Benefits 101

First Time Enrollee

If you are a first-time enrollee or turning 26 and coming off your parent's insurance plan, there are a few things you need to know before choosing your health plan:

1. ***Coverage:*** Make sure you choose a plan that covers the necessary medical services you will need.

- If you have the option to enroll in your employer's group health policy, ask your HR department about how to enroll and what options are available.
- If your employer does not offer coverage, you can apply for a Marketplace insurance plan through the Affordable Care Act.
- Keep in mind that if you don't have coverage through your job when you turn 26, you may only have until the end of the month to enroll in a new plan to maintain continuous coverage, depending on the terms of your parent's group policy.

2. ***Network:*** Check to see if your doctor and hospital are in-network for the plan you're considering. If your doctor is not in-network, you may be charged the full amount for services.
3. ***Cost:*** Compare the monthly premium, deductibles, co-payments, and co-insurance amounts to find a plan that fits your budget.
4. ***Out-of-pocket maximums:*** Consider the maximum amount you would have to pay in a year for covered services.
5. ***Prescription drug coverage:*** If you take medications regularly, make sure the plan you choose covers your drugs and at what cost.
6. ***Provider Availability:*** Check if the insurance company has a wide network of providers in your area.
7. ***Plan type:*** There are different types of health insurance plans, such as PPO, HMO, and HDHP, each with various benefits and restrictions. Choose a plan that suits your needs and preferences.

Remember, the open enrollment period is only during a specific time of the year. So, be aware of this when it comes time to sign up for health insurance, as this is typically the only time you can enroll or change your plan. In some cases, a qualifying life event will allow a special enrollment period, such as when you turn 26 and come off your parent's insurance plan.

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