

Aetna Offering Free In-Home Health Assessments for Individual and Small Group Members

We'd like to let our individual and small group customers know that Aetna is offering a free (optional) in-home health assessment via MedXM and Your Home Advantage (YHA).

These assessments are free, voluntary, confidential and won't change or affect coverage in any way. These contractors will be calling Aetna customers to make appointments.

If you have questions about this please feel free to contact our insured benefits department.

[Click here to review an Aetna flyer about this program.](#)

Last Days to Take Advantage of Tax Season Special Enrollment Period

Uninsured tax filers who owe a fee on their 2014 taxes for not having minimum essential health coverage in 2014 have until April 30 to take advantage of a Special Enrollment Period through the Federally-facilitated Marketplace to enroll in health coverage for the remainder of 2015.

As of mid-April, more than 68,000 consumers have taken advantage

of this opportunity to sign up for coverage through the Federally-facilitated Marketplace.

In order to take advantage of this Special Enrollment Period, consumers must meet all of the following requirements:

- They did not know that the health care law required them and their household to have health coverage, or they didn't understand how that requirement would affect their family.
- They owe a fee for not having minimum essential coverage for one or more months in 2014;
- They are not already enrolled in minimum essential coverage for 2015.
- They live in a state with a federally-facilitated marketplace; some state-based marketplaces are offering similar Special Enrollment Periods as well.

For those who are required to file taxes, the fee for not having minimum essential coverage in 2014 was 1 percent of household income or \$95 per person, whichever is greater. This fee will increase in 2015 to 2 percent of household income or \$325 per person, whichever is greater. The fee is pro-rated based on how many months a person is uninsured. If an individual who would otherwise have to pay a fee enrolls in coverage for the remainder of 2015, they will pay the fee only for the months they were uninsured.

Additional information for consumers: Consumers seeking to take advantage of the Special Enrollment Period can find out if they are eligible by visiting <https://www.healthcare.gov/get-coverage>. Consumers should also be aware of the following:

1. Act now to avoid owing the full fee next year. This Special Enrollment Period is only open until April 30, 2015. Consumers who don't have minimum essential coverage for the remainder of 2015 risk owing the fee for whatever portion of the year they don't have coverage.
2. Plans might be more affordable than you think. Eight out of

10 people can find minimum essential coverage for \$100 or less a month with tax credits through the marketplace.

3. You benefit from increased competition and choice. Compared to last year, there are over 25 percent more health insurance companies participating in the Marketplace in 2015. More than 90 percent of consumers will be able to choose from three or more health insurance companies—up from 74 percent in 2014— and consumers can choose from an average of 40 health plans in their county for 2015 coverage—up from 30 in 2014.

For more information, contact [Anna Moorman](#) at Allen Insurance and Financial.

Health Insurance Premium Payment Grace Periods: What You Need to Know

An insurer expects premiums to be paid prior to a member's specified due date. Exchange rules require a payment grace period. Although this is not a new term, the grace period for Exchange premium payments will differ between non-subsidized and subsidized members.

A grace period is the period of time after a premium payment becomes due in full without policy cancellation.

Members should pay before their due date. Beyond these grace periods if a member has not paid their outstanding premium in full, their coverage will be terminated and they will not be allowed to re-apply for Exchange insurance until the next Open Enrollment Period. Members will be notified if they are in a

past due premium situation.

Grace periods:

- Non-subsidized members: A non-subsidized member will have a 1-billing-month grace period from their billing due date to pay in full.
- Subsidized members: A subsidized member will have a 3-billing-month grace period.

If you have questions, please call [Anna Moorman](#).

Choosing Health Plans When Your Business is Growing

When your business grows and you begin adding employees to meet growing customer demands, there's more to consider than making schedules and setting up new work spaces. You must begin considering health plans that meet the needs of your employees while still meeting the complex requirements of the Affordable Care Act, including the employer shared responsibility mandate. Choosing the right health coverage inspires loyalty and productivity in your workers and is a key factor in employee recruitment and retention. You also need to know exactly where your plan stands with ACA compliance, so this is something you want to get right.

