

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts Members Get Paid to Shop New SmartShopper Program gives cash rewards to members who shop for care

BOSTON, Dec. 11, 2017 /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Imagine getting paid to shop. It sounds like a dream for some people. But for some members of the state's largest health plan, that dream is becoming reality.

Starting January 1, members and their covered dependents in [Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts](#)' (Blue Cross) self-funded employer plans who select the benefit will be able to participate in the new SmartShopper Program. This means they can earn up to \$250 in cash rewards per procedure when they shop for and get care from lower cost, quality providers for eligible procedures like MRIs, mammograms, and colonoscopies. There is no limit to the amount of rewards members can earn in a year.



MASSACHUSETTS

Compared to other health care shopping programs, SmartShopper was the first to be fully integrated with a health plan's provider search tool. Using Blue Cross' Find a Doctor & Estimate Costs tool members can view what their out-of-pocket costs for a procedure will be while they shop, sort providers by quality rating and distance, and read and write reviews.

Blue Cross is partnering with Vitals on SmartShopper and recently launched a pilot with six cities and towns from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA).

"We've had a long and successful relationship with Blue Cross and are always looking for new ways to partner with them to help Blue Cross members in MIIA make smart health and financial decisions for themselves and their families. That's why we jumped at the chance to test out this new program," said Chris Bailey, MIIA Health Trust Manager. So far, over 200 members have shopped for services, and Bailey expects that number to grow. "Once people hear how easy it was for their colleagues to shop and earn cash rewards, we think more will want to shop, too."

Karen Mastrianni, Blue Cross' Senior Director of Product Development and Management, said, "We're excited to offer SmartShopper to our self-insured accounts and members beginning 1/1/18. We've bundled SmartShopper together with our Find a Doctor & Estimate Costs tools to enable a comprehensive shopping and consumer engagement experience."

Joel Coffin, Blue Cross' Director of Consumer Transparency Solutions, added, "By leveraging our partnership with Vitals and the extensive work we have done with them over the past few years, we believe 2018 offers exciting new opportunities for our members to continue to take control of their health care costs. New programs like SmartShopper are a natural evolution that provide an opportunity to change the way people shop for care. Members can lower the cost of care while earning cash incentives."

How do members earn cash rewards through SmartShopper? All they need to do is:

- Log into their MyBlue account at www.bluecrossma.com/myblue. Access SmartShopper through our Find a Doctor & Estimate Costs tool and search for an eligible procedure.

OR

- Shop by calling a Personal Assistant at 1-877-281-3722 Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. or Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m.

AND

- Receive a service included in the program from a reward-eligible provider.

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We're the trusted health plan for more than 25,000 Massachusetts employers and are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we're rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and [LinkedIn](#).

About Vitals

[Vitals](#) empowers everyone to shop for their health care like an expert. We bring together cost and quality transparency along with innovative consumer engagement programs to help people select high-quality, lower-cost care. Vitals leads the market with incentive and engagement programs that pay people to shop. Our

solutions achieve measurable and sustainable savings for consumers, employers and health plans. Vitals helps more than 120 million people each year access better, more affordable care.

SOURCE Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

For further information: Amy McHugh, amy.mchugh@bcbsma.com, 617-246-2311
