

A photograph of three children smiling and holding pumpkins. On the left is a boy in a red sweater, in the middle is a girl in a purple and white striped turtleneck, and on the right is a girl in a light green sweater. They are standing outdoors with green foliage in the background.

in UNISON

Working Together for Better Health


Pennsylvania • Fall 2009

Flu Shots Are Your Best Defense

Defense! Defense! It may be football season, but fall also means it is flu season. And the best way to prevent the flu is with a good defense - get a flu shot. These shots are safe for children and adults. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommends that all children age 6 months to 18 years get a flu shot. Last year's flu shot won't protect against this year's flu. So get your flu shot now!

Flu shots are advised for:

- All children 6 months to 18 years (children age 9 and under who get a flu shot for the first time will receive it in two separate shots, one month apart)
- Anyone who lives or works with children age 5 and under (especially with babies younger than 6 months, who can't get the flu vaccine)
- All people age 50 and older
- Women who will be pregnant during flu season
- Anyone who has, lives with, or cares for someone who has health problems like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease, blood disorders, cancer or HIV/AIDS
- People who work in a nursing home, a hospital, a doctor's office or a school
- Anyone who lives in a nursing home or other long-term care facility.

A photograph of a child in a blue outfit riding a blue bicycle on a paved path. An adult in a light blue shirt is standing next to the child, possibly supervising. The background shows trees with autumn foliage in shades of yellow, orange, and red.

Source: U.S. Centers for Disease Control Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (CDC ACIP)

TEENS Needs Shots, too

Many teens aren't getting all the shots they need. They are exposed to diseases like measles, mumps and whooping cough. Measles and mumps have been on the rise in schools. Some vaccinations (shots) are given as a series. Some children may have missed getting all the required shots.

Your children can still get a shot if they miss one. If they miss a shot in a series of vaccines, they can pick up where they left off. Check with your children's doctor to make sure they are protected.

Unison can help you set up these visits. These doctor visits are free. Don't wait. Make an appointment for your child's sake. If you need help, call the EPSDT Department at 1.800.377.2142. We can also help you get a ride to the doctor's office.

Shots for Teens (ages 11-18)

Tetanus, diphtheria (Tdap)	Booster shot at age 11-12 years, then every 10 years
Meningococcal (MCV4)	All 11-12 year olds, teens who haven't had the shot and are about to enter high school (or at about age 15)
HPV	All girls age 11-12 years old, 3 shots
Flu Vaccine	1 shot every year
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)	Need if they have not already had
Varicella (Var) chickenpox	Need if they have not already had
Hepatitis B (Hep B)	Need if they have not already had
Polio	Need if they have not already had

Source: kidshealth.org and US Centers for Disease Control

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Take Steps to Avoid Swine Flu H1N1

H1N1 (called “swine flu” early on) is a new flu virus making people sick. This new flu spread around the world quickly. It was first reported in people in the United States in April 2009. It spreads from person-to-person, in the same way that regular flu viruses spread.

Because it is new, there is no vaccine for it yet. There are

many everyday things you can do to stop the spread of germs that cause illnesses like the flu.

Take these everyday steps to protect your health:

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after you cough or sneeze.

- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
- Stay home if you are sick.

For more information, check the CDC website:
www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Consider the Pneumonia Vaccine



Pneumonia kills about 40,000 people a year in the United States. The pneumonia vaccine could save at least half of them.

You should also get a pneumonia shot if you are:

- *A smoker*
- *At least 65 years of age*
- *Have a long-term health problem like sickle cell disease or kidney failure*

- *Have a weakened immune system*
- *Are from certain Native American populations*

Pneumonia shots are usually given just once, but they can be repeated every five years. Pneumonia happens mostly in the winter or spring, but can happen at any time. Talk to your doctor about the pneumonia shot.

KICK THE HABIT!

Do you want to quit smoking and need help?

Go to www.health.state.pa.us. Click on “Quit Smoking Now” from the list on the left. Then click on “Counseling Assistance.” You’ll find counseling programs in your area that can help you quit smoking.

You can also call Pennsylvania’s Free Quitline at 1.800.QUITNOW (1.800.784.8669).



What is Chlamydia?

Chlamydia (pronounced: kluh-mid-ee-uh) is the most common sexually transmitted disease (STD) in the United States. People can have chlamydia and not know it. The disease moves from one person to another through sexual activity. Chlamydia also can be passed from a mother to her baby while the baby is being delivered.

