



## spotlight on health care

### A Better Way to Buy Health Insurance

(NAPSA)—Frustrated by the high cost of healthcare, a growing number of motivated consumers are taking matters into their own hands. These smart consumers want greater value for their healthcare dollars and more control over how those dollars are spent. They now have an option to open a Health Savings Account (or HSA).

An HSA is a government-sanctioned savings account that is combined with a qualifying health insurance plan to provide major medical protection and significant savings on premiums. HSAs were established in 2003 as part of the Medicare Prescription Drug, Improvement, and Modernization Act. HSAs allow you to save money in a tax-free account (such as an IRA) to pay for routine medical expenses now or in the future. With an HSA, you can enjoy significant tax benefits:

- Contributions to your HSA can be deducted from your taxable income.
- HSA funds accumulate tax-free.
- You pay no tax on withdrawals for qualified medical expenses.
- In 2006, you can set aside pre-tax annual contributions of \$2,700 (for self-only policies) or up to \$5,450 for your family.

Leading insurance providers offer qualifying health plan policyholders online tools that help them manage their HSA account transactions with an integrated, secure Web site, as well as through a debit card and checkbook. HSA owners can also invest account assets in mutual funds online.

HSA funds are completely

#### HSA Coverage Includes:

- Qualified medical expenses
- COBRA insurance coverage between jobs
- Health insurance premiums for individuals receiving unemployment compensation
- Qualified long-term care insurance and expenses
- Medicare and retiree health insurance premiums.



portable and roll over from year to year—even if you change jobs, take a job that doesn't offer insurance, start your own business or retire. You can pay for any qualified medical procedure without having to get it specifically approved, and regardless of pre-existing conditions. The funds can be used during retirement to pay for retiree health care, Medicare expenses and prescription drugs.

As a result of their many benefits, HSAs are becoming increasingly popular. Assurant Health, one of the leading individual and small-group health insurers and the first to offer an HSA, has received Individual Medical HSA applications from more than 300,000 people from all segments of the population. Seventy percent of HSA applicants are families with children and 44 percent indicated they had no prior health insurance coverage, suggesting that HSAs also have powerful appeal to those who live without health insurance coverage of any kind.

Get more information on HSAs at [www.assuranthealth.com](http://www.assuranthealth.com) or contact an independent insurance agent.