



# Benefit Brief

AUGUST 19, 2010

VOLUME 7, NUMBER 8

## In This Issue:

[New Partnership  
for Individual  
Healthcare!](#)

[Healthcare  
Reform Update](#)

[ARRA Subsidy  
Ends](#)

[Questions &  
Answers](#)

---

### **SUMMER OF RECORD HIGHS EVERYONE IS FEELING THE EFFECTS!**

This summer has been record breaking across the country, the 100-degree days, flash floods, and thunderstorms. It has all been very unpredictable. We are reaching the third quarter for the year and here at Strauss Financial we do not want your October, November or December renewals to be as challenging as the summer temperatures have been!

As your renewal approaches we will review all the options available for you and your employees. The health care reform has brought on many changes and we want to keep you informed as best as we can. Please contact our office at 570-386-4574 or via email and [newsletter@straussinsurance.com](mailto:newsletter@straussinsurance.com) and we will be happy to answer your questions.



We are pleased to announce a new partnership with Get Med 360. There are many options available with this carrier including a guaranteed issued of policies for small businesses. Below you will find a brief summary on the program features. Please contact our office if you would like additional information.

#### **PROGRAM FEATURES**

Guaranteed Issue – Never turn clients

Carrier is A.M. Best Rated "A" Excellent (as of 2009)

Outstanding Customer Service and Support »»

#### **PLAN BENEFITS**

All of the benefits included in our plans are brought to you through a membership in the United Consumer Awareness Association - UCAA

<http://www.unitedconsumer.org/>

Plans are 100%

Guaranteed Issue --

Instant Issue!

- Insured Benefits
- Discount Medical Plans
- Consumer Savings Benefits and much more...



## Health Care Reform

The Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act of 2010 was passed this March. With this bill being passed there are many changes taking effect immediately as well as a time line that extends into 2016. We will focus on key points over the next few months; in this issue we will be discussing the immediate changes that might affect you, your employees and business.

### Small Business Tax Credits

One of the items involved in the new Health Care Reform Laws that seems to be mentioned often but rarely talked about in detail is the new Tax Credit available to Small Businesses that offer health insurance to their employees and meet certain criteria. This is one of the few healthcare reform law changes that actually benefit the employer and not just the employee. Below is a summary of the key points.

Effective Date of Law	Taxable years beginning in 2010
Requirements to Qualify	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Employer must be a small employer – meaning the employer employs fewer than 25 full-time equivalent employees (FTE's)</li><li>2) Average wages per FTE must be less than \$50,000 per year</li><li>3) Employer must maintain a "qualifying arrangement"</li></ol>
Amount of Tax Credit	The tax credit is a percentage of the premiums paid by an employer during the taxable year.
Maximum Credit	For taxable years beginning in 2010 through 2013, the maximum credit is 35% of premiums as calculated above (25% for tax exempt employers)

*Please click on the link below for a more comprehensive reference on the "Small Business Tax Credits."*

[Small Business Tax Credits](#)

**In This Issue:**

[New Partnership for Individual Healthcare!](#)

[Healthcare Reform Update](#)

[ARRA Subsidy Ends](#)

[Questions & Answers](#)



## American Reinvestment and Recovery Act of 2009

### ARRA Subsidy Ends

For people “involuntarily terminated” by their employer prior to May 31, 2010, the Government has picked up 65% of the cost to pay for health insurance premiums. Under the federal COBRA law, a laid-off worker can stay on his employer’s plan a total of 18 months, but the employee must pay the entire cost of the coverage. The COBRA subsidy – initially part of the 2009 stimulus package – provided the majority of the premium costs for people who lost their jobs, and made it possible for many to retain their health coverage.

Starting June 1, 2010, the newly unemployed are not eligible to get the subsidy at all. The proposal to extend subsidies to those laid off through the end of the year seems to be stalling in Congress, a casualty of worries about the deficit in an election year. Congress extended the subsidies four times since February 2009, but the latest effort failed before the Memorial Day recess. Congress may again consider extending the subsidy when members return next week, but it’s unclear how long such a proposal would take to make its way through Congress and what support there would be for it.

### In This Issue:

[New Partnership for Individual Healthcare!](#)

[Healthcare Reform Update](#)

[ARRA Subsidy Ends](#)

[Questions & Answers](#)



### QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

We would like to invite you to ask your health insurance questions here. When we know the everyday struggles our clients have we are better able to serve you. You can email your questions to [Newsletter@StraussInsurance.com](mailto:Newsletter@StraussInsurance.com)

*We will continue to keep you informed of plan options, policy changes and how you can spend less on health insurance! In the mean time, as summer comes to a close, enjoying the last trips to the beach, amusement parks and family picnics. Please remain safe and enjoy your time with family and friends.*

Sincerely,  
**Strauss Financial Staff**

*To be removed from our email newsletter list please click the following link:*

[Newsletter List Removal](#)