

# THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

## WASHINGTON, DC

### New Health Insurance Marketplace Coverage Options and Your Health Coverage

When key parts of the health care law (the Affordable Care Act) take effect in 2014, there will be a new way to buy health insurance: the Health Insurance Marketplace (“Marketplace”), also commonly referred to as the Health Insurance Exchange. To assist you in evaluating options for you and your family, this notice provides some basic information about the new Marketplace, and about employment-based health coverage offered by GW (if you are a benefits-eligible employee).

#### What is the Health Insurance Marketplace?

The Marketplace is designed to help you find health insurance that meets your needs and fits your budget. The Marketplace offers “one-stop shopping” to find and compare private (non-GW) health insurance options. You may also be eligible for a new tax credit that lowers your monthly premium right away. Open enrollment for health insurance coverage through the Marketplace begins October 1, 2013 and ends March 31, 2014 for coverage starting as early as January 1, 2014. (Please note: Benefits Eligible Employees - The Open Enrollment period for the Marketplace should *not* be confused with the Open Enrollment period for health and other benefits programs offered by GW, which is from October 1, 2013 through October 31, 2013.)

#### Can I Save Money on my Health Insurance Premiums through the Marketplace?

You may qualify to lower your monthly premium, but only if you are not eligible to enroll in health coverage offered by GW (or in a family member’s employer-sponsored plan), or you are eligible, but the coverage does not meet certain standards. The amount of savings on your premium, if any, depends on your household income.

#### Does Employer Health Coverage Affect Eligibility for Premium Savings through the Marketplace?

Yes. If you are eligible to enroll in a health plan offered by GW (or you are eligible to enroll as part of a family member’s employer-sponsored health insurance plan) that meets certain standards, you will not be eligible for a tax credit through the Marketplace and may wish to enroll in an employer-sponsored health plan. However, you may be eligible for a tax credit that lowers your monthly premium or a reduction in certain cost-sharing if you are not eligible to enroll in a GW plan (or a family member’s employer-sponsored health insurance plan) or you are eligible to enroll in an employer-sponsored plan, but the coverage does not meet certain standards. If you are not eligible for “affordable” coverage under a GW plan, or if the coverage GW (or a family member’s employer-sponsored health insurance plan) offers under its plans does not meet the “minimum value” standard set by the Affordable Care Act, you may be eligible for a tax credit.<sup>1</sup> Note that even though GW’s health insurance plans are competitively priced and meet the minimum value standard, you may still be eligible for a premium discount through the Marketplace if you are not eligible for self-only coverage that is “affordable.” The Marketplace will use your household income, along with other factors, to determine whether self-only coverage is “affordable” as it applies to your circumstances, and if so, you may be eligible for a premium discount.

**Note:** If you purchase a health plan through the Marketplace instead of enrolling in a health plan offered by GW (or a family member’s employer), then you may lose the employer contribution (if any) to the employer-offered coverage. Also, this employer contribution – as well as your employee contribution to employer-offered coverage – is often excluded from income for federal and state income tax purposes. Your payments for coverage through the Marketplace are made on an after-tax basis.

#### How Can I Get More Information?

The Marketplace can help you evaluate your coverage options, including your eligibility for coverage through the Marketplace and its cost. Please visit [www.HealthCare.gov](http://www.HealthCare.gov) for more information, including an online application for health insurance coverage and contact information for a Health Insurance Marketplace in your area.

If you are a benefits eligible employee and would like more information about health insurance coverage offered by GW, please review your summary plan description available on the GW Benefits Administration website <http://benefits.gwu.edu> or contact the GW Benefits Administration Department at [benefits@gwu.edu](mailto:benefits@gwu.edu) or 703.726.8382.

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<sup>1</sup> Coverage is considered “affordable” under an employer-sponsored health plan if the employee’s share of the annual premium for self-only coverage does not exceed 9.5 percent of the employee’s household income. An employer-sponsored health plan meets the “minimum value standard” if the plan’s share of the total allowed benefit costs covered by the plan is no less than 60 percent of such costs.