

# News Release

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

### CareFirst Joins Partnership of Blues Plans as Owner of NASCO

*-- Increases in Efficiency and Claims Processing Cost-Savings Expected --*

**BALTIMORE, MD and ATLANTA, GA (Aug. 5, 2009)** — CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield (CareFirst) today announced that it has received the required regulatory approvals for its investment as a full partner in National Account Service Company LLC (NASCO), joining the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Michigan, Horizon Blue Cross and Blue Shield of New Jersey and WellPoint, Inc.

“One of the reasons we are interested in furthering our relationship with NASCO is the existing partnership of Blues plans,” stated Chet Burrell, President and CEO of CareFirst. “It is through this unique, strategic partnership that we believe CareFirst can increase the efficiency of our claims processing function.”

As part of its ownership, CareFirst has a seat on the NASCO Executive Committee, which serves as the governance board of the company. Burrell will serve as CareFirst’s representative on the committee. Beginning in July 2008, CareFirst has been consolidating its large group claims processing to the NASCO system. Once complete, NASCO will handle about 50 percent of CareFirst’s overall membership. Large groups are defined as having 200 or more policyholders under an insurance plan.



*John Ladaga (left) and Chet Burrell signing the ownership contract.*

“Having a voice at the NASCO table places CareFirst in a position of influence over how best to shape the direction of the company with our partners,” said Burrell. “The ability to share technology, as well as intellectual and financial resources through NASCO is a significant advantage in an industry facing considerable change and a necessity to maximize the value of each dollar spent on the delivery of care.”

NASCO has been providing health care claims and membership solutions for several Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans for over 20 years, and its single shared-system allows Blues plans to eliminate redundancy and leverage the costs of development and maintenance. NASCO’s system is built to handle large volumes and complex business, which is essential to CareFirst. NASCO will handle claims processing for nearly 500,000 large group contracts for CareFirst by January 2010.

NASCO is committed to maximizing customer performance and lowering operational costs through its unique shared-system environment and consistently high performance. With the ability to automatically adjudicate high percentages of all claims processed, NASCO allows its customers to achieve greater overall efficiency and maximize their operational performance.

“CareFirst’s decision to become an owner of NASCO further demonstrates the growing strength of NASCO’s value proposition to Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans,” said John Ladaga, President and CEO of NASCO. “Our solutions leverage true economies of scale, which is resonating with CEOs and CIOs across Blue Cross and Blue Shield plans. As Plans face economic challenges never before experienced, they are turning to proven, scalable and affordable solutions like ours.”

### **About CareFirst**

In its 72nd year of service, CareFirst, an independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association, is a not-for-profit health care organization which, through its affiliates and subsidiaries, offers a comprehensive portfolio of health insurance products and administrative services to nearly 3.4 million individuals in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia. Through its CareFirst Commitment initiative and other public mission activities, CareFirst supports efforts to increase the accessibility, affordability, safety and quality of health care throughout its market areas.

### **About NASCO**

NASCO got its start in Atlanta over 20 years ago when it partnered with several Blue Cross® and Blue Shield® Plans and the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association to introduce an integrated membership and claims processing system for national accounts. Today, NASCO’s capabilities extend to include support for individual, local and government business while its multitude of performance-based services help its Plan customers improve their operational efficiencies and reduce costs. Having processed over 1 billion claims, the NASCO Processing System is unsurpassed in the market for reliability, flexibility, scalability and operational performance. For more information, visit [www.nasco.com](http://www.nasco.com).

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*To learn more about CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, visit: [www.carefirst.com](http://www.carefirst.com)*