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MINUTES
Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium
Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design
March 1, 2012 – Noon
Old Jail Conference Room

APPROVED

Present:

Municipal Representatives: 7 members

Betty Conger, Village of Groton; Schelley Michell Nunn, City of Ithaca; Mary Mills, Village of Cayuga Heights; Herb Masser, Town of Enfield; Don Barber, Town of Caroline and Chair, Board of Directors; Jennifer Case, Town of Dryden; Brooke Jobin, Tompkins County

Municipal Representatives via Proxy: 2 members

Judy Drake, Town of Ithaca (Proxy – J. Licitra); Laura Shawley, Town of Danby (Proxy – M. Mills)

Union Representatives: 7 unit members

Chantalise DeMarco, County White Collar-CSEA; George Appar, President; Ithaca Professional Fire Fighters Assoc. and Ithaca Area Fire Fighters #73; John Licitra, Town of Ithaca DPW Teamsters; Michael Thomas, City of Ithaca Admin. Unit – CSEA 1000; Patricia Vandebogart, TC3 CSEA Staff Unit; Jim Bower, Bolton Point

Others in attendance:

J. Taber, Locey & Cahill; S. Dovi, TC3; Beth Miller, Ken Foresti, Excellus

Call to Order

Ms. DeMarco called the meeting to order at 12:11 p.m.

Presentation by Excellus

Mr. Foresti walked the Committee through the Consortium's customized web portal (<http://myexcellusplan.com/greatertompkins/>) that is available through the Excellus website. There is also a link to this under the Employee section of the Consortium website. Tools are available through the portal that will allow members to manage their policy, obtain answers to questions relating to prescription drugs, and access information and resources to manage health. It was noted that registering on the portal does not replace any paperwork that members currently receive concerning benefits.

Ms. DeMarco asked if more detailed information could be listed on the Benefit Summary page because some employees may not know which plan they are in. Ms. Miller said this could be done if more information was provided. Ms. DeMarco said she will speak to Brooke Jobin, Tompkins County Benefits Manager, about this.

Mr. Foresti reviewed the Blue 365 program that is available to all Consortium plans. This includes the Resources for Healthy Living which offers health resources, healthy choices, and, discounts for recreation, travel, and fitness.

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Mr. Foresti said for a \$25 enrollment fee and \$25 per month with a three-month commitment, members can have access to over 8,000 health clubs across the country. He demonstrated how a search of health clubs is done to locate clubs and displayed a list of clubs within the area. The search showed the closest participating clubs to Ithaca were in Horseheads, Syracuse, and Waverly, New York. Members asked Mr. Foresti to look into whether the following area clubs would be interested in participating: Island Health, City Health Club, and Planet Fitness.

Mr. Foresti highlighted the Step-Up Program and explained the tools available through the web portal through this program. He extended an offer to help the Consortium plan a program for its members.

Withdrawal of Items from the Agenda

Ms. DeMarco said the updates on CanaRx and Medicare Supplement would be withdrawn from the agenda until Mr. Locey is in attendance.

Review of Requests for Proposals for EAP and Flex Health Spending Account Programs

Ms. Taber presented and reviewed revised RFP's based on suggestions made at the last meeting.

FSA (Flexible Spending Account) Program

She said one of the biggest questions that come up about flexible spending accounts is how it is going to be funded. At this time they want to have the vendor be able to either fund it through contributions from individual employers as well as the Consortium as a whole. Mr. Locey will need to work with Mr. Squires on the specific details of how the funding will work but to move this forward it will be presented with both options. This RFP will be distributed on April 2, 2012 with responses due by April 27th. Ms. Taber will research what providers are available that could be included in the distribution in addition to providers currently being used by municipalities in the Consortium (EMB RMSO and Sieba).

EAP (Employee Assistance Program)

Ms. Taber referred to the Cost Proposal section and said it will be based on a per member per month cost within the scope of services they are asked to provide. Some members do not currently provide these services so vendors are being asked to provide different pricing based on what each municipality can afford or thinks would be appropriate for their employees.

Ms. Nunn said the City currently pays for a total number of hours and each employee can use up to eight hours. The City pays a prime rate on anything used above the total number of hours the City has contracted for. Ms. Taber clarified that this covers any employee's spouse and dependents.

Mr. Masser said he provided Mr. Locey with a list of providers to include on the distribution list. Ms. Taber asked that this information be sent to her. Ms. DeMarco asked that she receive a list of the providers Ms. Taber currently has.

New Business

Mr. Barber said work is being done on the Consortium's year-end numbers and, through the Treasurer, the Board has learned that for the last several months the Consortium was spending what it was bringing in in premium and not having to use reserves. Many proposals have come for managed care from Excellus and Medco and providers in the County have been talking about having the Consortium participate in a clinical integration program. All of these

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programs are aimed at saving money but have to be embraced and participated in by employees. He noted that none of these programs are about changing benefits; they are about changing behavior patterns. It will take time to bring people along and find out what comfort level there could be in this. He thinks having this Committee talk about how to move in that direction would be an important step.

Mr. Barber responded to a question of what managed care is and said the party managing the care is managing the information and communicating with an employee about ways they see the same level of service could be provided at a lower cost. Mr. Barber stressed that he is not speaking to how care should be managed at this time, but is speaking about the concept and the need for an effort to have employees on board. He spoke strongly about the need to change patterns that continue to raise health care costs.

Ms. Nunn asked if a physician is required to write a prescription for a generic drug if one is available. Ms. DeMarco explained New York is a generic mandate State; prescriptions can be written for a brand name drug but it is always filled generically unless the physician orders it to be dispensed as written. Ms. Nunn said she thinks it is important to talk about an education and awareness plan and employers need to start the process of educating its workforce about the financial issues around health care in addition to how each individual can make an impact on reducing costs.

Mr. Barber said the Consortium's Strategic Planning Committee is talking about this and trying to come up with strategies. Ms. DeMarco stressed the importance of having all of the employers at the table during these discussions to work towards communicating this to employees.

Mr. Barber explained that clinical integration is something that Cayuga Area Physicians have worked with local providers on putting together and is an alliance of independent physicians that all communicate with each other. When a patient is seen by a physician in this alliance that physician has access to all of the patient's information regardless of what physician they have seen or where. There is a patient portal that allows a patient to communicate with his or her physician also. This integration of information results in cost savings through reducing the number of tests done, reducing emergency room visits, providing better advice to patients, and a focus on high-risk patients. Mr. Barber said they are working with the large employers in the community and have approached the Consortium Board about participating. Mr. Barber said the Consortium is still negotiating with them on cost. He suggested this Committee invite Travis Turner to attend a meeting and provide a presentation; Ms. DeMarco will follow-up on this.

Report from Beth Miller on Excellus Upgrade Timeline

Ms. Miller said as of January, 2013 Excellus will be doing a system upgrade and the Consortium will be moving to the upgraded system which contains many enhancements. At the next meeting she will bring someone to talk about the upgrade and timeline in detail.

Approval of Minutes of October- February, 2012 Meetings

Due to lack of quorum approval of minutes was deferred to the next meeting.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 1:35 p.m.

Respectfully submitted by Michelle Pottorff, Administrative Clerk