[Read more now from our partners at Anthem, on their healthcare reform blog.](#)

MCHO Informational Meetings in Waldoboro, Belfast and Camden

We'd like to let the public know that Maine Community Health Options is holding meetings statewide to help its members get the best value from their MCHO plans. Locally, these meetings are scheduled in Waldoboro, Belfast and Camden.

- March 31: Waldoboro, Cooperative Extension, 377 Manktown Road, 5:30 to 7 p.m.
- April 1: Belfast, Belfast Free Library, 106 High St., 5:30 to 7 p.m.
- April 2, Camden, Camden Public Library Picker Room, 55 Main St., noon to 1:30 p.m.

Registration is required at the [MCHO website, where the complete list of meetings can also be found.](#)

Allen Insurance and Financial is an independent, employee-owned insurance and financial planning services agency with offices in Rockland, Camden, Belfast and Southwest Harbor. **Online:** AllenIF.com

You Can Still Sign Up For Health Insurance

The federal government announced Friday (Feb. 20) that it will implement a special enrollment period for people who learn, at the time they file their taxes, of the Affordable Care Act-mandated tax penalty for not having health insurance.

This special enrollment period will allow people to sign up from March 15 to April 30. Americans who did not have health insurance in 2014 may owe a fine of \$95 or as much as 1 percent of their income. If they remain uncovered in 2015, the fine could rise to 2 percent of their income for the 2015 tax year. The U.S. Treasury estimates that as many as 6 million people may owe the penalty for not having insurance in 2014.

Those eligible for the special enrollment period must:

- Live in states with a federally-facilitated marketplace
- Currently not be enrolled in coverage through the FFM for 2015
- Attest that when they filed their 2014 tax return they paid the fee for not having health coverage in 2014
- Attest that they first became aware of, or understood the implications of, the Shared Responsibility Payment after the end of open enrollment (February 15) in connection with preparing their 2014 taxes.

Resources:

- Call us at 855-710-5700.
- [Allen Insurance and Financial's online enrollment portal.](#)
- [Healthcare.gov](#) – income tax info for 2014.

Talking Marine Insurance and Safety With the Nation's Tall

Ship Owners

Gene McKeever and Chris Richmond, marine insurance specialists from Allen Insurance and Financial recently attended the 42nd annual Tall Ships America Annual Conference, where they each led a well-attended presentation on insurance and safety.

Richmond's talk, "The Ethics of Marine Surveying," allowed him to draw on both his experience as a former tall ship captain and now as a commercial marine insurance specialist. Richmond joined Allen Insurance and Financial in 2011 after 20 years in the marine industry.

Richmond discussed:

- The difference between buyers' surveys, insurance surveys, and material condition surveys in terms of



Chris
Richmond

expectations, strengths, and potential pitfalls.

- Finding the right surveyor for the kind of survey needed.
- What a sail training board of directors should do to ensure they are getting the truth about the material condition of their ship, including any bad and expensive news.
- Who has the legal and ethical burden for getting the right survey for the right purpose.
- The responsibility to act on survey findings.

In a discussion session entitled, "Don't Cast Off Without It," McKeever discussed the Jones Act, providing important information about the intricacies of marine insurance for vessels, their owners and the people who work with them.



Gene McKeever

McKeever presented:

- The history of the Jones Act and related laws.
- The types of coverage available to those who work aboard tall ships.
- The actions and activities triggering that coverage.
- The cost of coverage and how it is determined.

Allen Insurance and Financial has worked with Tall Ships America as their exclusive endorsed agency world wide since 2007 to provide a comprehensive vessel insurance program for association members, who include many of the nation's most historic tall ships.

Both presentations were designed to help ship owners learn about the proactive steps they can take to help maintain a viable insurance position while working with their insurance agent, said Richmond.

Participants at the 42nd Annual Conference on Sail Training and Tall Ships, held Feb. 4 through 6 in Philadelphia, discussed maritime issues, learned about new regulations in the industry, networked with tall ship masters from around the country and abroad left feeling inspired, motivated and eager to implement all they learned within their own organizations.

