

# *The Headache we call “Healthcare”....*

*By Erica Potts*

As most, if not all of you know that getting an insurance policy this time of the year is not going to happen unless you an employer interested in providing coverage for you and your employees or you have a situation that is called a Special Enrollment Period (SEP). Situations that may qualify you are: divorce, marriage, birth, adoption, permanent move, error by Federal Marketplace, or loss of employer coverage. The next open enrollment has been scheduled for November 1<sup>st</sup> through January 31<sup>st</sup> however, that may change as many aspects of the ACA are currently under fire.

Recently the House Republicans unveiled what is now being called the American Health Care Act (AHCA) Following are a few highlights of the bill being presented....

## **What Goes?**

- *Mandate to have coverage. The penalty for not having coverage during the year.*
- *Subsidies to help with cost of premiums. Subsidies that are received through signing up for coverage through the Federal Market Place.*
- *Medicaid Expansion dissolves in 2020. Ooverhuals the broader Medicaid program to end its open-ended federal financing. Instead, each state would receive a limited amount based on its enrollment and costs.*
- *All taxes but the Cadillac Tax are gone but it doesn't go into effect until 2025. Many believe that by the time 2025 arrives this to will dissolve.*

## **What Stays:**

- *Preexisting condition coverage, this protects people with pre-existing health problems from being denied coverage. However, consumers must maintain continuous coverage -- otherwise, they would face a flat 30% surcharge on top of their premiums.*
- *Kids on parent policy until age 26 stays.*

## **What's New?**

- *Promotes continuous coverage by requiring a 30% higher premium for a lapsed policy.*
- *Tax credit toward premium, ex. 30 yr old receives \$2K and up to \$4K for those over 60 yrs old.*
- *Allows insurers to charge their oldest customers up to 5 times what they charge young adults. The ACA limits that to 3 times.*
- *Greatly expands contributions to health savings accounts, which allow people with high-deductible insurance to cover expenses that their plans don't pay for.*

While this is just a smidgen of what to expect we have a long way to go for the final law. The ACA was not created overnight, it took many years planning before rolling it out. This plan keeps much of the basic framework set up by ACA but it seems to be full of holes that I'm sure will be ironed out in the months to come.