



NARRATIVE SUMMARY

Community-Rated Small Group Commercial Comprehensive Premium Rate Filings Plan Year 2019

Healthfirst Health Plan, Inc. (“Healthfirst”) has submitted to the New York Department of Financial Services (DFS) an application to adjust premium rates for small group market health insurance coverage – including Healthfirst’s Healthy NY product – effective in 2019. Healthfirst has requested an increase in premium rates for plans offered in 2019. The Department of Financial Services is reviewing Healthfirst’s requested premium rate increase and will determine if the rates are appropriate based on the available evidence.

The requested rate adjustments will affect all currently enrolled small group market subscribers renewing coverage for the 2019 calendar year as well as new small group policies issued during the 2019 calendar year. Final rate adjustments approved by DFS will be effective January 1, 2019. The rates are guaranteed for a 12-month period ending December 31, 2019 and are subject to New York’s community rating and guarantee issue laws. Subscribers’ rates will vary according to the benefit plan in which they enroll, as well as the census/family tier they select.

As of the date of the submission of this Narrative Summary, 25 covered lives (i.e., subscribers and their covered dependents) are estimated to be affected by the rate adjustment.

A Description of Your Premium Rate

Your health insurance premium rate has two main components. One is the costs of paying for medical care and the other is Healthfirst’s administrative costs.

1. **Medical care costs.** The largest portion of your health insurance premium rate goes toward paying for the costs of the medical claims submitted by you and other members enrolled in Healthfirst’s small group market plans. Under New York law, at least 82 percent of the premium Healthfirst’s members pay must be put toward paying for the costs of medical claims. More than 82 percent of Healthfirst’s premium dollars is used for paying medical expenses.
2. **Administrative costs.** Administrative expenses include a wide range of services and functions, such as processing claims and upgrading technology to keep pace with the rapidly changing health care sector. It also accounts for an array of member-centric expenses such as conducting medical necessity reviews, managing members’ complex and chronic conditions, maintaining a robust provider network, and partnering with the community on health education initiatives.

Healthfirst takes a meaningful and evidence-based approach to determining how much of a rate adjustment to request from DFS.

Your Rate Adjustment Explained

Healthfirst is applying for a rate adjustment to account for marketplace trends and to reflect actual and anticipated claims costs. While several market forces continue to drive health care costs higher more generally, Healthfirst continues to strengthen the effectiveness of its care management and quality improvement programs and robust network.

Healthfirst is requesting a higher rate for 2019 because several market forces continue to drive health care costs higher. These forces include:

- Cost increases for inpatient hospital, outpatient hospital, and physician services
- Cost increases for prescription drugs, including the increased use of expensive specialty prescriptions.

The premium rate increase that Healthfirst is requesting is 21%.

Final Rate Adjustment

The final rate adjustment that Healthfirst members experience may differ than what DFS eventually approves. Healthfirst will notify its currently enrolled members approximately 60 days prior to the new rate taking effect.