

GIC Selects Metlife for State Retiree Dental Plan

2007 MAR - Lower Premiums Beginning This July - Soon there will be a new face to the state's retiree dental plan. It belongs to Snoopy, the famous beagle from the Peanuts comic strip.

That's because MetLife, the multinational insurance company with whom the Snoopy character has become so closely identified, has been selected by the state's Group Insurance Commission (GIC) as the new administrator of its retiree dental plan. MetLife will succeed the current administrator, Altus Dental, on July 1.

"There was extremely stiff competition among the finalists, including Altus, Delta Dental and MetLife, all of whom are recognized leaders in this business," reports John Brouder of Boston Benefit Partners, which was the GIC's consultant in the selection process. "It's a testament to how this plan has grown since its inception in '02 and how well regarded it is now by those who are in the know."

According to officials, there were a number of factors that led to awarding MetLife a three-year contract with a two-year option. Among them, the monthly dental premiums beginning this July will be 11% less than the current rates (Individual: \$27.13 to \$23.93; Family: \$64.69 to \$57.64).

Another selling point for MetLife is that on average, the discounts given by dentists in its network (MetLife Preferred Dentist Program) are greater than in the networks for the other insurers. There are approximately 90,000 participating dentist locations nationwide in the MetLife program. Editor's Note: It will be important for enrollees to check to make certain that their dentist is part of the MetLife network in order to be eligible for the discounts.

"MetLife is the largest administrator of dental benefit plans among commercial insurers, servicing nearly 21 million people, and it was recently one of a group of insurance carriers selected to run the new Federal Dental Plan," comments Association Insurance Coordinator Cheryl Stillman. "Their selection, we believe, will produce a bigger and better dental plan for our retirees over the next few years."

"I share Cheryl's enthusiasm over the plan's future," comments MetLife's Senior Account Executive Shelley Molnar. "We look forward to

meeting and talking with your members, as well as all retirees, about the plan at the GIC's upcoming health fairs.

"It's only the beginning of our effort with the GIC, and your Association, to make this dental plan the prototype for similar retiree programs throughout the country."