U.S. Health Care Reform Update

The Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act and the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act were signed into law in March, 2010. These laws have significant implications for organizations, like Santa Clara University, that offer health care coverage to Faculty and Staff employees and their families.

The new guidelines do not require SCU or our insurance providers to make any immediate changes. However, in order to provide the best possible insurance coverage for Faculty and Staff, we have identified and implemented one update effective June 1st. **Effective June 1, 2010, the maximum coverage age for dependent children increased from age 24 to age 26, and full-time student status is no longer required.** Dependent children, regardless of student status and including married children, may remain covered on SCU’s insurance plans until they reach age 26.

***In order to continue coverage for the remainder of the 2010 Plan Year, dependent children must be covered by SCU’s insurance carrier and not on cancelled or COBRA status. Otherwise, Faculty and Staff may re-enroll dependent children during Open Enrollment for the 2011 Plan Year. If you have questions or would like to verify dependent coverage status, call the HR Service Center at (408) 554-4392 or you may email Caroline Zelaya directly at czelaya@scu.edu.***

The below summarizes the changes for covering dependent children:

1. The maximum coverage age for dependent children changed from age 24 to age 26.
2. Married dependent children are considered eligible dependents until they reach age 26.
3. Dependent children are no longer required to maintain full-time student status.
4. SCU’s insurance carriers will no longer ask for proof of full-time student status.
5. SCU’s insurance carriers will automatically discontinue coverage for dependent children only when the children reach age 26.

**Note:** Dependent children continue to be **ineligible** for coverage on SCU’s Plans if they are eligible for their own employer-sponsored coverage.

As a reminder, regardless of what any health care reforms may bring, the key to reigning in escalating health care costs, is a strong focus on wellness. If you haven’t already done so, schedule your annual physical and make sure you and your family members are getting the preventive care exams you need. The Department of Health and Human Services will continue to issue detailed guidance on the new Patient Protection and Affordable Care and Health Care and Education Reconciliation Acts. We will continue monitoring this guidance to determine how the new laws affect Santa Clara University’s Plans and look forward to sharing more information with you. In the meantime, you may search the Library of Congress website at [http://thomas.loc.gov/](http://thomas.loc.gov/) for the most recent versions of bills that have been signed into law or see the following sites for more information:

**Summary of New Acts**
Full text - Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act
Full text - Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act

Regards,
Santa Clara University Benefits

(Please send your questions to czelaya@scu.edu.)