

# 'Blues' can spot big claim families

Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan (BCBSM) says its new cost-containment program could help Chrysler Corp. save more than \$2 million yearly by reducing unnecessary hospital stays.

"The new program can accurately analyze at a faster rate than ever before the thousands of claims generated by BCBSM members at a major customer like Chrysler," said Robert H. Revojoy, BCBSM vice president for health care affairs.

"Now we can quickly determine unusual patterns of admission, lengths of stay, surgical procedures and medical care provided these members."

"Then we meet with hospitals and physicians to solve the specific problems cited by the new program," he said.

THE NEW PROGRAM indicated that some hospitals were admitting above-average numbers of Chrysler UAW members and members of their families for one- and two-day stays for surgery.

The new program is called ASSURE — A Selective Strategy for Utilization Review

Effectiveness. Chrysler and the UAW, on behalf of its hourly employees, are the first to make use of it.

"This new program has provided evidence that Chrysler UAW members have been unnecessarily admitted to a number of hospitals in the state for lower back pain when no surgery was performed."

"These admissions alone cost Chrysler nearly \$700,000 over a recent 12-month period," he said.

WALTER MAHER, director of employee benefits and health services for Chrysler, said:

"This new program blends two important ingredients. It helps slow down the growth rate of health-care costs without sacrificing the quality of care."

"Unnecessary hospitalization for lower back pain not only increases Chrysler's health-care costs, but also subjects our employees to the stress and inconvenience of being hospitalized when home bed rest can be a safer, more comfortable solution."

Mare Stepp, vice president and director

of the Chrysler Department, UAW, said, "The program will improve the quality of care provided our members by reducing instances where hospital stays and related services — such as myelograms of the spinal cord — are performed when no surgery appears necessary."

"In those cases, myelograms are not only medically unnecessary, but also entail considerable risk for our members and their families."

**Unusual patterns of admission, lengths of stay, surgical procedures and medical care provided. These members can be identified quickly in the new hospitalization plan used for the first time by Chrysler UAW members.**

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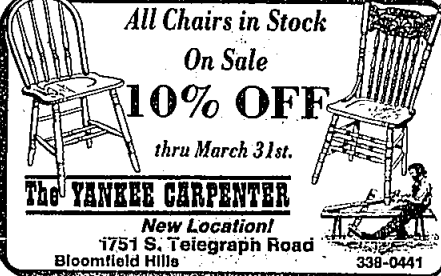
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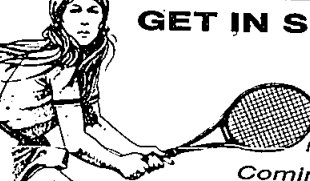


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