Broker Assistance Transfer Program – BATPhone Pilot Request for Applications

Overview
The Maryland Health Benefit Exchange (MHBE) is seeking Authorized Producers to participate in a pilot program, called BATPhone, which will integrate brokers with our Call Center. The MHBE intends to make use of its existing ranks of highly skilled Authorized Producers (brokers) in assisting with the plan selections of consumers who call our Call Center. By placing brokers in a “virtual call center” that is easily accessible by Call Center Customer Service Representatives (CSRs), the MHBE will improve the experience of all stakeholders. Brokers will get access to new business, consumers will receive expert advice and guidance, and the Call Center will have more CSRs available to answer calls.

Program Description
Consumers often call the MHBE Call Center to complete their eligibility applications and to enroll in Qualified Health Plans (QHPs). During the upcoming open enrollment period (11/1/2015 - 1/31/2016), the MHBE estimates the number of enrollments in QHP through the Call Center at 10,000. Thousands of consumers who are eligible for automatic renewal are likely to seek assistance in choosing a different QHP for 2016. Some of these consumers may have brokers of record, but those who do not will be offered the opportunity to be transferred to a BATphone broker. Consumers will complete their eligibility applications with the help of the CSR. Once the eligibility determination is delivered, if the consumer intends to enroll in a QHP, the CSR then offers to bring in a broker to help. Once the consumer agrees, the CSR initiates a three-way call to a specially built queue in the phone system. A broker picks up, and the broker and CSR complete the “tango” process, which links the broker to the consumer. Once the CSR and the broker complete the tango, the CSR hangs up, leaving the consumer and the broker on the line to complete the plan selection and enrollment.

The pilot phase of this program, scheduled to coincide with the dates of the upcoming open enrollment period, is intended to allow MHBE to evaluate the effectiveness of the “virtual call center” concept. If the pilot is determined by MHBE leadership to be a success, it envisions rolling out a much broader program in the future. To that end, MHBE will gather data and metrics from all involved systems.
and personnel, including brokers. This data will include both quantitative metrics and qualitative feedback from participants. While the ultimate goal of BATPhone is to further the mission of the MHBE, the overriding goal of the pilot phase is to refine and perfect the BATPhone program. For this reason, MHBE must make decisions that keep the smooth administration of the pilot the primary consideration.

Responsibilities of the Broker

Pilot Preparation and Training
Participating brokers must agree to undertake the necessary preparations for the pilot, including but not limited to acquiring the necessary IT equipment (computer, USB headset with microphone) and completing the necessary training delivered by the MHBE staff.

Perform Enrollments
Participating brokers must commit to spending significant time “in the queue,” helping consumers to enroll in QHPs over the phone.

Pilot Evaluation and Feedback
Brokers selected to participate in the pilot will be expected not only to perform enrollments as described above, but also to participate in program evaluation efforts. Brokers will offer feedback and suggestions through interviews, correspondence, and surveys.

Participant Selection
The BATPhone pilot will consist of 25 phone-system software licenses, or “seats.” MHBE retains sole discretion to select which seats are assigned to which brokers, with the primary consideration being to support the goals of the pilot. Within that framework, BATPhone brokers will be selected based on a range of considerations.

Considerations for Selection
- Located in Maryland - Required. Participation in the pilot is limited to brokers whose main work location/office is physically located in Maryland.
- Experienced with Maryland Health Connection - Required. Experience with Maryland Health Connection will be measured by the number of individuals enrolled in coverage by the broker in Plan Year 2015. Only those brokers who have at least one enrollment in Maryland Health Connection are invited to apply.
- Demonstrated Commitment to the Success of MHBE - Preferred. This commitment can be demonstrated in a number of ways, including but not limited to participation in MHBE enrollment events, membership in MHBE
advisory panels or other stakeholder groups, and public comments submitted on proposed MHBE policies.

- **Time Commitment - Considered.** MHBE intends to deploy the BATPhone Pilot in such a way that each of the 25 seats is being actively used to enroll consumers in health coverage during the entire program period. The program period is defined as 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday between November 1, 2015 and January 31, 2016 with the exception of holidays when the Call Center is closed (November 26, 2015, December 25, 2015, and January 1, 2016). The MHBE intends to issue BATPhone licenses that will be as close to 100% utilized as possible.

**Selection Process**
Brokers who wish to participate in the pilot must submit an application to the MHBE, as detailed below. The MHBE staff will evaluate each application and rank the 30 applications that best support the goals of the pilot in descending order of suitability. Those applications ranked 1-25 will be designated as participants, while those ranked 26-30 will be designated as alternates. The MHBE staff will inform all applicants of their status after the selection is complete. Brokers who are selected to participate will then formally agree.

**Alternates**
Should a participating broker need to withdraw from the pilot, or if the MHBE decides to, in its sole discretion, replace a participating broker, brokers designated as alternates will be invited to join the pilot.
Application

In order to be considered for participation in the pilot, please prepare an application as described below and send it via email to mhbe.producers@maryland.gov with the subject line “BATPhone Pilot Application.” Applications must be received by 5 p.m. Eastern Time on October 12, 2015. Applications received after that time will not be considered or evaluated. Applications must be provided in Adobe Acrobat (pdf) format.

Broker Information

Name of Broker ____________________________________________

National Producer Number __________________________________

Business Address __________________________________________

Phone Number ____________________________________________

Email _____________________________________________________

IT Information

Do you have a computer with reliable access to the internet?

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Qualifications

Please describe your experience using Maryland Health Connection to enroll consumers in coverage:

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Please describe your history with MHBE outside of enrollment activities:

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Time Commitment
Please describe how you plan to commit time to the BATPhone Pilot. Please be as specific as possible, including dates, times, and/or hours.

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_________________________________________________________________________________________________

Signature

__________________________________________
Signature of Broker                     Date