How does a woman know she has it?

Many times there are no signs. Chlamydia may cause an unusual vaginal discharge or pain when you pass water or urinate. Some girls with

chlamydia also have pain in their lower abdomens, pain during sexual intercourse, or bleeding between menstrual periods.

How does a man know he has it?

Many times there are no signs. Some men may have a discharge or experience itching or burning sensations.



What should you do?

Chlamydia can cause serious health problems, especially in women. It's a good idea to get tested once a year if you are sexually active. The test can be done on urine. It does not require a pelvic exam. If you have chlamydia, your doctor can give you medicine to treat it. Your partner will need to be treated, too. You both need treatment to keep from passing it back and forth.

If you have questions about chlamydia or think you might have it, talk to your doctor.

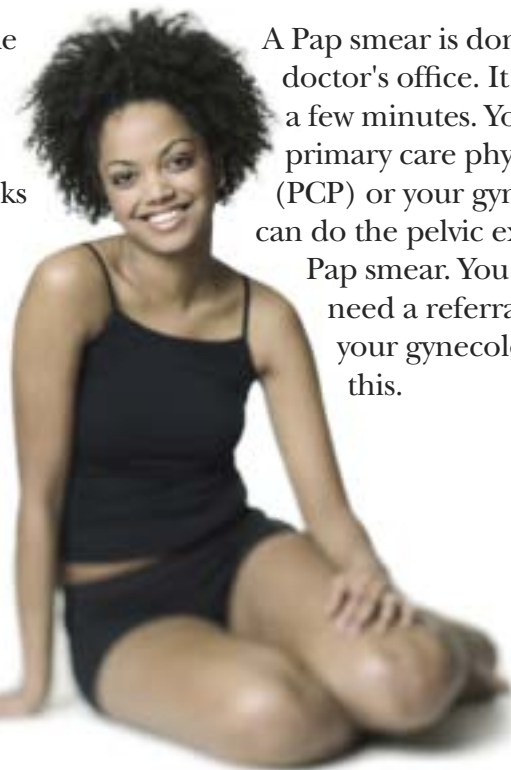
Pap Smears Can Save Lives

A yearly pelvic exam and a Pap smear are your best protection against cervical cancer. At one time, cervical cancer was the leading cause of death in women in the United States. Pap smears changed that.

If it is found early, cervical cancer can be cured. Pap smears can even detect abnormal cells before they become cancer. That's why it is so important to get Pap smears regularly.

Your doctor will take a sample of your cervical cells and send them for testing. The lab looks at your Pap smear and sends a report to your doctor. If it is normal, there is nothing to do until it is time to come back for your next Pap smear.

A Pap smear is done in the doctor's office. It only takes a few minutes. Your primary care physician (PCP) or your gynecologist can do the pelvic exam and Pap smear. You do NOT need a referral to see your gynecologist for this.



Si desea recibir una copia de esta información en español, por favor llame al número 1.800.414.9025 (711 para las personas con deficiencias auditivas).

SAFETY

(Five Things You Can Do To Prevent Infection)

Avoiding contagious diseases like the common cold, strep throat and flu is important to everyone. Here are five easy ways to stay healthy.

1) Clean your hands.

- Use soap and warm water for at least 15 seconds. Rub your palms, fingernails, in between your fingers and the backs of your hands.
- Or, if your hands do not look dirty, clean them with alcohol-based hand sanitizers. Rub the sanitizer all over your hands, especially under your nails and between your fingers, until your hands are dry.
- Wash your hands before touching or eating food. Clean them after you use the

bathroom, take out the trash, change a diaper, visit someone who is ill or play with a pet.

2) Make sure health care providers clean their hands or wear gloves.

- Doctors, nurses and other health care providers are exposed to lots of bacteria and viruses. Before they treat you, ask them if they've cleaned their hands.
- Health care providers should wear clean gloves when they take throat cultures, pull teeth, take blood, touch wounds or body fluids, and examine your mouth or private parts. Don't be afraid to ask them if they should wear gloves.

3) Cover your mouth and nose.

- Many diseases are spread through sneezes and coughs. These germs can travel more than 3 feet! Cover your mouth and nose so you don't infect others.
- Use a tissue! Keep tissues handy at home, at work

and in your pocket. Be sure to throw away used tissues and clean your hands after coughing or sneezing.

