

November 2009

Dear Anthem Subscriber and GIMG Patient:

As most of you know GIMG tries hard to be available to our patients. We have our morning call time for questions, the lab communicator for test results, evening and Saturday hours, and a policy of seeing same day appointments. As primary care physicians our costs have gone up dramatically and payments from insurance companies have not. Today, in the US, health insurers pay well for procedures, hospitalizations, and imaging, but primary care is underpaid relative to these items and the cost of running a practice. We, as many others, believe preventive and timely care saves more serious illness and higher costs.

We are disappointed and concerned that our availability to you may now be threatened. **General Internal Medicine Group (GIMG) contacted Anthem in June 2009 to attempt to negotiate a 2010 fee schedule and as of this date have failed to reach an agreement for services rendered after December 31, 2009.** GIMG wishes to provide you with options for continued care and hopes that you choose one that makes it easy to remain a GIMG patient.

You have several options.

If you are also concerned that your GIMG physician may no longer participate with Anthem you may express that to Anthem's customer service or to the Human Resources department at your (or your spouse's) work.

You may look into other health plan options made available to you by your employer through an "Open Season" or annual selection process. This is done best through the Human Resources Department at your (or your spouse's) job. GIMG contracts with most other plans. For a list please see our web site at www.gimg.com or call our office.

If you are continuing with Anthem it is likely that you can still be a GIMG patient with minimal impact to you. If you see GIMG as a non-participating provider, we will submit the claim for services rendered with our local Blue Cross Carrier, Care First Blue Cross, under the National Blue Cross reciprocal billing agreement. We have confirmed this with Anthem but recommend that you confirm this and any impact it may have to you by calling Anthem at the number on your ID card.

We would have liked to inform you earlier of this change but we thought we would hear from Anthem, however, at this point we have not and our experience has been that changes in providers, health plans, or finances for healthcare need to be communicated well in advance to insure that patients can determine and pursue the best option available to them. Please feel free to call us at our health plan contact line (703-738-5737) from 9:00 AM until 4:00 PM, M-F to ask questions or discuss your concerns.

Thank you for selecting GIMG. We hope you can find an option that allows you to stay with us.

Sincerely,

The Physicians of General Internal Medicine Group.