



October 8, 2010

East Jefferson General Hospital withdraws from HMO provider network effective Oct. 4

Change may affect network status of some doctors who work there

The Office of Group Benefits has been notified by Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Louisiana that East Jefferson General Hospital has withdrawn from the HMO health plan's provider network effective October 4, 2010. The change also affects the network status of some doctors who work at East Jefferson General Hospital.

For hospital admissions in progress, the level of benefits won't change until after the plan member is discharged. Some HMO plan members may also qualify for in-network benefits for physician services under Blue Cross' continuity-of-care provisions.

Continuity-of-care waivers, issued under special circumstances, allow HMO plan members to continue to receive medical care from non-network providers at the higher in-network level of benefits for a limited time. You may be eligible if you are receiving care for certain conditions, such as a pregnancy past the 24th week, a high-risk pregnancy or a life-threatening illness such as cancer for which you are undergoing a course of treatment. If you believe you qualify, **talk to your doctor** about providing Blue Cross with a continuity of care waiver.

Otherwise, benefits for HMO plan members who choose to receive care at East Jefferson General Hospital will be paid at the out-of-network rate. For inpatient out-of-network care, there is a deductible of \$1,000 and 70 percent co-insurance. Non-network doctors and hospitals are legally entitled to bill plan members for the difference between billed charges for medical care they provided and the amount paid by Blue Cross (often called balance billing), although some providers may choose not to do so.

HMO network hospitals in Jefferson Parish and nearby parishes include the following:

- Children's Hospital, New Orleans
- Medical Center of Louisiana at New Orleans
- Ochsner Baptist Medical Center, New Orleans
- Ochsner Foundation Hospital, New Orleans
- Ochsner Medical Center, Kenner
- Ochsner Medical Center – Westbank Campus, Gretna
- River Parishes Hospital, LaPlace
- St. Charles Parish Hospital, Luling
- St. James Parish Hospital, Litcher
- Touro Infirmary, New Orleans
- Tulane Lakeside Hospital, Metairie
- Tulane University Hospital, New Orleans
- West Jefferson Medical Center, Marrero

OGB and Blue Cross encourage HMO plan members to check the searchable provider directory on the Blue Cross website (www.bcbsla.com/ogb) or call Blue Cross Customer Service at 1-800-392-4089 (toll-free) before scheduling an appointment to be sure your doctor is still in the HMO plan's provider network.