

Benefits Focus Group Minutes (12/03/03)

Committee members, alternates and staff advisors present:

John Agen
Janice Cox
John Glanden
Gil Fernandez
Pat Horan
Casey Humpert
Karen Lusk
Dick Minster
Stacey Monroe
Andy St. John
Susan Merritt
Joyce Dolan
Nancy Meskimen
Joe Munyak
Marquett Becker (arrived 15 min. late)
William Tatum
Robert Blinch-Edwards (Linda McKinney advised he may be delayed and did arrive 15 min. late)
Kurt Hoverter
Linda McKinney
Wendy Prell (Linda McKinney advised Wendy may be delayed; however, Wendy did not arrive.)
Diane Vanderwest

John Agen called the meeting to order at 1:05 p.m., December 3, 2003. Linda McKinney called the roll.

Minutes from the November 5, 2003 meeting were approved; however John Agen will hold until Benita Saldutti returns for signature on it, since he was not present at the November 5th meeting.

Since Mr. Robert Blinch-Edwards will be a little delayed and he was assigned agenda items 3 and 4, John Agen advised that these agenda items would be addressed when Mr. Blinch-Edwards arrives. The next agenda item will then be taken out of agenda order.

Guidelines for Calling EMI:

Linda McKinney distributed copies of a first draft of the "Before you Call Checklist" to each member for review and discussion. This checklist was drafted to assist people when they call by aiding in determining whom they should call, properly preparing for the call and the documentation of the call.

Pat Horan made the suggestion of including "SARAS" as the group name/I.D. on this checklist for use when logging into Caremark. This checklist will be communicated to all active and retired employees.

To see your personal information, a password is required. Kaykae has the information packet concerning this procedure. This step will be added to the checklist.

John Munyak had a question regarding the HIPAA regulation and contacting Caremark with the required prior authorization paperwork. The HIPAA regulation is not an issue when ordering prescriptions, it does become an issue when asking questions regarding details or medical services provided for someone other than yourself (and not a minor dependent) due to PHI (Protected Health Information.)

The form required by either EMI or Caremark, reference to the HIPAA regulation and prior authorization and the process of documenting the form, will be discussed further at the next meeting in January. Also, for the next meeting, to find out whether the City can provide the required HIPAA form to active and retired members. The prior authorization HIPAA form does not have to be notarized.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards will provide information at the next meeting regarding costs of administering pneumonia shots and whether or not they can be offered at the same time/interval with flu shot. Linda McKinney advised that Risk Management would need to be advised of any information on pneumonia shots prior to administering.

Health Screening Location Update:

The health screening locations and dates have been confirmed with the addition of the Venice Community Center. The following are the dates and locations for the screenings:

Wednesday, January 28	Sarasota Memorial Hospital Auditorium
Friday, January 30	North County Administration Bldg
Tuesday, February 3	SMH at University Parkway
Thursday, February 5	Colonial Oaks Park
Tuesday, February 10	Woodmere Park
Thursday, February 12	Payne Park Auditorium
Wednesday, February 18	Venice Community Center

Screenings will be scheduled from 7:30am -10:00am. Healthcare screenings are provided at no cost to the member.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards talked about the campaign to communicate the health screening literature to all employee members, their spouses and dependents (that are covered on our insurance plan), through flyers and payroll stuffer announcements. Instructions on the flyer will direct the employee to call Healthcare Sarasota to make an appointment for the health screening locations. If a member's spouse is not on the insurance plan, it will be up to the employer if they want to allow others not on the plan to participate in the screenings. Remember the screenings are scheduled for the morning

hours (7:30 a.m. - 10:00 a.m.) due to a fasting requirement. You cannot eat or drink anything the morning of the screening, except clear un-sugared water.

Linda McKinney requested 250 flyers to go out to the SMERA members with their next newsletter as an extra outreach to the retirees who may be traveling. This would include the firefighters as members of SMERA. The retirees would get a flyer from EMI and one from SMERA.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards will provide the health screening literature to Human Resources next week.

Today at the board meeting for Healthcare Sarasota, Mr. Blinch-Edwards advised the budget was approved, which included the expense for the health screenings.

Checklist for doctor appointment/lab tests:

Mr. Blinch-Edwards distributed the draft of the Doctor's Visit Checklist to members for review and comments. These checklists will aide the member during office visits.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards discussed the need for diet and exercise to be on the checklist and to be considered. Certain medication could interfere with your diet (i.e. a diabetic should not follow a carbohydrate diet because it creates sugar) and strenuous exercise should be avoided if stressed.

