

## **Owning Your Own Health Committee**

**March 18, 2015**

Old Jail Conference Room

2:00 p.m.

APPROVED

Present: Mack Cook, Jennifer Jones, Brooke Jobin, Ken Foresti (via phone), Don Barber, Leslie Moskowitz, Bev Chin, Ted Schiele

### **Call to Order**

Mr. Cook called the meeting to order at 2:05 p.m.

### **Approval of Minutes of February 18, 2015**

It was MOVED by Mr. Schiele, seconded by Ms. Chin, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of February 18, 2015 as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

### **Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Barber reported other Consortium Committees have not met during the past month. He thanked Mr. Schiele and Ms. Chin for hosting an exploratory session yesterday on the Worksite Wellness Coalition and said both Ms. Moskowitz and Ms. Jones attended as well. The meeting was attended by some well-established programs (Cornell, Ithaca College, Cayuga Medical Center, Hospicare, City of Ithaca, and Tompkins County) and at the meeting there was general agreement that the Coalition would be beneficial to all parties. Mr. Barber said he proposed that municipalities that have established a wellness policy include their worksite wellness teams in the Coalition as it may be a venue for start-up programs and existing programs to talk about rolling out new wellness programs and collaboration.

Mr. Barber said "knowing your numbers" has become a common theme of this Committee and there has been discussion of offering biometric screening programs to benefit fairs in the Fall and he said he has received quotes from Ignite Health which offers a la carte options for the Flame and Light program options. The Light option is a screening with exit counseling after the screening and they would report aggregate numbers to the Consortium and would report any common issues they observed such as high blood pressure. The Flame option is an enhanced option that starts with a health calculation which provides someone with an objective number between 1-100 of where their health fits in and then they would do an enhanced exit counseling to talk about what they found. They would then report back to the employer with recommendations for a health management program.

With respect to costs the Light Program would be \$5,000 for 100 participants and the Flame Program would be \$6,000. In the quote for 200 participants the Light Program would be \$8,540 and the Flame Program would be \$9,820. The numbers were based on Ignite Health attending four venues for benefit fairs. Ms. Jobin said the due to lack of space because of the many different vendors that attend County benefit fairs other options may need to be explored for hosting County benefit fairs.

Mr. Barber said if this Committee reaches a point where it would like to move forward a recommendation would be presented to the Audit and Finance Committee. He said he envisions this being a Consortium cost and that employers would not be paying for it as the Consortium would first receive the benefit of lower claim costs. As the time moves closer

feedback can be sought to identify what the number of participants would be. *Mr. Cook asked if numbers could be obtained for the costs for a range of 300-400 participants; Mr. Barber said he will request this information.*

### **Discussion of Wellness Vision**

A copy of a Wellness Vision proposal, initial goals, and action steps was provided to members. Mr. Barber reviewed the draft Wellness Vision he prepared and goals based on that Vision proposal.

Wellness Vision: “A community that values and practices preventative health care of promoting health and preventing disease.”

Mr. Foresti reviewed a similar Excellus Wellness Vision that is targeted towards employees and family members. Ms. Moskowitz questioned where owning one’s own health would fall into this statement. Mr. Schiele asked if the Consortium has a mission statement. Mr. Barber said although it has been articulated many times the Consortium has not adopted a formal mission statement. The purpose of the Consortium when it was first created was to provide a venue for all of the municipalities in Tompkins County and neighboring counties for to have a larger group to get better pricing for insurance and to have the most efficient insurance company possible. The Consortium has been able to operate efficiently; however, with claims costs rising at 7-8% annually it is not sustainable and wellness is part of a strategic plan. The idea behind this is to articulate a vision for the Board to embrace and the action steps would be things the Consortium would do and not individual employers.

