

Seven Things You Need to Know About the Insurance Marketplace

1. **It's called the "Marketplace" because you're actually shopping for insurance.**

The Marketplace will let you see what your premiums and deductibles would be and compare options side-by-side when you apply for coverage. There are even some online shopping-inspired features, like a pop-up window that asks if you want to chat with a representative for help while you're on the site.

2. **You cannot be denied coverage due to a preexisting condition.**

While this isn't specific to the Marketplace, all health insurance plans—including those on the Marketplace—will be prohibited from refusing to cover you or opting to charge you more because of pre-existing conditions starting in 2014.

3. **All of the insurance networks are regulated and required to offer you access to specialists.**

You may have heard that insurance plans available through the Marketplace will severely limit your access to health care providers and specialists. But in order to sell a plan, insurance companies are mandated by law to demonstrate network adequacy. So, while you may not be able to choose any doctor—unless you want to pay out of pocket to receive care from someone who's out of your network—you will have access to specialists.

4. **Enrollment through the Marketplace will be open for six months.**

The Marketplace will be open from October 1 to March 31 (plans selected before December 15, 2013, will go into effect on January 1, 2014).

5. **You can still check out the Marketplace even if you have insurance.**

When you visit healthcare.gov, the site prompts you to enter information about yourself (such as your income, whether you currently have health insurance, and what you'd like to learn more about through the site) and then tells you whether you qualify for a tax credit and what you would actually pay in terms of premiums and out-of-pocket costs. Please note that you may not qualify for a tax credit if you are enrolled in DePaul's full-time health insurance plan.

6. **...But if you have insurance, you don't HAVE to do anything.**

The Marketplace is really for individuals who are either uninsured or are in the individual market. So feel free to check it out if you're curious or you need health insurance—but if you're happy with your current plan (which may be provided by DePaul, another employer, Medicare, Medicaid, Veteran's Administration coverage or other qualified coverage), you are not required to visit the Marketplace.

7. **If you don't have health insurance by January 1, 2014, you'll have to pay a fine.**

The annual fee will be 1 percent of your yearly income or \$95—whichever is higher (and it will go up each year, until 2016, when it will be 2.5 percent of your income or \$695).