



A New Paradigm in Illinois Consumer Health Insurance

The passage of the *Affordable Care Act* put forth great changes within the landscape of individual and employer-sponsored health insurance plans, both in Illinois and nationwide. Besides the eligibility improvement enacted by “guaranteed acceptance” underwriting, the legislation also granted a state by state provision to encourage new “Consumer Operated and Oriented Plans,” or “CO-OPs” for short.

The Illinois CO-OP is administered by **Land of Lincoln Health**, a non-profit, member owned and member managed, individual and group health insurance provider. This initiative was driven by the Metropolitan Chicago Healthcare Council, an association of more than 150 hospitals and other healthcare groups. Land of Lincoln organized with the intent to provide competition to the major carriers in Illinois: predominantly *Blue Cross Blue Shield*, *Aetna*, *Humana*, and *United Health Care*. In a market dominated by these players, hospitals and consumers alike were hamstrung when negotiating claim settlement, pricing, and other quality determinant factors affecting the insurance-caregiver-consumer *trriage a trois*.

Many regional hospital networks are endorsing Land of Lincoln Health not only as members and caregivers, but also as benefit plan **sponsors**, a prominent list which includes: Adventist Health, Advocate Health Care, Centegra Health System, DuPage Medical Group, Elmhurst Memorial, and Swedish Covenant. Through such plans, Land of Lincoln Health offers individuals and groups similar or identical benefit plans to those received by the sponsoring network’s hospital employees.

Our opinion is that having a member managed healthcare option, working hand in hand with many of the state’s largest hospital groups, presents a new and better paradigm for consumer plan selection in Illinois. Finally, Illinois has a “We the People” response to the hegemony of the state’s health insurance elite. And, so far, it’s working. In 2015, Land of Lincoln individual and group plans are **pricing** 20% or more below competition. Their PPO network has grown to comprise more than 90% of healthcare providers in Illinois. And while we were unable to confirm their latest sales figures, we understand that sales have surpassed the company’s own expectations.

“Putting Your World In Balance”