- If you don't have a tissue, cover your mouth and nose with your hand or the bend of your elbow. If you use your hands, clean them right away.

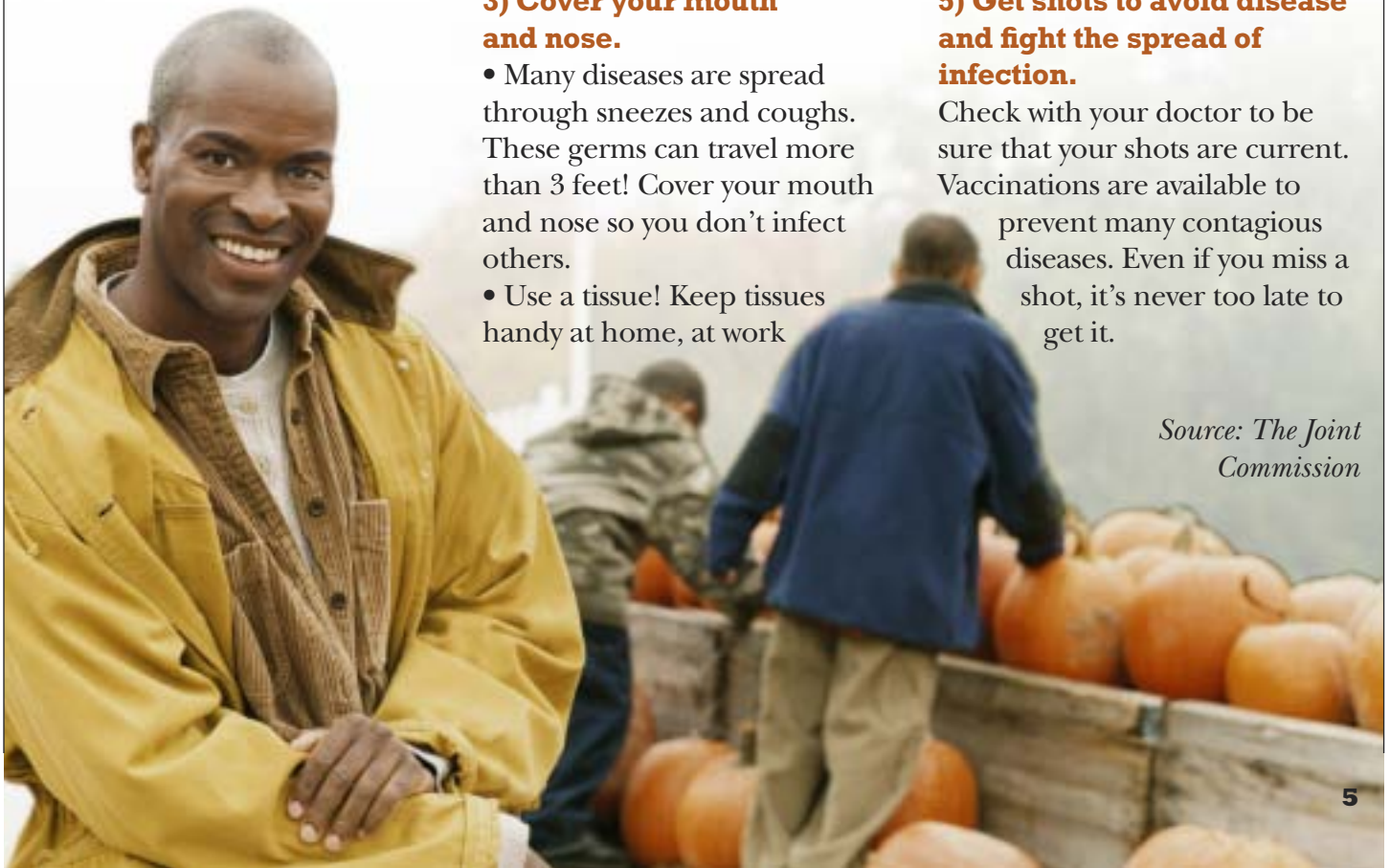
4) If you are sick, avoid close contact with others.

- If you are sick, stay away from other people or stay home. Don't shake hands or touch others.
- When you go to the doctor, call ahead and ask if there's anything you can do to avoid infecting people in the waiting room.

5) Get shots to avoid disease and fight the spread of infection.

Check with your doctor to be sure that your shots are current. Vaccinations are available to prevent many contagious diseases. Even if you miss a shot, it's never too late to get it.