There was a discussion of tying in Owning Your Own Health to the vision statement. From the standpoint of being broad enough to see that there is buy-in Mr. Schiele agreed that it should not be too detailed. It was stated that wellness vision statements can often be very involved and individual municipalities can adopt their own wellness vision statements. Members supported the brevity of the statement and there was consensus that it communicates an accurate, appropriate, and valuable global vision statement for the Consortium. The proposed Wellness Vision will be presented at the next Board of Directors meeting.

The Committee reviewed and made suggestions to the following initial goals to achieve the Vision:

#### **Initial Goals to achieve vision:**

1. Wellness vision is embraced by Board of Directors, employers, employees, families, and retirees;
2. Establish a sustained preventative health care awareness program. Mr. Barber said different initiatives could be identified using all the different venues and putting out a similar message so that people are hearing the message at many different levels. This would make the message broader than coming just from the Consortium.
3. Develop GTCMHIC branding that emphasizes wellness. Mr. Schiele questioned if “branding” refers to saving money. Mr. Barber said it refers to having people be healthier. Mr. Schiele said if this is branding the Consortium it first needs to be branded as the employee’s insurance company and although wellness is very important, if this is branding the Consortium people need to understand that it is their insurance company. At this time most employees believe their insurance company is Excellus He said the

true branding is that it is the employees' insurance company and one of the things they get from it is concern and attention to wellness.

Mr. Cook agreed that stated employees still do not know that the Consortium is not only their insurance company and that employees are stakeholders in the success of the Consortium, similar to a cooperative. Employees do not realize their premiums are a direct derivative of their health practices. Ms. Moskowitz said if the branding is done now it will also ease the flu clinic process. Mr. Barber said there is awareness of this and is part of his presentation of the Orientation Manual to municipalities and bargaining units.

4. Board of Directors creates the Wellness Team charged with developing and oversight of the implementation of preventative health care programs

The Committee discussed Mr. Barber's proposed action steps:

1. Present Wellness Vision at March 26, 2015 Board of Directors meeting.
2. Develop branding competition. Participants would be anyone who is covered. A logo/slogan and artwork could be included, it should be fun and include prizes.

Mr. Cook will report on the discussion at today's meeting to the Board at its meeting next week and will explain that the purpose is to enhance and encourage awareness that the Consortium is not an intangible, remote, or large corporation. It is "us", meaning the employee's families, co-workers, and retirees. Ms. Moskowitz asked how aware Board members who are elected officials are of this. Mr. Barber said some of the most powerful statements endorsing the Consortium come from elected officials; one of the biggest challenges, however, is getting elected officials to participate in committee meetings where much of the work is done. Ms. Moskowitz noted all of this relies on the engagement of employees.

3. Make original Strategic Planning Committee partners aware of Wellness Vision and desire to collaborate with awareness campaigns. Mr. Barber said the bulk of this action took place yesterday because a number of these partners were at yesterday's Worksite Wellness Coalition meeting.
4. Introduce Wellness Team Concept to Board of Directors on March 26, 2015 and ask for guidance and charge to OYOH to bring forward resolution.
5. Present actions steps 1, 2, & 4 to next Joint Committee meeting.

### **Municipal Wellness Survey**

Mr. Barber said he compiled the following list of questions with assistance from Mr. Schiele and from the CDC Assessment Tool and will be using them tonight when he meets with the Town of Lansing Board to present the Orientation Manual.

Ms. Moskowitz asked about a suggestion that was made previously with regard to obtaining what would be the best point of contact to help to get the right person to attend meetings. Mr. Barber said benefit clerks at each municipality are currently that person and a meeting will be held with them in May to honor them for their commitment and work with the Consortium. It is also to re-enforce that they are at the front lines to communicate with employees and the Consortium.

1. Are healthy snacks choices available at meetings and in break rooms?
2. Are employees able to take physical activity breaks during the workday?
3. Do you believe that healthier people are more satisfied and productive on the job?
4. Did you know that healthier lifestyle choices can help reduce health care costs?
5. Do you think work is a good place to learn new habits for healthier eating and exercise?
6. Would you like to make wellness part of your workplace?
7. Has your municipality adopted a Wellness Policy? If so, please share examples of level of commitment and support.
8. Does this policy include a Wellness Committee? And if so, will a representative be able to regularly attend the Consortium's Own Your Own Health Committee?
9. Has municipal budget include funds to support Wellness activities?

