



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Press Contact: Jennifer Wright Dorr
202-293-5330**

Financial Help Available to Tackle Hospital Health Care Costs

As hospital costs soar and health insurance coverage tightens, more American families than ever before are being thrown into a financial tailspin. Unexpected health care costs are the number one cause of bankruptcy with 1.5 million American families losing their homes every year due to unaffordable medical costs.

Passing comprehensive health care reform is essential, but for immediate financial relief, Union Plus is providing \$1,000 Hospital Care Grants to help union families who are saddled with steep hospital bills. The grant money, which never needs to be re-paid, helps union families get a handle on household bills and gain some much-needed peace of mind.

Union member Kristan McArthur, of Dallas, GA, says the \$1,000 grant she received helped her cope with the emotional and financial stress she suffered following surgery to repair a crushed anklebone.

“The Union Plus Grant helped me a lot,” McArthur says. “There was a lot of pressure on me to pay off the hospital bills, but how could I do that when I wasn’t even able to work? I still had to pay for prescriptions, food, and other household expenses. It was such a big relief after I used the \$1,000 to pay off what I owed for the surgery.”

The Hospital Care Grants are part of a new \$3 million safety net initiative introduced this year by Union Plus to assist union members facing financial hardship during the recession. Union SAFE provides a wide array of benefits, including financial counseling, college savings grants, disability assistance, and help aimed at fighting foreclosure.

Union members who have had a Union Plus Credit Card, Mortgage, or Insurance policy for one year and who face out-of-pocket hospital expenses (after insurance) that are at least 10% of household income for a hospitalization of the union member, spouse or dependent within the last 12 months are eligible to apply for grants.

The Hospital Care Grant is just one of the many ways that Union Plus is working to keep union members healthy – both physically and financially (see box).

For more information and to apply for a Hospital Care Grant, visit UnionPlus.org/HospitalGrant.

###

[Note to Editors: content below for a sidebar]

Stay Healthy with Your Union Plus Benefits

Health care costs – doctor visits, prescriptions and hospitalization – continue to spiral out of control. In fact, every 30 seconds someone in the U.S. files for bankruptcy following a serious health problem.

Union Plus has created various programs aimed at helping to keep union members healthy – physically and financially.

- Take advantage of a free **prescription discount card** that helps you save at over 58,000 participating pharmacies.
- Try to take some of the pain out of unpaid hospital bills by applying for a **Hospital Care Grant** for Union Plus Credit Card, Mortgage and Insurance holders.
- Cut your out-of-pocket health care expenses with **Union Plus Health Savings discount programs**. Depending on the program selected, enjoy savings on vision care, prescription drugs, hearing care, dental care, physician and hospital care.
- Get in better shape while exercising your union money-saving power when you use **Health Club Membership Discounts** at your choice of over 10,000 fitness clubs nationwide.
- Ease the stress and costs related to finding and securing eldercare services by tapping into the **Union Plus Eldercare Services** program.

Explore all the ways that Union Plus can help you get your financial and physical health in order by visiting **UnionPlus.org/Health** today.

###