Source: The Joint Commission



FACTS about HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

You could have high blood pressure (hypertension) and not know it. There are usually no signs of high blood pressure. In fact, nearly one-third of those who have it don't know it. The only way to be certain if you have it is to have your blood pressure checked.

High blood pressure is dangerous because it makes the heart work harder to pump blood. High blood pressure can lead to hardening of the arteries, stroke or heart failure.

Some things that contribute to high blood pressure are:

- Smoking
- Being overweight
- Lack of physical activity
- Too much salt in the diet
- Too much alcohol consumption
- Stress
- Diabetes
- Family history of high blood pressure
- Chronic kidney disease

If your blood pressure is extremely high, here are some signs to look out for:

- Severe headache
- Fatigue or confusion
- Vision problems
- Chest pain
- Difficulty breathing
- Irregular heartbeat

It's important to know what your blood pressure is. See your primary care provider (PCP) for regular check-ups. Use the free blood



Women's Health Check & Report Card

Remember, as a Unison member, you **don't need a referral** to see your gynecologist for a check-up or a Pap smear. You also don't need a referral for a mammogram.

Unison wants to help you stay healthy. That is why we mail a health report card to our female members who are 21-64 years old. The report card tells you when you had your last Pap smear. It also tells you the date of your last mammogram. It reminds you about a chlamydia check. We get this information from tests we have paid for on your behalf.

If you get a report card that says you have not had a Pap smear in the last year, please make an appointment with your doctor as soon as possible.

pressure machines available in grocery and drug stores. If your blood pressure reading is high, schedule a visit with your PCP.



What You Should Know About Lead Poisoning

Lead can cause hearing, behavior and learning problems. Lead poisoning can cause brain damage or death. Children with lead poisoning don't always feel or act sick. A blood test is the only way to know for sure. This blood test is usually done during Well Care visits at 9-11 months and 24 months of age. Talk with your child's doctor about this test.

Lead can be found in many places:

- Paint chips or paint dust from old houses, toys or furniture
- Some new toys made outside the United States have been recalled because they contain lead.
- Tap water from lead pipes, food stored in lead-glazed dishes, or



canned foods from other countries

- Dirt or dust from work or hobbies like furniture refinishing (things like fishing weights, lead bullets and car batteries can have lead in them, too)
- Make-up, such as Surma or Kohl
- Folk medicines, such as Greta, Azarcon and Pay-loo-ah.

What can you do to prevent lead poisoning?

- Wash children's hands and faces often, especially after playing and before eating.
- Never let your child eat paint chips or chew on old painted toys or furniture.
- Wash pacifiers and teething toys often.
- Keep your child away from areas where lead can be found, like garages and basements of old houses.
- Store food and drinks in glass or plastic containers.
- Run the water for 15-30 seconds before drinking or cooking with it.

When You Need a Prescription

If you are eligible for prescription drugs, you can go to any of our participating drug stores and have your prescription filled.

Unison uses a Preferred Drug List (PDL).

It helps your doctor choose which drugs to order for you. Some drugs need prior

approval before your doctor can prescribe them. That means we must approve the drug before you get it.

Prior approval is also needed if your doctor thinks you need a drug that is not on our PDL. If we do not approve your doctor's request for a drug, we will send you information on how you can

appeal our decision.

To learn more, go to unisonhealthplan.com. You will find:

- Participating drug stores
- A complete list of our preferred drugs
- Updates to the preferred drug list
- Information on our PDL process
- How to appeal a decision if a drug is not approved.



Back-to-School **Asthma**

When children return to school, cold and flu season is just around the corner. Kids with asthma often experience attacks in the fall. They return to closed-in classrooms after having spent the summer outdoors. You can help to make this a healthy school year for your child. Here are a few back-to-school tips.

- Ask your child's doctor for a written asthma action plan.
- Work with nurses, teachers and coaches at school to help keep your child asthma-free.
- Help your child learn what causes or "triggers" asthma attacks. Make sure your child knows how to take asthma medication and use an inhaler, if prescribed by your child's doctor.
- Find out what your school's policy is regarding the use of asthma medicine.
- If you and your child's doctor agree, have the doctor complete a permission slip saying that your child is able to carry and use an asthma inhaler.
- Get your child a flu shot

Common in-school **TRIGGERS** for kids with asthma

- viral infections (like colds or the flu)
- dust mites
- chalk dust
- animal dander (from the class pet)
- mold
- exercise, cold air, and pollen (which can become a real problem during phys-ed classes)

We Are Online

Learn more about your health plan on our website.

