



Meeting Minutes | Health Care Policy Committee

Wednesday, March 6, 2024 | 9:30 a.m.

202 Arbor Lake Dr., Columbia, SC 29223 | First Floor Conference Room

Minutes approved June 26, 2024

Board Members Present for All or a Portion of the Meeting: Mr. Steve Heisler, PEBA Board Chairman Joe “Rocky” Pearce, and Committee Chairman Alex Shissias.

Board Members Absent: Mr. John Sowards

Others Present for All or a Portion of the Meeting: Peggy Boykin, Robby Brown, Phyllis Buie, Amber Carter, Alexis Cohens, Kevin Crosby, Matt Doherty, Justin Ellis, Denise Hunter, Heather Muller, Jacalin Shealy, Laura Smoak, Rob Tester, Katie Turner, Travis Turner, Angie Warren, Justin Werner, Chuck Wilson, and Heather Young from the South Carolina Public Employee Benefit Authority (PEBA); Jesse Epting, Dr. Tripp Jennings, Andrew Keese, Ansh Upadhyay, and Carmen Wilson from BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina; Brandon Mattie from Hello Heart; and Sam Griswold from the State Retirees Association of South Carolina.

Others Present for All or a Portion of the Meeting Via Virtual Means: Jessica Moak from PEBA.

I. Call to Order

Chairman Alex Shissias called the PEBA Health Care Policy Committee (Committee) meeting to order at 9:30 a.m., and stated that the public meeting notice was posted in compliance with the Freedom of Information Act.

II. Approval of Meeting Minutes – December 6, 2023

Mr. Steve Heisler made a motion, which was seconded by PEBA Board Chairman Rocky Pearce, and passed unanimously, to approve the minutes from the December 6, 2023, Board meeting.

III. New Initiatives in the New Medical Claims Administration Contract

Ms. Carmen Wilson with BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina detailed new health care initiatives intended to create a positive impact for the State Health Plan (SHP) and its membership.

Ms. Wilson advised that the new contract with BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina is for seven years, beginning January 1, 2024, and ending December 31, 2030. As part of the new contract initiative, members will be provided with a direct toll-free telephone line maintained by a live person, available during the hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. This line will be dedicated to guiding members in search of services related to behavioral health and population health programs, and to assist in finding the appropriate provider for the services.

Ms. Wilson also discussed the implementation of a program designed to address Social Determinants of Health (SDOH). This program will have the capability to use predictive analytics and social determinants data to identify members whose health could be improved by addressing SDOH. Mrs. Wilson advised that this program will use a referral management process to a statewide network of service providers, and seek to create connections into health system Electronic Medical Records to act on SDOH screenings.

Ms. Wilson stated that BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina will collaborate with PEBA to seek participation in population health programs related to the demographics of Plan participants, and will develop strategies to promote and encourage members to enroll and participate in population health management.

Ms. Wilson concluded the presentation by stating that the goal of the new BlueCross BlueShield of South Carolina initiatives is to ensure that members have easy access to care, and that the care is given at the right place, and at the right time.

IV. Hello Heart Program Review

Mr. Brandon Mattie, Vice-President of Sales with Hello Heart, reviewed the Hello Heart digital platform focused strictly on heart health in the SHP. Mr. Mattie stated that 42 percent of U.S. adults struggle with hypertension, and it's the third largest cost driver for the SHP.

Mr. Mattie advised that there are 27,848 total users in the Hello Heart Program, and 61 percent of users with high blood pressure have seen a reduction in their blood pressure. Mr. Mattie stated that 71 percent of users are female, and 42 percent of users have self-reported high cholesterol.

Mr. Mattie also reviewed enrollment by month statistics, communication campaigns, engagement of users, and SHP specific user diastolic and systolic reductions.

V. State Health Plan Benchmark Review

Mr. Rob Tester, Insurance Policy Director, presented the SHP benchmarking review in which key SHP measures are compared with peer and national benchmarks. Mr. Tester reviewed the SHP enrollment as of March 2024, specifically noting that membership in the SHP is the largest it's ever been with 534,669 covered members. Mr. Tester discussed the SHP growth and expenditure per member to national trends; the SHP contribution rate increases versus the Consumer Price Index growth for medical care; and the 2023 average monthly total premiums.

Mr. Tester also reviewed the 2023 average annual deductible; the 2022 average annual gross plan cost per active employee; and the 2024 composite monthly premiums. Mr. Tester stated that the State Health Plan continues to compare favorably to other public and private employers, regionally and nationally.

VI. State Health Plan Amendment

Mr. Justin Werner, General Counsel, reviewed the amendment to the definition of "Employee" for the purposes of eligibility to participate in the State Insurance Benefits Program.

Mr. Heisler made a motion, which was seconded by PEBA Board Chairman Rocky Pearce, and passed unanimously, to recommend that the PEBA Board amend the definition of "Employee" for

the purposes of eligibility to participate in the state insurance benefits program, effective immediately, to allow the councils of participating counties and municipalities to exercise a one-time, irrevocable option to exclude their council members from the definition of "Employee."

VII. Old Business/Director's Report

Ms. Peggy Boykin, Executive Director, stated that she would provide the director's report at the full Board meeting.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, and upon a motion by Mr. Heisler, which was seconded by PEBA Board Chairman Rocky Pierce, and approved unanimously, the Committee meeting adjourned at 10:33 a.m.