

WellPoint Announces Plan to Extend Health Care Coverage for Many Young Americans

McGohan Brabender received the following press release from Anthem/Wellpoint regarding coverage of adult children to age 26 effective 6/1/2010 for their fully insured products:

(Indianapolis, April 19, 2010) WellPoint, Inc. (NYSE: WLP), the nation's largest health insurer by medical membership, announced today that it will take steps to prevent a gap in coverage that could leave many young Americans uninsured.

Each year in June, many individuals are no longer eligible as dependents on their parents' insurance policies because of their age, student status or other factors. Health care reform legislation, signed into law last month, will extend the dependent age for coverage to 26 for plan years beginning September 23, 2010. As such, many individuals would face a coverage gap during the months before this provision is fully implemented.

As a proactive measure to assist its members, WellPoint's affiliated health plans, working in collaboration with the US Department of Health and Human Services and state regulators, will allow young men and women to remain on their parents' policies even before this health care reform provision takes effect. Beginning June 1, WellPoint's affiliated health plans will automatically retain these young individuals on their parents' policies in both fully insured group and individual health plans. Our self insured clients and members will have the option of not offering this extended coverage.

"Protecting access to health benefits for members is our first priority," said WellPoint's Chief Strategy and External Affairs Officer, Bradley Fluegel. "We are pleased to lead the way in advancing the intent of health care reform; increasing access to affordable, quality coverage."

Please contact your McGohan Brabender account team with further questions at (800) 293-2347.