- What benefits and services are covered and what's not
- A list for doctors, dentists, specialists, drug stores, hospitals, and vision services
- Pharmacy Services
- How to get care - primary care, specialty care, after-hours care, behavioral health services and hospital services, and care when you are out of your service area
- What to do in an emergency
- Preventive health guidelines
- Your rights and responsibilities
- How to make a complaint
- How to appeal a decision
- What to do if your appeal is denied
- How we study and evaluate new treatments and services
- Our privacy policy.

Go to www.unisonhealthplan.com. From the pull down bar, select Ohio. Select your plan. Click on Members. You will find this information and more. Call Member Services to get a printed copy of information on our website.



Read the Label to Lower Salt Intake

Salt (sodium) helps to balance body fluids and blood pressure. Most people eat more salt than they need.

Did you know that the more salt you add to your diet, the more fluid your body holds onto? Your heart muscle will then have to work harder to pump this added fluid. In some people it may increase blood pressure. High blood pressure increases your risk for heart disease and stroke if not treated.

You should limit your daily salt/sodium intake to no more than 2,300 mg per day or the equivalent of nearly 1 tsp.

Most foods are labeled and must show how much sodium is in one serving. Pay attention when statements such as, “sodium free” and “low sodium” appear on the product. They are not always what you think:

THE LABEL SAYS:

- 1) Sodium free
- 2) Very low sodium
- 3) Low sodium
- 4) Reduced sodium
- 5) No salt added

THAT MEANS:

- 1) Less than 5mg per serving
- 2) Less than 35mg per serving
- 3) Less than 140mg per serving
- 4) Has 25% less than regular product
- 5) No salt was added when made, but still may contain salt

SAFETY TIPS:

Some over-the-counter medications may contain large amounts of sodium.

- Always read labels and check the ingredients.
- Avoid foods that have “sodium” near or at the top of the ingredient list.
- Ask your doctor.

Childhood Obesity: Questions and Answers

If you are worried about your child's weight, you can talk with your child's doctor.

How Can I Do This?

You can visit your child's doctor to talk about weight, nutrition and exercise. These visits are for children under 21. They are covered by Medical Assistance. You can do this at a regular visit to the doctor. Or you can go to a visit just about your weight, nutrition and exercise. After talking with your doctor, you can make an appointment to see a nurse, or nutritionist. A nutritionist is someone who knows about healthy foods, exercise and weight. Parents can go to the visit with their children.

What May Happen at the Visit?

The doctor, nurse or nutritionist may:

- Weigh your child
- Check his blood pressure
- Measure how tall he is
- Check his body mass index, sometimes called BMI.

Nurses and Nutritionists will talk about healthy foods and drinks, exercise and lifestyle changes that will help control weight. Body Mass Index or BMI is a number that adds height and weight to find out if your child's weight could be a health problem. Your child's weight may be normal. But if you or your doctor are worried, there is help. Your doctor can give you ideas on healthy food choices and getting your child to exercise. Your doctor can also give you more help from other people like a nurse or a nutritionist. Parents and grandparents want the best for their children. Your doctor can help. Together we can help children be healthy and more active.

Members Privacy Policy

This member privacy policy notice describes how medical information about you may be used and disclosed and how you can get access to this information. Please review it carefully.

The law says we must help protect our members' privacy. These are the rules that Unison* and its affiliates use to do that job. We must follow these rules. We make sure that the providers and everyone else who works with us agree to help protect your privacy and use these rules. We can change our privacy rules.

If we do, the new rules will apply to all the information we have about you. If we make changes, we will send you updated information. This notice may also be found on the internet at www.unisonhealthplan.com.

Financial Information

When you join our health plan, we may get information about you are, where you live and your income. We share that information with DPW.** We also use it to run our business. We will not share your information with anyone else unless you say we can or the law says we must.

Health Information

We get information about our Members' health from providers. When you join one of our health plans, you allow us to use that kind of information. We use it when we pay for and help arrange your health care. We also use it to run our health plans. We will not use your health information to do other things unless you say we can.

