job continues with follow-up questions and other service. When a small business owner needs to add a new employee, who does he call? He or she would be overwhelmed without my presence. I answer many, many questions: What forms are required? Where do I mail them? When does my new employee become eligible? Where is the information I need to explain the coverage? I consider it my first priority to service my client's continuing questions.

Certainly the client could attempt to call the insurance carrier with these questions and speak to a faceless person over the phone but what added incentive does the carrier have to offer the highest level of customer service to my client when they don't even know his needs?

I have spent 25 years educating myself so that I can provide insurance expertise to my community. Any change to the marketplace must include the valuable services of local insurance professionals in order to be effective."
- George G. Curt (Broker)

"Licensed health insurance producers (agents and brokers) provide a wide range of services for both individual consumers and the business community.

Producers interface with insurers, acquire quotes, analyze plan options, and consult clients through the purchase of health insurance... It is essential that [policymakers] recognize and protect the indispensable role that licensed insurance professionals play in serving consumers."

-The National Association of Insurance Commissioners

