

# Choosing the Future

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## Food for Thought

Consider these developments.

- United HealthCare announced on Thursday that it may withdraw from Affordable Care Act exchanges in the future after reporting losses of around \$700 million for the year.
- Blue Cross Blue Shield of New Mexico announced in August that it lost \$19.2 million last year in coverage offered to 35,000 people on plans sold on and off of the exchange and would be pulling out of the state's health insurance exchange.
- UnitedHealth's action follows the closure of numerous health-care cooperatives, such as the Kentucky Health Cooperative (51,000 members), Health Republic Insurance of New York (150,000 members), CoOpportunity Health in Iowa and Nebraska (120,000 members), the Louisiana Health Cooperative (17,000 members) and Nevada Health CO-OP (14,000 members).
- Enrollment in the exchanges is estimated by Health and Human Services Secretary Sylvia Burwell to be 10 million in 2016, less than half of the 22 million predicted by the Congressional Budget Office in May 2013.
- Insurance premiums are soaring for many patients.
  - Tennessee: The biggest health plan in the state, BlueCross BlueShield of Tennessee received approval for a 36.3% increase.
  - Kentucky: The Kentucky Health Cooperative, the largest insurer on the state's insurance exchange, received approval for a 25.1% increase.
  - Oregon: Moda Health Plan, Inc., the biggest plan on the state's exchange, received approval for an average 25.6% increase.
  - Ohio: Medical Mutual received approval for an average 14.5% increase.
  - Michigan: BlueCross BlueShield won approval for an average 11.4% increase.
  - Idaho: Blue Cross of Idaho won approval for an average 23% increase.
- Most of the nearly 10 million people in marketplace plans qualify for subsidies to offset their premiums, but the average deductible for a silver plan on marketplaces nationwide this year is more than \$2,500.



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