The conference ended with the Gala Sail Training Awards Dinner, sponsored by Allen Insurance and Financial, and the presentation of the 2014 Sail Training Awards which honor a select group of sail trainers and supporters who have been recognized by their peers and fellow tall ship masters for their outstanding contributions to the world of sail training.

Founded In 1973, Tall Ships America serves as the hub for tall ships activity, expertise, and information in North America, and

is commended by Congress as the Sail Training Organization representing the United States in the international forum. In addition to organizing the TALL SHIPS CHALLENGE® series, Tall Ships America supports the people, ships and programs of sail training through grants, scholarships, conferences, education, publications, public events and advocacy. The mission of Tall Ships America is to encourage character building through experiential sailing, promote sail training to the North American public, and support education under sail. Online: sailtraining.org

Travel Insurance: Especially Important if You're 65+

Open your U.S passport to page two and you may be surprised by the following warning:

HEALTH INSURANCE. Persons considering foreign travel should determine what health insurance coverage, if any, they require while outside the United States. Medicare does not cover health care costs outside the United States and its territories, except under limited circumstances in Canada and Mexico.

Many international travelers lack appropriate insurance protection

Government sponsored health programs such as Medicare almost never cover care received in a foreign country. Employer-sponsored plans often limit overseas coverage to emergency care only (and the burden will be on you to prove it's an emergency). Emergency medical evacuation is almost never covered. Even if

you're traveling on business, you may have significant gaps in your coverage.

Why is insurance so critical for international travel?

Obtaining healthcare in some parts of the world can be tricky. Some hospitals won't provide any treatment—or won't allow a patient to be discharged—until the hospital has received a guarantee of payment. Such guarantees are commonly provided by travel insurers, in conjunction with assistance providers, but rarely by other insurers or managed care plans. This means you'll have to pay in advance, perhaps as much as tens of thousands of dollars, with your credit card. Of course, for this to work the hospital must accept foreign credit cards and your card must have a sufficient credit limit.

In addition, remember that leaving your destination – for a place with higher quality medical care or to return home where your regular insurance is accepted—can be difficult. Medical evacuations are tricky to arrange and there are some air ambulance providers who should be avoided. Worse, local authorities may have financial ties to certain evacuation companies. The solution? Most travel insurance includes a medical assistance benefit, which is critical. It gives you 24/7/365 access to a company that will arrange an evacuation for you with a creditable evacuation company—or, through their medical personnel, can help assure that you're getting appropriate treatment locally. The assistance company will also be available to help with other travel related problems such as legal troubles, lost passports or credit cards, etc. Emergencies are rare but everyone should have a contingency plan.

Assess your personal health plan

If you have health insurance in the U.S., the first step is to check with your insurance company and establish what kind of coverage you have. If you have difficulty getting a straight

answer, that alone should be a warning. If you don't have insurance in the U.S., consider that you might need it more than ever when traveling—and recognize that the coverage can be cheap – as little as \$1.50 to \$9 per day.

Three Important Types

There are the three major types of coverage to consider. Most travel insurance products offer all three or two of the three:

- Health/accident insurance. Typically referred to as travel health insurance, these policies pay for doctor and hospital bills, and sometimes dental care and medications. These plans can be written for short trips (1 day – 6 months) and will supplement Medicare or a managed care plan. HTH's TravelGap plans are an example of this type of coverage. International health insurance can also be purchased as primary insurance for someone relocating to another country for an extended period of time (6 months or longer). HTH's Global Citizen and Global Citizen EXP are examples of this type of coverage. These plans are comprehensive and include added features such as preventative services, acupuncture, chiropractic, maternity benefits and more.

- Medical Evacuation. This is key. Evacuations can be expensive (as much as \$100,000 or more from a remote location). In addition to the coverage, you'll want assistance arranging an evacuation—(see above). All of HTH's products offer coverage for medical evacuation.

- Trip cancellation/interruption. These coverage's protect you financially in the event you have to cancel or interrupt your trip for medical or other reasons. For example, say you purchase a \$5,000 cruise but can't take it because of personal illness—or illness in the family. Depending on when you cancel, a significant portion of the \$5,000 may be non-refundable. This type of insurance will reimburse you. HTH's Trip Protector offers this type of coverage (as well as evacuation and

supplemental health/accident).

