

Why should I consider the lowest cost carrier?



By “lowest cost carrier,” we mean the carrier that has the lowest premiums (or pre-tax paycheck deductions) as offered in your region. Whatever plan you choose, one of the carriers will have a lower premium than the other carriers for that same plan. Choosing it will reduce your pre-tax paycheck deductions.

Carriers compete in each region to offer you the lowest price they can. Read more on why the lowest cost carrier may (or may not) be your best option, below.

Choosing a Coverage Level

When you enroll in medical and prescription drug coverage, you have five coverage levels (or metallic plans) to choose from: Bronze, Bronze Plus, Silver, Gold and Platinum. Each coverage level is available from multiple insurance carriers at different costs that are priced regionally. Make sure to do your homework and compare benefits and features across the five coverage options and choose the option that best suits you and your family’s health needs, tolerance for pricing and out-of-pocket claim costs.

Did you know!

Your company’s health care marketplace requires medical carriers to compete in all regional markets in which they have a viable network. As a result, a carrier’s price can be significantly higher in a given year and in a specific region based on that carrier’s market presence and negotiated discounts. However, your dental and vision pricing is tied to the coverage level and carrier you choose. The carriers are all competing for your enrollment and are pricing their plans accordingly.



Choosing a Medical Carrier

Carriers are competing for your business and typically raise or lower their prices from year to year. Once you have chosen a coverage level, if the lowest cost carrier includes your providers in network, or you are willing to change providers, it is recommended you choose the lowest cost carrier.



Meet Michelle

Last year, Michelle chose the Silver plan through Aetna because it had all her providers in network even though it cost a little more than Cigna, the lowest cost carrier. During this enrollment, Michelle used the **Help Me Choose** tool to review her options and noticed that Anthem's prices have increased. Further, the tool also showed that Cigna now has her health providers in network. Michelle decides to save money and switch to Cigna, the lowest cost carrier.



Meet Javier

When Javier completed his new hire enrollment earlier this year, he selected Bronze Plus under UnitedHealthcare (UHC), the lowest cost carrier at the time. Over the past few months, Javier developed a serious health condition. During annual enrollment, he used the **Help Me Choose** tool to help find the best medical option for his needs. The tool recommended the Gold plan with Cigna listed as the lowest cost carrier. However, his specialist is not in Cigna's network. Given this, Javier decides to enroll in Gold coverage but stays with UHC, so he can continue seeing his current doctor.



Still need assistance?



Help Me Choose tool – describe what you are looking for in a plan and this tool will help you choose. Find it on the [**My dsm-firmenich Benefits website**](#).



Review carrier connection – Learn about each of the carriers and the areas they serve on the [**Make It Yours**](#) website.



Schedule an appointment – For additional support, you can schedule an appointment with a customer service representative through the [**My dsm-firmenich Benefits website**](#).

