

NEWS RELEASE

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Compare HMOs in Virginia on Cost and Quality: Annual VHI HMO Report Released

There are more than 1 million HMO members in Virginia, many of whom are entering open enrollment periods in which they can select their health insurance provider for the coming year. Virginia Health Information's *Compare HMOs* report on HMO quality and satisfaction has just been released and is available online, free to the consumer. VHI is a nonprofit, independent resource for health care data and information.

The *Compare HMOs* report contains five years' worth of information, including measurements on member satisfaction, access to and effectiveness of care, and administrative data such as medical cost ratios. Using VHI's report, consumers can assess whether HMO members get the right care for diabetes, heart disease, asthma mental health and other conditions. Satisfaction scores show whether members are satisfied with their doctor, the care members received and how quickly they get the care they need. For example:

- 85% of members said they got received care quickly.
- 82% of members reported they received the care they needed.
- 79% of members highly ranked their doctor or nurse.

"The good news is that Virginia's HMOs fare better than the national averages on 29 out of 57 measures," says Michael Lundberg, Executive Director of VHI. "However," Lundberg continued, "the report also highlights areas for improvement, such as breast and cervical cancer screening rates, which have declined since 2005."

The report's financial data also shows that on average, HMO medical cost ratios increased slightly over 2008, meaning more of premiums were spent on medical care.

- Monthly premiums per member per month averaged \$320 compared to \$287 in 2008. The lowest amount was \$268, highest \$519—a difference of 62%.
- 3 HMOs have profit/loss ratios over 10% a reduction since 2008.
- 4 HMOs had profit/loss ratios of less than 2%.

VHI's *HMO Finder* lists all HMOs serving a city or county. Links to many HMO websites allow for rate quotes and plan descriptions.

Virginia Health Information is the nonprofit organization the Commonwealth of Virginia and businesses go to for a wide range of consumer and business health information.

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