How We Use Your Information

We use health information for treatment, payment and healthcare operations. We use your information to help arrange your care. We may send appointment reminders for you or your children. We also help with care for Members who are hurt, sick or pregnant. We share your information with doctors, hospitals, drugstores and other providers when we pay them for your care. We share information with other companies that also pay for your care. We share your information with the government so they can help with any payment problems.

We tell DPW about Unison Members' health. We can use your information to check how our health plan is doing. We also use it to check on the doctors, hospitals and other providers that work with us. We share your information when we send reports to the government.

We will not share your information with your employer unless you say we can. If you cannot give your O.K., we can get the O.K. from someone who takes care of you or your family.



We may use your health information if the law says we must or we can. We may have to share your information if you are in a lawsuit. We may share your information if there is a serious threat to anyone's health or safety.

Your Privacy Rights

When you join our health plan, you agree that we can use your health information. We use it the way we explained at the time of your enrollment.

You can look at and get copies of your health information that we hold. You can give us more information to complete or correct your records. You need to give this information in writing and tell why you want to change the records. You can ask us to change how we use your health information. You need to ask us in writing. We do not have to agree.

We will tell you how and when we shared your health

information if you ask. You need to ask for this in writing. You can ask that your health information be sent privately. We can only



use your information to do other things if you say we can. You can take back that permission at any time. We will not do anything to punish you if you use your rights, file a complaint or ask us for help with your privacy. You can ask for a separate paper copy of this information and we will send you one.

Privacy Complaints

Member Services can answer some of your privacy questions. They also take complaints and grievances. You can reach them at 1.800.414.9025.

Or you can write to:

Member Services
Unison MedPLUS
1001 Brinton Road
Pittsburgh, PA 15221

You may also file a complaint with the federal government by calling the Office of Civil Rights at 1.866.627.7748 or in writing at:

Secretary of Health
and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20201

You Have the Right to Your Privacy

Unison will not give medical information about you to anyone without your OK, UNLESS the law requires it. Of course, we will share information with your PCP.

*Unison Administrative Services, LLC ("Unison Services") conducts health plan operations for its affiliated and contracted managed care organizations ("MCOs"), including, but not limited to, Unison Health Plan of Pennsylvania, Inc., Unison Family Health Plan of Pennsylvania, Inc., Unison Health Plan of Ohio, Inc., Unison Health Plan of Tennessee, Inc., Unison Health Plan of South Carolina, Inc., Unison Health Plan of New Jersey, Inc. and Unison Health Plan of Delaware, Inc. (collectively referred to as "Unison").

** As to Pennsylvania operations, those agencies include the Pennsylvania Insurance Department and the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare. As to Tennessee operations, the agency is the Bureau of TennCare. As to Ohio operations, the agency is the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services. As to South Carolina operations, the agency is the South Carolina Department of Health and Human Services. As to New Jersey operations, the agency is the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). As to Delaware operations, the agency is the Delaware Department of Health and Social Services. In addition, CMS provides federal oversight of both the Medicaid and Medicare programs.



Unison Administrative Services
 Unison Plaza, 1001 Brinton Road
 Pittsburgh, PA 15221
www.unisonhealthplan.com

Presorted Standard
 U.S. Postage
PAID
 Pittsburgh, PA
 Permit No. 4503

Unison Health Plan Member Services

For more information, we are available Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Wednesday 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. You can reach us at **1.800.414.9025** (hearing impaired 711).

Interpretation and translation services are free to members. Please call Member Services for more information. Please refer to your member handbook for benefit coverage.

HOLIDAY OBSERVANCE

Members Services will be closed on the following holidays. You may leave a message with our answering service, and your call will be returned. On-call staff will be available for emergencies

- *Thanksgiving Day, Thursday, Nov. 26, 2009*
- *Day after Thanksgiving Day, Friday, Nov. 27, 2009*
- *Christmas Day, Friday, Dec. 25, 2009*
- *New Year's Day, Friday, Jan. 1, 2010*

Language Support

Unison helps members who need special services to understand their benefits. These services include 711 National Relay Service for those members with hearing loss, TTY access, translation help for members who do not speak English and translated materials including materials in Braille.

If you or your family needs this kind of help, please call Member Services at 1.800.414.9025. Members who are hearing impaired please call 711. No person on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, religion or disability shall be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of or be subject to discrimination under any program or service provided by Unison Health Plan.



Si necesita ayuda para traducir esta información, por favor comuníquese con el departamento de Servicios a miembros del Unison al 1.800.414.9025 (711 para las personas con deficiencias auditivas).