One form of travel insurance commonly sold at airports is “flight accident insurance,” which generally pays a lump dollar amount in the event of death from a plane crash, an extremely rare event. If you’re looking at insurance in an airport, make sure it also includes one or more of the three important coverages listed above.

Source: [HTH Worldwide](#).

Engagement Ring Insurance

Who should insure the engagement ring?

Purchasing an engagement ring is a big decision and you should be equipped with the right information before making your purchase. Here’s a guide on making a purchase that will make your fiancée, bank account, and Trusted Choice® independent insurance agent say “Yes!”

Brace the bank

An engagement ring is an investment, and (thankfully) you get to dictate how much you’re willing to risk. According to [www.theknot.com](#) in 2013, the average cost of an engagement ring is \$5,431. If that price makes you cringe, no worries—you can still find a great ring for a little less, but read the next section to ensure you don’t compromise quality for price.

Understanding Girls’ Best Friend

There are four elements to determining quality of a diamond—carat, clarity, color, and cut. Educate yourself on these elements. A carat is a diamond’s weight, not size, so don’t be

fooled by how big a diamond may seem; the clarity is an assessment of a diamond's internal and natural characteristics. The color and cut of a diamond depends on preference; color is graded on an alphabetical scale, and cut varies, but affects the way the gem shines.

Certified & Appraised

Ask the jeweler for the assessment of the diamond and a GIA diamond grading report. An assessment of the diamond on the jeweler's stationary protects you in the event that the jeweler misrepresented the value and facts about the ring. A GIA diamond grading report also serves as backup verification for your purchase— the Gemological Institute of America is the most respected lab in the world. If your jeweler cannot provide the assessment or GIA report, back out of the store slowly and find another jeweler.

Now the REAL big question: Who should insure the engagement ring?

You proposed, but your fiancée will live in their condo until the big day— what do you do? This is a matter of insurable interest. When you purchase valuables (like an engagement ring) for someone else and you want to insure the item, you are trying to create insurable interest. Insurable interest says, "I have a strong interest in this item but it does not reside in my home with me; however, I should be able to insure it for a period of time."

The easiest way to create insurable interest for the person in possession of the ring is to make the use of the ring by her conditional...i.e., you still own the ring and it doesn't become your future spouse's until you both are married. Until that time, you have an insurable interest and there should be coverage under your policy.

If you make ownership conditional on marriage, you likely have

an insurable interest and can insure it yourself. Since most homeowners policies limit theft of jewelry to about \$1,500 (some less, some more), the ring should be scheduled on his homeowners policy. An alternative is for your fiancée to insure it on their policy since coverage usually extends to any property you use, not just property you own. This assumes that either or both have homeowners policies (or they live at home and are covered by their parents' policies). When you are married, you both should have a single homeowners policy with both as named insureds and the ring and other jewelry scheduled on the policy.

Be sure to talk to your Trusted Choice® independent insurance agent about all of your options and steps to getting your new future off to a bright start!

SOURCE(S):

<http://abcnews.go.com/Nightline/diamonds-decoded-experts-guide-buying-engagement-ring/story?id=19630519>

<http://www.independentagent.com/Education/VU/Insurance/Personal-Lines/Homeowners/Conditions/FacultyInsurableInterest01.aspx>

www.bankrate.com

Health Insurance Deadline is Feb. 15

Open enrollment for health insurance under the Affordable Care Act ends Feb. 15, after which only individuals with a qualifying life event can purchase health insurance.

It is also important to note that since open enrollment ends on a weekend, the last business day to apply and get personal help is Friday, Feb. 13.

For help with health insurance under the Affordable Care Act, you can call our special health insurance line: (855) 710-5700 or –

[button name="Use Our Enrollment Portal"
url="https://alleninsurance.insxcloud.com/my-quote/individual-info" target="_blank"]

This short video provides an introduction to the services we offer to our individual health insurance clients.