### **Discussion of Content of Presentation of Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design**

Mr. Cook spoke of engaging the Joint Committee on the process. He said the Consortium is unique in that under Article 47 there is a requirement for a standing committee of labor representatives and management that is charged with looking at plans, the design of those plans, and where plans are moved to. If the intent is to solicit grass root involvement in their plans members of that Committee need to be engaged in this Committee. Mr. Cook said this Committee needs to go to that Committee to present information if it is going to be successful in changing the culture. Mr. Barber said Committee has been presented with information on how plans are designed and what little control the Consortium has in making changes to plan designs and a second educational retreat is scheduled for June 12<sup>th</sup> that will focus on plan design. At that time there will be an overview of how plans are designed and what levers are left to be tweaked and what the effects are of those changes. He said that information will allow during contract negotiations for people to be aware there are certain parts that are mandated and some that are flexible. He said every collective bargaining unit has a member on the Joint Committee and the opportunity to be sitting at the table.

Mr. Cook said this is an opportunity for the Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design to be aware that as the health care environment changes it may necessitate changes in the actual compensation of plans and used the Cadillac Tax that is anticipated in 2018 as an example of something that will require some change in plan design to allow a plan to continue to be affordable at the family level. He said the Joint Committee is the best communication tool that presently exists to get information out.

### **Next Agenda Items**

Due to time constraints there was not time to review the final document prepared by Mr. Barber (below). It was agreed that that item along with discussion of feedback from the Board of Directors will be included on the next agenda. Mr. Cook encouraged members to attend a meeting of the Joint Committee on April 7<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Wellness Marketing to Board and Joint Committee**

Research shows that wellness results in happier lives, the ability to enjoy and participate in more activities, shorter recovery from disease or injury, the ability to do more at work and pleasure for longer. Research also shows that the majority of population doesn't feel wellness programs are appropriate or relevant to them. These facts indicate an opportunity for education and provide fertile ground for new concepts.

Wellness is preventative care that patients chose for themselves to promote health and prevent disease. To make this an integral part of a patient's new lifestyle requires community support. A key strategy to wellness program (WP) success is to think of it as changing a community's culture.

Employers play an important role, in changing a culture. An opportunity exists to use workplace interactions to create a social structure needed to reinforce wellness culture. Wellness, when thought of as preventative care, will decrease health care costs and premiums. This financially benefits employer and employees through premiums and medical costs like copay, deductible, etc.

Documentation of return on investment of wellness programs show that with a volunteer start-up of corps of 33%, claims cost are reduced by 7% in 2.5 years. There are other financial benefits not included such as less absenteeism, lower worker's comp and disability insurance costs; and, if this culture is sponsored at work, improved social interactions in the workplace.

The Consortium is a different structure from most wellness initiatives due to 16 autonomous employers of varying size and resources. But some Consortium's have had several years of experience. Because of the varying size and staffing of our partners, we could think of the Consortium providing the basic underpinnings of creating a Wellness culture and allow employers the freedom to enhance the culture as their resources allow. The Consortium BoD can consider taking this support role because financially the Consortium will be the first entity to see benefit. As the community embraces wellness, those cost reduction could be passed along as reduced premiums. So, the Consortium's wellness actions would be for the entire community.

Research shows that successful programs start by education, move to encouraging participation through rewards and once the program is running for a few years incentives are used to bring in the rest of the flock. This suggests that the program actions need to be both fun and patient focused to make it relevant and easy to participate in. Initial financial incentives to reward behaviors can complement education to encourage the initial cadre and develop a solid operating program in operation. Then premium incentives can be used to nurture the remaining staff into the program and move closer to a preventative health care culture.

### **Adjournment**

The meeting adjourned at 3:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, Administrative Clerk