



**Arkansas
BlueCross BlueShield**

An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

news release

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Arkansas Blue Cross, Health Advantage continue to offer mammograms as a wellness benefit

Little Rock, Ark. (November 19, 2009) — Although the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force announced recently that routine mammograms are no longer recommended for women 40 to 49, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield and its wholly owned subsidiary, Health Advantage, will continue to cover screening mammograms as a part of our wellness benefit, according to James Adamson, M.D., Arkansas Blue Cross senior vice president and chief medical officer.

“We understand there is concern among our members about the new recommendations from the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force, but we want to assure our members that we will continue to cover annual screening mammograms for all Arkansas Blue Cross and Health Advantage female members age 40 and above who have our wellness benefit and who have the service performed by an in-network physician and facility,” said Dr. Adamson.

The U.S. Preventive Services Task Force recently reversed a previous 2002 recommendation by eliminating the recommendation for screening for those women ages 40 to 49, and increasing the screening interval to every two years for women 50 to 74.

The American Cancer Society and the American College of Radiology have expressed significant concerns over the new recommendations of the U.S. Preventive

(more)

Services Task Force, and these two organizations continue to recommend screening mammography on an annual basis to all women beginning at age 40. Recommendations vary for those who are considered at higher risk.

Founded in 1948, Arkansas Blue Cross and Blue Shield, an Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is the largest health insurer in Arkansas. Arkansas Blue Cross and its affiliates have more than 2,700 employees. If combined, the 39 independent, locally operated Blue Cross and Blue Shield Plans collectively provide health-care coverage for 98 million —nearly one in three — Americans.

