



National Association of Health Underwriters

America's Benefits Specialists

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NAHU Statement on Medicare Regulations on Commissions

(Arlington, VA)—Janet Trautwein, CEO of the National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU), today released the following statement on the regulation of Medicare commissions:

“The National Association of Health Underwriters’ membership of more than 20,000 professionally licensed health insurance agents, brokers and employee benefit specialists is committed to protecting consumers and sustaining the integrity of Medicare. It is because of our deep professional commitment and adherence to a strict code of ethics that we have always promoted honest and ethical marketing and sales practices for all Medicare-related insurance products, including Medicare Advantage.

“Selling and servicing any Medicare-related products, if done correctly, is a very labor-intensive process that requires great patience, compassion, specialized training and knowledge of the many facets of the Medicare program.

“NAHU has long advocated for improved accountability and oversight in the Medicare marketing area, including the institution of reasonable level commissions over time to eliminate incentives for agents to "churn"—moving customers from plan to plan without regard for the best interests of consumers.

“In making changes to the marketing rules, we are hopeful that government actions will not impede beneficiaries’ timely and convenient access to professionally licensed agents and brokers. Millions of seniors rely on professional health insurance agents and brokers to guide them in selecting the best Medicare option for their individual needs and in assisting them in getting problems solved quickly and efficiently.

The servicing of client needs— *after* the sale of a product — is what constitutes the bulk of the work performed and value brought by agents and brokers on a daily basis. It is that service that is rarely acknowledged for the value it holds. NAHU members who work with seniors spend countless hours explaining how coverage works and helping them when problems arise. Their goal is for their client to be satisfied, and they do not view these individuals as merely a convenient way to make a quick buck. We continue to be concerned, as we have expressed previously, that the many professionals who provide this valuable service to seniors are being categorized in the same way as a few bad apples who don’t operate under the same ethical framework., and this does a grave disservice not only to them, but also to the beneficiaries they serve.

“Professional senior-product agents and brokers look forward to continuing their service as champions of consumers, and to serving as resources for federal and state policymakers.”

The National Association of Health Underwriters represents 20,000 professional health insurance agents and brokers who provide insurance for millions of Americans. NAHU is headquartered in Arlington, VA. For more information, please contact Kelly Loussedes, vice president of public relations at 703-276-3835 or kloussedes@nahu.org.

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