

Subject: Changes to the Aetna Student Health Gold Plan Policy Year

Dear Student Health Administrators,

We are contacting you regarding an important issue currently affecting Columbia University students on Morningside campus. As you are aware, this year our Aetna Student Health Gold Plan changed from a short 50 week to a 52 week coverage period, and as a result policies that previously started on September 1<sup>st</sup> transitioned to an August 15<sup>th</sup> activation date. We agree that this change will benefit incoming students; however, it has come to our attention that many returning Morningside students were not aware of this date change and did not register for classes before August 15<sup>th</sup>, which is not otherwise necessary for most graduate students. We understand that, once enrolled, coverage will retroactively apply, that students who did not register by August 15<sup>th</sup> can manually enroll by following [this link](#), and that coverage subsequently may take up to 10 days to take effect.

We are concerned that unnecessary confusion about these changes has occurred. While we are reaching out to our respective networks to inform students about these changes, we are writing to ask that you issue an announcement to all students eligible for the Gold Plan. We hope and expect that you will provide administrative support and specific information detailing how affected students can retroactively process claims (including prescriptions, as well as medical expenses incurred while traveling or during an emergency) from August 15<sup>th</sup> until they regained 'active' coverage, and clarifying whether both class registration and manual insurance re-enrollment are necessary to obtaining coverage as soon as possible.

Sincerely,

Graduate Workers of Columbia (GWC)

Contact: [columbiagradunion@gmail.com](mailto:columbiagradunion@gmail.com)

Columbia University Graduate Student Advisory Council (GSAC)

Contact: [president.gsac@columbia.edu](mailto:president.gsac@columbia.edu)