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Intuit and Stride Health Help the Self-Employed Meet December 15th Open Enrollment Deadline

Companies Offer Five Tips to Help Freelancers Choose a Health Plan, Avoid Tax Penalties and Maximize Benefits

MOUNTAIN VIEW, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [Intuit Inc.](#) (Nasdaq:INTU) and [Stride Health](#) are partnering to help freelancers get the most out of their health insurance as the Tuesday, Dec. 15, deadline for Open Enrollment approaches. The two companies have integrated Stride Health's personalized approach to managing health insurance, healthcare and compliance within Intuit's QuickBooks Self-Employed product, which helps freelancers manage business and personal finances, and helps get them ready for taxes throughout the year.

Research from Intuit shows that 28 percent of freelance workers do not have a health plan – more than double the 12 percent of Americans who don't have insurance. By not having health insurance, these workers will face 2016 IRS fines that start at \$695 and grow from there.

"Many self-employed workers aren't aware of the steep penalties they'll face if they miss the December 15th open enrollment deadline, or of all the options and resources available to them when it comes to health insurance," says Alex Chriss, vice president of Intuit's Small Business Group. "We're on a mission to provide stability to the self-employed so that they can enjoy the freedom and flexibility of being their own boss, without having to worry about their finances or challenging compliance requirements like health insurance."

"Finding the right health plan is an important financial decision, and one that can be confusing to many freelancers and self-employed individuals," says Noah Lang, CEO of Stride Health. "By simplifying the process, and tying this important health decision directly back to an individual's finances, we can significantly move the needle on the number of independent workers that are protecting both themselves and their incomes."

Five Open Enrollment Health Insurance Tips for Freelancers

To help self-employed workers make the most of the Open Enrollment Period, Intuit and Stride Health are offering the following five tips:

1. **Re-Evaluate Your Specific Needs** – Unlike employees of big companies, you don't have to accept a cookie-cutter, one size fits all approach. Use this to your advantage. Whether you are signing up for the first time, or switching plans, use the Open Enrollment period as an opportunity to evaluate your specific healthcare needs and find a plan to match.

2. **Save Money** – In this case paying sooner actually saves you money! That’s because by signing up by December 15, your coverage will start January 1, 2016. This maximizes both your ability to pay for medical expenses using your health plan throughout the entire year, and the potential tax deductions you can have through paying premiums. Some health insurance premiums are deductible, and QuickBooks Self-Employed will help you to figure out which ones.
3. **Avoid Penalties** – By missing the Open Enrollment deadline, not only do you miss out on the benefits of being covered, you also open yourself up to tax penalties – IRS fines for not having coverage are \$695 or 2.5 percent of your income, whichever is greater.
4. **Plan for Tax Time** – Speaking of the IRS, tax time isn’t far off. Make sure you are taking full advantage of healthcare-related tax deductions and tax credits provided by the government. For example, consider opening a health savings account (HSA), a tax-advantaged bank account reserved for health-related expenses. The “net savings” to you is usually between 25 to 40 percent, depending on your tax bracket.
5. **Monitor your coverage all year around** – Make sure you get the best return on your health insurance investment. Take advantage of year-round support from Stride Health to ensure you are maximizing the benefits of your health plan. For example, get help understanding what free benefits your plan offers (and which make the most sense for you to use), and be notified when your favorite doctor leaves your health plan’s network.

Self-employed workers have grown to 36 percent of the U.S. labor force, and are expected to reach 43 percent by 2020. On-demand workers alone are projected to grow from a current base of 3.2 million to 7.6 million by 2020. It’s important that this quickly growing population understands both the health and financial implications of the health insurance decision.

About Intuit Inc.

[Intuit Inc.](#) creates business and financial management solutions that simplify the business of life for small businesses, consumers and accounting professionals.

Its flagship products and services include [QuickBooks®](#) and [TurboTax®](#), which make it easier to manage [small businesses](#) and [tax preparation and filing](#). [Mint.com](#) provides a fresh, easy and intelligent way for people to manage their money, while [ProSeries®](#) and [Lacerte®](#) are Intuit's leading tax preparation offerings for professional accountants. The Insurance programs described herein will be provided by Stride Health, Inc. an authorized insurance broker (License # 17110854) and Intuit Insurance Services, Inc. (License #0H27264), a licensed insurance agency and an affiliate of Intuit Inc. in conjunction with Stride Health.

Founded in 1983, Intuit had revenue of \$4.2 billion in its fiscal year 2015. The company has approximately 7,700 employees with major offices in the [United States](#), [Canada](#), the [United Kingdom](#), [India](#) and other locations. More information can be found at www.intuit.com.

About Stride Health

Stride Health, Inc. an authorized insurance broker (License # 17110854) delivers health coverage, care and compliance as a complete suite of “Benefits for Independents” to individuals. Stride’s platform provides on-demand economy marketplaces, consumer finance

platforms, and large organizations with a seamlessly integrated solution to protect independent workers.

Now available in all 50 states and Washington DC, Stride's coverage suite is bolstered by a dedicated advisory team and software that provides access to in-network medical practitioners, negotiated drug prices at 70,000 local pharmacies, and care delivery in your plan. Stride's product is available on any device – mobile, tablet or desktop.

Based in the San Francisco, Stride Health (www.stridehealth.com) launched in early 2014 and is venture-backed by the leading health and consumer technology firms Venrock, New Enterprise Associates, and Fidelity Biosciences.

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Intuit Inc.

Steve Sharpe, 650-224-2362

stephen_sharpe@intuit.com

or

Access Communications

Jen Garcia, 415-844-6244

jgarcia@accesspr.com

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