State of Idaho
DEPARTMENT OF INSURANCE

C.L. "BUTCH" OTTER
Governor

700 West State Street, 3rd Floor
P.O. Box 83720
Boise, Idaho 83720-0043
Phone (208)334-4250
FAX # (208)334-4398

WILLIAM W. DEAL
Director

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 5, 2011

CONTACT: Tricia Carney
208-334-4312
tricia.carney@doi.idaho.gov
cell 208-850-2342

Affordable Healthcare Act – What it Means for You in 2011

Changes consumers should be aware of now

BOISE ID (January 5, 2011) – As of January 1, 2011, several components of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act are now in effect. The Idaho Department of Insurance urges consumers to learn how these changes may affect them.

"Consumers need to understand how these new changes impact their individual coverage now," says Department Director Bill Deal.

- Over-the-counter medications will now require a prescription for reimbursement from a Health Care Flex Spending Account, Health Reimbursement Arrangement, or Health Savings Account.

- Medicare and Medicaid patients who are subject to the "doughnut hole" or drug coverage gap will receive a 50% discount when buying Medicare Part D covered brand-name prescription drugs.

- To ensure premium dollars are spent primarily on health care, 85% of all premium dollars collected by insurance companies for large employer plans and 80% of premium dollars collected for individual and small employer plans must be spent on health care benefits and quality improvement.

- To protect consumers from excessive premium increases, federal law will require companies to justify premium increases in excess of 10%. Idaho received a grant that will allow more actuarial review of rate increase filings.

For answers to questions about these changes or other insurance-related issues, consumers are encouraged to contact the Department of Insurance at 334-4250 in Boise, 800-721-3272 toll-free statewide, or visit the website at www.doi.idaho.gov.

# # #