

Independent Insurance Agents of Nebraska
National Association of Insurance & Financial Advisers– Nebraska
Nebraska Association of Health Underwriters
Nebraska Association of Professional Insurance Agents

Key Principles For Creating A Health Insurance Exchange For Nebraska

Collectively, our statewide organizations represent 5,000 members who are licensed insurance agents and financial advisers. We all advocate for laws and regulations which are mutually beneficial to consumers, agents, and advisers, and work to promote our members' professional knowledge and ethical conduct. Licensed insurance agents and financial advisers provide professional guidance and protection to consumers in every county in Nebraska. Our members are the most knowledgeable consumer advocates in the insurance delivery process.

The formation of Health Insurance Exchanges as required by the federal Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, will transform the nation's private health care and health insurance marketplaces for individuals and small businesses. We believe that the following principles are critical to the successful creation of a Health Insurance Exchange for Nebraska.

If PPACA provisions requiring a health insurance exchange are upheld, Nebraska should have a State Exchange, and not allow the federal government to step in and operate an exchange for Nebraskans

- ◆ A State Exchange is better for Nebraska consumers because it can be built to meet local needs most efficiently - it will be closer and more accessible to Nebraskans.
- ◆ A State Exchange will maintain State authority and jurisdiction for insurance sales that are already regulated by the State and will reduce overlapping and confusing regulation by the federal government.
- ◆ Since insurance in Nebraska is already regulated primarily by the state Department of Insurance, the infrastructure is already in place to regulate a Nebraska Exchange.
- ◆ Based on the existing regulatory infrastructure, the Nebraska Department of Insurance is the most appropriate entity to operate and administer a State Exchange and avoid unnecessary duplication and costs.



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To protect and best serve consumers, Nebraska’s licensed insurance agents and advisers should be the primary source for insurance enrollment and service, and able to advise consumers and sell products through a Nebraska Exchange, and be adequately compensated for the services they provide.

- ◆ Agents are advocates for consumers – their knowledge and experience will be more important than ever in the new marketplace.
- ◆ Agents provide valuable services to individuals and employers by explaining choices, seeking affordable plans, and resolving problems with claims.
- ◆ Agents are already subject to rigorous licensing and continuing education requirements, and carry Errors & Omissions coverage to protect consumers.
- ◆ Agents help keep risk pools healthy by actively selling coverage to healthy people.

Exchange Navigators who offer advice to consumers, enroll purchasers in plans, or sell insurance should comply with all existing Nebraska licensing statutes and regulations that govern such activities.

- ◆ Laws and regulations providing consumer safeguards should apply to the Exchange as they do in the rest of the marketplace.
- ◆ Standards for licensing or certifying Navigators should be established by the State and unqualified and unregulated individuals should not be permitted to engage in such activities.

To assure that the Exchange operates in the best interests of consumers, agents should be represented in the governing structure that is ultimately established to operate a Nebraska exchange

- ◆ Every day, agents act as representatives and advocates for consumers in the current health insurance marketplace, and are uniquely positioned to provide resources and advice in the new marketplace.
- ◆ The input and insight of agents and advisers – in addition to their technical expertise – will be critical to assuring that the Exchange operates in the best interests of consumers.
- ◆ Regardless of which State agency is charged with management and administration of the Exchange, governance and policy making for the Exchange should allow for balanced input from key stakeholders, including agents.

