



For Immediate Release

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Birdsong Hearing Benefits Enters the Market to Provide a Full Array of Services for the Most Under-Utilized Supplemental Benefit: Hearing

Led by industry veterans, Birdsong to partner with health plans and hearing providers to provide hearing benefits to the growing population of people who will experience hearing loss in their lifetime

Jacksonville, FL – May 23, 2022 – More than 48 million people in the US have hearing loss. A 2021 [American Speech Hearing Association \(ASHA\) poll](#) conducted found that more than half (51%) of all adults reported having hearing problems, but only 11% of those respondents have sought treatment. Birdsong Hearing Benefits, based in Jacksonville, FL, today announced its hearing benefits offering to help millions of Americans—especially those in Medicare Advantage—to regain their lost hearing and reconnect with the people and sounds they love.

Hearing benefits are an increasingly important supplemental offering that continues to gain attention, especially in Medicare Advantage. It is a common practice for Medicare Advantage and other health plans to offer a benefits package to its members that includes medical, dental, and vision coverage. A whole health focused, preventive, and full-treatment hearing benefit, however, is significantly under-utilized in today's environment, yet it affects a significant portion of the population. Studies show hearing loss has an impact on other health comorbidities. Hearing loss increases risk of falls and leads to a sense of social isolation and can ultimately have a negative impact on mental health as well as cognitive decline. Birdsong is entering the market to address the needs of these populations as a high-quality, customer centric hearing benefit manager for supplemental benefits.

Birdsong will be a partner to health plans for all hearing needs and services, providing a credentialed provider network, preventive analysis and outreach for health plan members, a contact center, claims operation, and care management.

"Hearing is a vitally important sense for people to feel connected with others and the environment. Sadly, attention to hearing health has historically been a sensitive subject with people feeling embarrassed," said Birdsong President, Sharon Fletcher. "I have such a deep appreciation for the independent providers, networks and retail hearing care professionals." She continued, "They have been so effective in helping people experience the full sound of life again. It is our intent to refer more individuals to them for quality hearing care."

Birdsong, built on the philosophy of care, is designed to improve clinical outcomes and lower total member medical cost with proactive interventions and advanced analytics. It is estimated that those affected with hearing loss begin to notice signs in their early fifties yet very few receive treatment. Birdsong's hearing benefit offerings will seek to address hearing concerns by closing the gaps in care through early hearing loss detection and interventions. Birdsong will offer dedicated care navigators and empower providers with real-time member insights.

In the absence of a supplemental hearing benefit, those suffering from hearing loss rarely seek early, proactive care. Birdsong, by creating the financial and navigation incentive, will seek to significantly increase the number of people who visit a hearing provider annually. Birdsong also will be creating innovative partnerships to socialize members and improve mental health via companion and community building programs.

"There is such a need currently for those dealing with hearing loss," added Fletcher. "Our goal is to create an offering that truly helps people hear better and feel more connected to life, while also adding value to payers and providers."

Birdsong will offer an integrated network – contracting directly with payers and an ever-increasing network of hearing care providers. Birdsong will deliver an easy and effective consumer experience while maintaining a high level of data security and privacy. This will positively impact health plans and hearing providers customer satisfaction scores and effectiveness.

Fletcher shared, "Our objective at Birdsong is to provide a superior hearing solution with exceptional care delivery for Health Plans and their members. It is our desire to help members receive the financial support and guidance to attain professional hearing care and prevent the adverse health outcomes associated with hearing loss."

Birdsong is led by executives with extensive experience in all facets of healthcare and managed care systems. Sharon Fletcher, president of Birdsong, has served in executive leadership roles as President & CEO, of various health plans. She brings extensive experience from both the payer, provider, and managed care ecosystems.

About Birdsong:

Birdsong Hearing Benefits™, located in Jacksonville, FL, was launched in 2022 to provide benefits to the 50-percent and growing population of people who will experience hearing loss in their lifetime. Birdsong provides supplemental hearing benefits to commercial plans and Medicare Advantage programs.

Birdsong's subsidiaries include Advanced Hearing Providers, a workers compensation organization headquartered in Portland, OR, Your Hearing Network, a network of discount plans and providers, AudioNet America, a third-party administrator located in Clinton Township, MI, and Great Lakes Provider Network.

Birdsong's website is <https://birdsonghearing.com/>