Some DC Exchange Plans Cover Elective Abortion but Not Hearing Aids

Multiple individual plans available on the D.C. health insurance exchange specifically cover elective abortion but not hearing aids, routine foot care or routine eye care.

One such plan, Healthy Blue PPO $1500, has a summary on the D.C. exchange's website titled "Excluded Services & Other Covered Services." It says enrollees can receive coverage for abortions performed for non-medical reasons but not for a number of other services that could seem medically necessary. The plan also excludes coverage for some other procedures, including cosmetic surgery, bariatric surgery and infertility treatment.

Per Anna Higgins of the Family Research Council, Aetna plans in D.C. and multistate plans run by the Office of Personnel Management and offered by Blue Cross Blue Shield specifically don't offer elective abortion coverage. All the other plans offered in the District do cover elective abortion.

When she wrote about the issue in October for Townhall, representatives from the D.C. exchange told her that plans were required to cover abortion because it was an "essential benefit." That's incorrect, however, and the exchange later retracted the statement. The Affordable Care Act specifically states abortion is not an essential benefit, so not all plans cover the procedure.

Over the last few weeks, many congressional Democrats offered heated criticism of plans that don't include comprehensive coverage of all health services, arguing that the millions of Americans whose coverage is being canceled shouldn't be allowed to stay on "junk plans."

A number of other plans in D.C. that cover elective abortion don’t cover things such as hearing aids, routine foot care or routine eye care. For instance, CD BChoice HSA Br 6000 includes elective-abortion coverage but excludes coverage for hearing aids, infertility treatment and routine foot care. And the Kaiser Permanente KP DC Bronze 4500/50/HSA/Dental/PedDental plan covers elective abortion but not routine foot care, hearing aids or infertility treatment. The KP DC 5000/30%/HSA/Dental/PedDental plan also covers elective abortion but not hearing aids, routine foot care or infertility care.

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