



Dora
Department of Regulatory Agencies

Division of Insurance

Wednesday, September 21, 2011

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Colorado Division of Insurance Awarded \$4 Million Federal Grant for Enhanced Premium Rate Review

Denver — The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has awarded the Colorado Division of Insurance \$4 million over three years to continue its work on enhancing the review process for health plan carrier premium rates.

“This grant will help us continue in our efforts to better protect Colorado consumers through the premium rate review process. The grant also will help us further our projects in the areas of consumer education and outreach,” said Commissioner of Insurance Jim Riesberg.

The grant is part of the Affordable Care Act, which provides states with \$250 million in Health Insurance Premium Review Grants over a five year period. It will help create a more level playing field by improving how states review proposed health insurance premium increases, as well as hold health plan carriers accountable for unjustified premium increases.

Colorado ranks fifth among the states to receive funding for the cycle II grant, behind New York (\$4.4 million), Pennsylvania (\$4.3 million), New Jersey (\$4.1 million) and Ohio (\$4.09 million). Colorado’s grant is for \$4,031,188.

The U.S. Department of Health & Human Services “encourages states to conduct rate review and has worked with States to strengthen their programs,” according to the HHS announcement.

On September 1, the Division began a public education campaign to help consumers and small business owners learn more about the factors that affect rate increases, with the public launch of a new website, funded by the first-year rate review grant. The website is available at askdora.colorado.gov; click on the “Are You Prepared for Changes in Health Insurance?” button.

In the HHS announcement, Colorado was cited as one of the HHS “success stories” for its efforts in the first year grant. The Division enhanced its current rate review information technology infrastructure, including the display of consumer-friendly rate summaries and an upcoming opportunity for consumers to be notified via email when a rate increase is submitted by their carriers. .

In the second cycle grant proposal between this fall and the fall of 2014, the Colorado Division of Insurance will build on its previous efforts to protect consumers by using new automated data tools to speed up the rate review process, make the process more efficient, and improve its IT infrastructure to allow real time information on rate filings.

To read the full report on today's announcement, go to <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2011pres/09/20110920a.html>; that announcement includes a link to a new report, *Rate Review Works*, that provides greater detail on the grant award and Colorado's previous efforts on rate review.

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The Colorado Division of Insurance regulates the insurance industry and assists consumers and other stakeholders with insurance issues.

DORA is dedicated to preserving the integrity of the marketplace and is committed to promoting a fair and competitive business environment in Colorado. Consumer protection is our mission.