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NEWS RELEASE

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Educators Health Alliance Selects Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska Disease Management Program

Omaha, NE, January 18, 2005 – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska’s BluePartners disease management program has been selected by the Educators Health Alliance (EHA) to help manage the diabetes and heart disease of EHA members with these chronic conditions. BluePartners will be available to EHA members beginning February 1, 2005.

One of the most valuable features of BluePartners is the support provided by a team of healthcare professionals, led by registered nurses. The healthcare team answers any questions covered family members have about chronic conditions, and consults with doctors regarding treatment plans.

“By selecting BluePartners, EHA is helping improve the health and productivity of their members and, ultimately, reduce costs,” said Tim Ranney, M.D., senior vice president and medical director for Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska. Ranney added that Blue Cross is pleased to offer the very best disease management programs to all its customers.

“EHA’s vision is to provide access to quality healthcare for all Nebraska educators, and the EHA Board saw alignment between this vision and the BluePartners program,” said Kevin Dolsky, principal of Actuarial & Health Care Solutions and lead consultant in the disease management selection process. “Like most organizations, EHA is constantly striving to provide a health program that is affordable and delivers quality care to members, and BluePartners provides an opportunity to address both of those objectives”, he said.

The BluePartners program is available to self-funded employers and is provided through an agreement with American Healthways (NASDAQ: AMHC).

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In a study published in the July 2004 *Health Affairs*, AMHC disease management programs were found to have significantly improved quality of care and lowered costs. The study—which included 43,000 members in 12 states participating in an AMHC diabetes disease management program—showed improvement in six key quality indicators and average cost savings of 5 to 8 percent. By improving health, dramatically reducing the number of trips to the hospital and reducing average length of stay in the hospital, the programs have proven to be one of the solutions for helping health plans and their employer customers reduce their annual healthcare spending trend.

About EHA

The Educators Health Alliance is a statewide risk pool that was created to ensure affordable healthcare insurance to Nebraska educators and is managed jointly by the Nebraska State Education Association, the Nebraska Council of School Administrators and the Nebraska Association of School Boards.

About BCBSNE

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, provides healthcare coverage or benefit administration to more than 560,000 people. Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Nebraska is a not-for-profit mutual insurance company.

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