John Glanden asked for clarification on the last item on the checklist referring to tests done in a "network setting". Mr. Blinch-Edwards explained this to mean when you go to a lab or a radiology facility be sure the facility is one within the *insurance network*. That checklist will also be reworded to clarify this item.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards advised that members should ask what is ordered for lab work for better understanding of what tests are being done and to also ask for a copy of lab test results. There are certain tests you don't need at a certain age. Be informed. Ask why a test is being done to become more aware and be a more informed consumer.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards will provide a list of the service charges for Wellness. Use Quest labs due to better discounts on services and to stay under the \$350 Wellness amount. Quest is located off Osprey Avenue behind Sarasota Memorial Hospital.

Stacey Monroe asked that we add beside the Quest lab that it is the "preferred" lab. Ask the doctor if the lab you are being sent to is a Quest lab and if not, why not, because Quest is the preferred lab. First Physicians or Inter-Coastal require the employee to sign a request that you go to their own labs, but you don't have to as you can go to Quest. If you have Medicare covering any lab tests costs, Medicare is the primary insurance and Healthcare is secondary.

A suggestion was made to add to the doctor checklist, "take any recent health assessment results to the doctor" as these assessments can be valuable tools.

The list of Wellness charges or costs will include a physical any related tests and suggested age ranges (or family history). Mammograms and X-rays could be included on the cost list. The list will provide costs that are listed as reasonable, customary, allowable costs for tests your doctor may send you for. The list of charges will also include radiology, for usual and customary (U&C) for x-rays.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards will have the list retyped and send it to Linda McKinney to be distributed at the next meeting.

Other matters:

Mr. Blinch-Edwards announced that Thursday, January 22nd and Friday, January 23rd, 2004, is the Annual Employee Health Benefit Conference to be held in Tampa, FL. Two members from this group will be allowed to attend with him. The \$300 fee is waived, because he is on the advisory committee. Members are to advise Linda or Kurt if interested in attending with Mr. Blinch-Edwards.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards will be attending a conference December 4th representing the southeast United States' position on consumer driven health care. Currently there is only a low amount of participation, .05%, to report on for Florida in consumer driven health care. Brooksville and a school district in Pinellas County have just started this option, but won't be included in their package until 2006-2007.

Mr. Hoverter advised about a study being conducted that will depict the rate structure of annual benefits spending rates. When these numbers are obtained, they will be provided to members.

Mr. Hoverter advised at the board meeting for Caremark today, information was provided for an on-line information toolkit for benefit managers on generics. Information on generic drugs can be pulled up, printed out or sent out. This on-line information toolkit will be looked at further and members will be advised. There is also a guide for commonly prescribed medications that we can get out to members. There is also a personalized, I Benefit Report.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards elaborated on the I Benefit Report, which is a report that lists the medications you are taking, the amount you paid for the medicine and what the plan paid for the medicine, listing the total cost for a certain period. This report also has a list of other medications to choose from and how much they cost, so you can make a choice. In order to get the best value, there is a "thumbs up" ICON that appears beside the medication for best value. These will be sent out directly by Caremark with very strict PHI (Protected Health Information) for a certain threshold of costs amount per year, you will be sent this I Benefit Report. The I Benefit Report won't go out to everyone.

Mr. Blinch-Edwards will also add to the list generic available drugs. You should ask your doctor if a generic is ok to take, when available. The same compounds are required of generic drugs, but the filler may be different. Store brand versus name brands list the same compound ingredients.

Andy St. John asked about generic drugs and had been told generic drugs were inferior to name brand drugs. Mr. Hoverter advised information on generic drugs, as to what the Food and Drug guidelines were concerning generic drugs, will be looked at and provided to the committee members to have an instrument to make decisions to go with generic or not.

Pat Horan requested if we could have an ID card for your wallet with Quest, as preferred, on the card with phone number and address. This will be looked into as well as providing a plastic holder for the card.

For information, Mr. Hoverter talked about biotech medications in Caremark literature. There is a biotech drug for severe pain called *Actiq* that ranks #289th volume ranked drug dispensed and is #7 in costs, averaging \$69 per day for usage (1700 days' supply had a cost of \$117,000). This biotech drug may have been available through the doctor's office and not the Rx benefit.

The next meeting is Wednesday, January 7, 2004, in room 100 of the Federal Building at 1:00 p.m.

Meeting adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

/dv

Minutes Approved: _____

John Agen, Chairperson