

Commissioner Poizner Releases Results of His Second Preferred Provider Organization Quality of Care Report Card (And it is Not Good)

Last week, Commissioner Poizner released the results of his second Preferred Provider Organization (“PPO”) quality of care report card. The results are not good news for consumers, and show that California’s PPOs have much work to do in meeting customer needs. According to Poizner:

“California PPOs rank in the middle of the pack compared with the national average, and show some of the lowest overall scores that California has ever seen. HMOs began reporting on quality in 2001, and I got PPOs to join the effort beginning last year. I am grateful for their cooperation, but this report card shows they will have to do better. This should be their wake-up call,” said Commissioner Poizner. “These results show that insurers have a lot of room for improvement, particularly in the area of customer satisfaction. As I promised when I came into office, consumers now have much more information to make choices that are best for them, and to pressure insurers to do better. We all need to use this data to make that happen.”



None of the six PPOs on the report card received the highest four-star rating, but Aetna, CIGNA HealthCare of California and United Healthcare (California) each received three stars overall for delivering quality clinical care. Anthem Blue Cross, Blue Shield of California and Health Net each received two stars overall in that category. Rating criteria included asthma care, checking for cancer, diabetes care and treatment of children. The ratings are based on a set of standard measures developed by the National Committee on Quality Assurance.

In addition to grades based on clinical best practices, the report also includes grades, for the first time, on customer satisfaction. While all PPOs got the mid-range 2-3 stars for getting care easily, all insurers except Aetna received the lowest, single-star rating for plan service. This is clearly the area of greatest concern for California consumers and where there is the greatest room for improvement. The Plan Service category includes customer ratings on things like helpful customer service, getting information about your costs and paying claims.

The PPO report card is available at <http://www.insurance.ca.gov>. The companion report card on HMOs will be released separately early next year.



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