A Legacy of Caring

With 35 years of history, CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona is one of the oldest and largest managed care providers in the state. In order to understand CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona as it exists today, it is important to explore its history and understand how two companies merged and now provide managed care and employee benefit services to over 360,000 individuals throughout the state.

CIGNA Healthplan of Arizona was formed in 1983 with the merger of Insurance Company of North America (INA) and Connecticut General. The story begins in 1968, when Internal Medicine Associates, Ltd., a group of nine physicians specializing in Internal Medicine, formed INA Healthplan of Arizona. They practiced part-time at Maricopa County Hospital in fee-for-service health care centers in Sun City and Mesa. In 1972, Internal Medicine Associates entered into a joint venture with Blue Cross Blue Shield operating as a prepaid health care plan, marketed as a supplement to Medicare. After serving the Medicare population, INA Healthplan decided to expand its services to all segments of the Valley. In 1974, it opened additional health care centers in order to accommodate its expanding population.

By early 1977, INA Healthplan and Blue Cross Blue Shield’s physician group decided to establish separate independent organizations. In 1978, INA Healthplan of Arizona became the first federally qualified health maintenance organization (HMO) in Arizona, operating five health care centers in Phoenix, Glendale, Mesa, Sun City and Scottsdale with approximately 75,000 members.

Shortly after INA Healthplan formed, the concept of creating an HMO in Arizona began with a 1970 study by Connecticut General Life Insurance. Three physicians formed a professional physicians group, known as Family Health Associates, P.C. (FHA) who then partnered up with Connecticut General to create the Arizona Health Plan (AHP). FHA provided the medical services while Connecticut General provided the marketing staff, insurance expertise and funding for facilities development. During its course of development, AHP expanded facilities into Tempe, Glendale, Maryvale, Paradise Valley, Scottsdale and Mesa.

AHP continued its relationship with FHA and Connecticut General, and in late 1981 Connecticut General announced its plans to merge with INA Corporation. At the time of the merger of the two competing Phoenix HMO’s, Arizona Health Plan and INA Healthplan of Arizona’s combined membership was 150,000. Connecticut General’s name was soon changed to CIGNA, which is a combination of its predecessors’ initials.

On April 1, 1983 the official name for the health plan was changed to CIGNA Healthplan of Arizona, Inc. CIGNA Healthplan of Arizona experienced rapid growth during the first three years because its enhanced reputation for quality services. On Sept. 1, 1993, the name changed once again to CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona and a new logo was created and introduced to represent CIGNA Corp. and CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona.

“CIGNA HealthCare” refers to various operating subsidiaries of CIGNA Corporation. Products and services are provided by these subsidiaries and not by CIGNA Corporation. These subsidiaries include Connecticut General Life Insurance Company, Tel-Drug, Inc. and its affiliates, CIGNA Behavioral Health, Inc., Intracorp, and HMS or service company subsidiaries of CIGNA Health Corporation and CIGNA Dental Health, Inc. In Arizona, HMO plans are offered by CIGNA HealthCare of Arizona, Inc. All other medical plans are insured or administered by Connecticut General Life Insurance Company.