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## Public Health Press Release

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### Blue Cross, United Compare Favorably Against Regional Health Insurers

Today, the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) and the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner released the tenth annual *RI Health Plans' Performance Report (2007)*. This report analyzes the two largest commercial health plans in the state, Blue Cross and United, on 38 separate quality measures which they submit annually to the Department of Health. The two plans are also compared to all commercial health insurers in New England and to the best 10% of health plans in the country.

According to the report, Blue Cross and United performed, in aggregate, somewhat better than average on quality measures when compared to New England cohorts. Blue Cross showed that 11 of 19 quality measures were equivalent to regional averages, five measures were better, and three were lower than the regional average. United showed that 12 of 19 quality measures were equivalent to the regional averages, four measures were better, and three were lower than the regional average. The report also allows for comparisons between the plans.

"These two health plans cover more than 75% of Rhode Islanders who have commercial health insurance," said Director of Health David R. Gifford, MD, MPH. "Patients need to know how their health plan performs. Public reporting ensures health plans are accountable for continuous quality improvement."

In 2007, this report demonstrated that Rhode Islanders pay less for health insurance than other New Englanders do. The average per person cost of Blue Cross commercial health insurance was 12% less than the New England average (\$333 per month vs \$379), while United was 14% less (\$325 per month vs \$379).

"The affordability quality and accessibility of our health care system is everybody's concern" said Health insurance Commissioner Christopher F. Koller. "When commercial insurers are held publicly accountable for their performance in these areas, every one benefits."

To view the report, visit <http://www.health.ri.gov/publications/HealthPlanPerformanceReport.pdf>

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