Key Questions to Ask an Insurance Broker When Evaluating Health Insurance Plans

# General Broker Assessment

* How long have you been working with employer-sponsored group health plans?
* Do you specialize in businesses of my size and industry?
* Are you an independent broker or tied to specific insurance carriers?
* Can you provide client references or case studies with businesses like mine?

# Plan Design & Customization

* What types of plans can you offer (PPO, HMO, HDHP with HSA, EPO, etc.)?
* What are the tradeoffs between these options for a business of my size?
* Can plans be customized based on employee needs or tiers (e.g., management vs. hourly)?
* How do the plans handle in-network vs. out-of-network services?

# Cost and Affordability

* What is the total monthly premium for each plan option (employer and employee portions)?
* Can you help us structure a contribution strategy that balances cost control with competitiveness?
* What are the deductibles, copays, and out-of-pocket maximums?
* Can you break down expected year-over-year rate increases based on past trends and renewal practices?
* Are there strategies for controlling long-term costs (e.g., wellness programs, self-funding, level-funding)?

# Network & Coverage

* Which providers and hospitals are in-network for each option?
* How do these networks compare to those of competing carriers?
* Can you provide tools or access to verify provider networks in advance of enrollment?

# Compliance & Legal Considerations

* How do the plans comply with ACA, ERISA, COBRA, and state-specific regulations?
* Do you provide assistance with 1094/1095 ACA reporting and required notices?
* How is mental health parity and reproductive health access handled under the plans?
* What Massachusetts/Connecticut/Rhode Island-specific compliance issues should I be aware of?

# Enrollment & Support

* Do you offer a benefits platform or enrollment system for employees?
* What support do you offer during open enrollment and throughout the year (e.g., claims issues, new hire onboarding)?
* Do you provide employee education or engagement materials for benefits comprehension?

# Broker Services & Fees

* How are you compensated (commission, flat fee, per-employee-per-month, etc.)?
* Are there any additional administrative, consulting, or compliance service fees I should be aware of?
* Do you assist with other benefits (dental, vision, life, disability, FSA/HSA, EAPs)?
* Can you help with benchmarking our benefits offering against similar companies?

# Renewals and Long-Term Strategy

* What is your renewal process, and when should we begin reviewing plan changes?
* How often do you go to market to review or rebid plan options for clients?
* What cost containment or plan optimization strategies do you recommend annually?