



## NIS Consultants Help Public Sector Organizations Find Savings

National Insurance Services' (NIS) Employee Benefit Consultants are always working hard to ensure that our clients have the best benefits and plan designs for their organization. And sometimes that means taking a customer out to request for proposal (RFP) to find savings.

Here's a few examples of how much we've been saving our groups on their health insurance lately:

- **New client saved \$205,000 with an 8% cap for next year**
- **Current client saved \$151,000 with a 15% cap for next year**
- **New client saved \$113,000 with a 9.5% cap for next year**
- **Current client saved \$150,000 with a 12% cap for next year**

And what's great about these savings is that the clients are saving the above amount plus the NIS consultant compensation is already built-in!

### Using a Consultant for the RFP Process

There are many reasons why an employer may choose to switch carriers – looking for better rates, plan design, customer and claims service, etc. But going out for RFP can be a time-consuming process. Many public sector organizations have found that hiring a consultant to manage the process has been easier than handling it themselves.

For some employers, they must go out to RFP more

often due to necessity. There is a Health Insurance Transparency Act (HITA) statute in Minnesota that requires all school districts (who are not in the Public Employees Insurance Program (PEIP)) to shop their health insurance and obtain at least three quotes every twenty-four months, and some cities and counties must go out to RFP every five years. The HITA requirements are very specific and there are numerous steps that need to be completed during the process. Instead of handling the HITA process themselves or relying on their administrator, some Minnesota public sector organizations have found it very helpful to hire a consultant to manage it.

No matter what the reason for going out to RFP, in today's aggressive market, many employers are learning that it is a smart move to use a consultant during the RFP process. A consultant wears many hats but first and foremost, they are an independent objective consultant looking out for your best interests and getting the best deal.

So, if you're going out to RFP (as a result of HITA or otherwise) a consultant should perform a full market search on your behalf, making sure you are getting best deal. Why settle for a partial market search (like only obtaining three quotes) when you could be getting more options to choose from?

Besides handling and managing your RFP process, a consultant can also:

- Take the place of hiring another HR person
- Answer employee questions about all lines of business

- Run open enrollment meetings
- Review your analytics and let you know if your plan is running well
- Manage all your Minnesota HITA statutory requirements (if applicable)
- Perform a full market search when going out for RFP
- Review your competitive quotes and make recommendations
- Build a strategic benefit plan
- Manage an Insurance Committee
- Address budget concerns and help contain costs
- Review contracts to avoid employer liability and grievances
- Understand the market and bring you new solutions and ideas
- And more

And when you hire an NIS consultant, you're not just getting one person but an entire team of people who specialize in strategy, analytics, retirement benefits, benefit integration, customer service, marketing, and more.

### Put Your Extra Savings to Work

Many employers working with consultants rely on their expertise. And by making changes to their insurance plans (benefit-wise, switching carriers, etc.), they find themselves with some additional savings.

For some struggling organizations (whether it be their small size, working with tight budget, have high claims or premiums, etc.), these savings are real dollars that can be applied back into the organization.

Here's what some employers have used their extra savings for:

- Hiring a new employee
- Purchasing additional resources (computers, books, etc.)
- Putting in additional employer-paid plan(s) (vision, dental, etc.)
- Offering worksite wellness products (accident, critical illness, and hospital indemnity insurance)
- Adding or enhancing their wellness program
- Implementing an online enrollment and benefit administration system

One added bonus of working with an NIS consultant is that we offer our clients our proprietary online enrollment and benefit administration system called NIS Enroll at no-cost. NIS Enroll can help streamline your benefit administration and enrollment process, provide year-around access and communication to your employees, eliminate paper applications and manual enrollment processes, and offer one-on-one telephonic employee enrollment meetings.

Sometimes, the extra savings trickle down to the employees as well. Making plan changes may result in cheaper premiums for employees, allowing them to have more take-home pay, or have the ability to purchase additional worksite benefits to fill their benefit gaps.

Many schools, cities, and counties have hired a consultant to help them manage their employee benefits. A consultant should be independent and objective, someone who is looking out for the employer's best interests. They work hard to ensure that their clients' benefits are the best in the market and that employees are paying the least amount for the best quality on an ongoing basis, year after year.



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