Blue Cross and Blue Shield of North Carolina (Blue Cross NC) and Amerigroup Partnership Plan, LLC (Amerigroup) have announced an agreement to collaborate to pursue participation in the forthcoming transition from the traditional Medicaid fee-for-service program to managed care. We believe our shared philosophy and depth of experience will benefit North Carolina’s providers, Medicaid beneficiaries and the state as a whole.

While there are no immediate changes for providers, the following frequently asked questions (FAQ) provide additional information about this collaboration and how Blue Cross NC and Amerigroup will work with providers. After we are given direction from the state regarding program requirements, we will be further reaching out to our provider community.

Q: What can you tell me about Amerigroup?
A: Amerigroup is a Medicaid industry leader with a history of offering trusted and caring solutions that improve health care access and quality for members while proactively helping states manage escalating health care costs. Through a family of affiliated health plans, Amerigroup serves 6.5 million Medicaid members across 20 states with best practices derived from decades of expertise that address the unique needs of Medicaid’s diverse beneficiaries. Amerigroup is a wholly owned subsidiary of Anthem Inc., one of the nation’s leading health benefits companies serving over 72 million people through its affiliated companies.

Q: What is the purpose of this collaboration?
A: The collaboration will bring best-in-class Medicaid managed care capabilities together with deep expertise on local needs, solutions and community supports to serve North Carolinians. Together, the two organizations plan to continue addressing the evolving health care needs of the state and its most vulnerable population through North Carolina’s Medicaid reform plan.

Q: What is the benefit of Blue Cross NC and Amerigroup working together?
A: Both companies successfully achieve positive health results and savings by focusing on provider networks delivering high-quality care, program integrity and transparency. Both companies have a history of working with all types of health care providers in collaborative and accountable relationships, social services agencies, community advocates and local experts to create solutions that eliminate unnecessary services, close care gaps and make measurable impacts in improving the health of entire communities. Blue Cross NC has deep knowledge about local health needs, community supports and provider capabilities in North Carolina. Amerigroup brings best-in-class Medicaid capabilities and solutions to serve low income as well as other highly specialized and vulnerable populations. As a combined allegiance, Blue Cross NC and Amerigroup are uniquely positioned to offer North Carolina best-in-class solutions that are unrivaled in value and potential.

Q: Is this collaboration similar to other relationships that exist between other health insurers and Amerigroup?
A: While different relationships have different legal structures and areas of focus, the fundamental goals are similar — to combine local expertise with Amerigroup Medicaid capabilities. In the Blue Cross NC/Amerigroup venture, both companies will retain their existing brands and ownership. This is simply a collaboration between the two companies. How this relationship
may evolve over time and the naming of health coverage plans for the North Carolina Medicaid market is yet to be determined.

Q: Are either company's names changing as a result of this collaboration? Is a rebranding taking place?
A: No, neither company’s name is changing, nor is either company rebranding. This is a collaboration between Blue Cross NC and Amerigroup to share expertise and seek opportunities to better serve the Medicaid population of North Carolina. How this relationship may evolve over time and health coverage plan naming in the North Carolina Medicaid market is yet to be determined. We will proactively communicate any future changes.

Q: What changes should we expect to see as a result of this collaboration?
A: At this time, it’s business as usual. This collaboration will have no immediate impact on Blue Cross NC’s existing members, network providers or associates. We will proactively communicate any future changes.

Q: How do I participate in the Medicaid network?
A: Participation processes have not yet been identified. After we are provided direction from the state regarding program requirements, we will be reaching out to the provider community to discuss requisites for participation.

Q: How do I not participate/opt out of the Medicaid network?
A: Participation for providers will be optional. Participation processes have not yet been identified, and it’s too soon to say what an opt-in or opt-out process might look like.

Q: Will I automatically be contracted with both companies as a result of this collaboration?
A: No, your contract with Blue Cross NC is not changing. We will proactively communicate any future changes that may affect current agreements.

Q: Will Medicaid participation be mandatory for providers already contracted for commercial or Medicare lines of business?
A: No. For now, provider contracts and the day-to-day work we do with providers remains the same. We will proactively communicate any future changes including Medicaid participation options.

Q: How will this impact my current Blue Cross NC contracts?
A: This collaboration will have no immediate impact on any current Blue Cross NC contracts. We will proactively communicate any future changes.

Q: What will Medicaid payment rates be? Will payment be less than Medicaid currently?
A: It is too soon to speculate about rates. After we are provided direction from the state regarding program requirements, we will be reaching out to our provider community to discuss rates and contracting.

Q: What services will require preauthorization?
A: It is too soon to answer this question. After we are provided direction from the state regarding program requirements, we will be reaching out to our provider community to discuss contract services.
Q: Will there be a different formulary for Medicaid?
A: It is too soon to answer this question. After we are provided direction from the state regarding program requirements, we will be reaching out to our provider community to discuss contract specifics and formularies.

Q: Will there be any changes to existing referral processes as a result of the collaboration?
A: No, this collaboration will only include potential Medicaid membership and will have no effect on any existing Blue Cross NC products (i.e., commercial insurance). It’s too soon to say what referral processes may be developed for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Q: Will existing members get new ID cards and/or benefits?
A: No, there will be no changes to current member ID cards. This collaboration will only include potential Medicaid membership and will have no effect on any existing Blue Cross NC products (i.e., commercial insurance).