

Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC)
September 8, 2016
Minutes of the Meeting

These minutes reflect discussion and debate at a meeting of a committee of the University of Minnesota Senate; none of the comments, conclusions, or actions reported in these minutes represents the views of, nor are they binding on, the senate, the administration, or the Board of Regents.

[**In these minutes:** Employee Benefits Update; Share the Air; Retiree Medical Rates and Changes; Medical Cost Relief Program; Open Enrollment Communications Plan; Wellness Program Update; Identity Theft RFP Committee Report; UPlan Medical and Wellness RFP; BAC Annual Schedule]

PRESENT: Tina Falkner (chair), Karen Ross, Susanne Vandergon, Cherrene Horazuk, David Kremer, Jody Ebert, Susann Jackson, Joseph Jameson, Amy Monahan, Fred Morrison, Theodor Litman, Dale Swanson, Pamela Enrici, Jen Schultz, Terri Wallace, Cynthia Murdoch

REGRETS: Jon Christianson, Brenda Reeves, Amos Deinard, Yvonne Christensen, Ken Doyle

ABSENT: Carl Anderson, Kathy Brown, Brooks Jackson, Keith Dunder, Ken Horstman

GUESTS: Dave Golden, director of public health, Boynton Health; Julia Sanem, director of health promotion, Boynton Health; Ryan Reisdorfer, human resources specialist, OHR; Ken Chapin, human resources manager, OHR; Betty Gilchrist, communications writer/editor, OHR; Laura Manydeeds, program administrator, OHR

Chair Falkner welcomed the committee and members introduced themselves.

1. Employee Benefits Update – Laura Manydeeds, wellness program administrator, OHR, presented an update on the Farmer’s Market. Currently there are twelve vendors, including five internal vendors, that are participating in the Twin Cities campus Farmer’s Market. The final Farmer’s Market of the year will occur on October 12th, 2016. There has been a good response from those attending the market at the new location in front of McNamara, Manydeeds said, so the Farmer’s Market will remain there after the completion of Tate building construction.

2. Share the Air – Smoke-Free Campus – Self-Enforcement – Dave Golden, director of public health, Boynton Health, and Julia Sanem, director of health promotion, Boynton Health, presented [this presentation](#) on Share the Air. This is the second full year of the smoking ban on campus, and each year their office conducts a survey. Policy awareness among students, staff and faculty have gone up, Golden said, while daily smoking rates across campus have gone down. Support of the policy has also increased across all groups.

Enforcement of the policy is still an issue, Sanem said. At this point, committee members discussed policy enforcement issues they have had on campus. Many committee members noted that there are still ashtrays around campus, which sends a mixed message to students, faculty, staff, and visitors. Many committee members voiced concerns that signage around the Twin Cities campus is not adequate, and some signage is contradictory to the policy (for example,

signs that direct people to not smoke within 30 feet of certain buildings). Golden said that the Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota provided funding for a number of sandwich board signs to place around campus, but thus far there has been no funding for additional, permanent signs. Boynton is currently in discussions with the Sign Shop on this issue, Golden added. Several committee members suggested that sandwich boards should be placed at transit stops and at the entrances to campus to catch visitors who may be unaware of the policy.

Cherrene Horazuk voiced concerns over some of the language present in the policy. Specifically, Hourzak said, she was concerned that the policy noted those in violation of the policy would be subject to discipline. Bargaining Unit employees are afforded two fifteen minute breaks and a 30-minute lunch, Horazuk said, and this may not give these employees time to leave campus grounds to smoke. Conversely, Horazuk said, P&A employees or faculty members do not have these same restrictions, and would be less affected by the potential for disciplinary action if found in violation of the policy. Rather than focusing on discipline, Horazuk said, the University should focus on helping employees quit smoking.

Golden said that the current policy lists discipline as a potential consequence of violating the policy, but there are other options for those who still smoke; encourage staff to go without cigarette breaks during the day, or to use smoking cessation products, which are covered by the University's health plans with no co-pay. Sanem added that approximately 20% of people on campus have a health concern that is aggravated by secondhand smoke, and so adherence to the policy is important.

Members of the committee suggested adding information about smoking cessation to the Wellness Newsletter, noting that smoking cessation aides are covered with no copay.

Falkner asked the committee if they were interested in drafting a letter to the provost requesting funds for better, additional signage for the campus. Committee members agreed; Falkner noted that she and Barbara Irish, senate associate, University Senate Office, would draft the letter.

3. Retiree Medical Rates & Changes – Ryan Reisdorfer, human resources specialist, OHR, reviewed [this document](#) outlining 2017 premiums and plan changes to Retiree Medical Plans.

To clarify who is eligible for these plans, Reisdorfer said that employees retiring after the age of 65 are given a one-time option to join this plan; if they do not join at that time, they are not eligible to join the plan later. Karen Chapin, human resources manager, OHR, added that this is to keep plan costs down, since retirees may opt to later join one of these plans only when they have expensive medical issues. Reisdorfer said that most employees do not opt to join these plans; rather, they opt Medicare or AARP plans. Typically, Reisdorfer said, retirees' choice is driven by their chosen network.

Fred Morrison asked which plan is best for pharmacy coverage. Reisdorfer responded that it is difficult to choose a plan based on pharmacy coverage alone, and hesitated to make a recommendation. For example, Reisdorfer said, Plan 1 may be better for pharmacy coverage since it has a higher premium and lower out-of-pocket costs, but it may not be the best for everyone. Reisdorfer noted that retirees can change plans during open enrollment, and there is

good help available from Employee Benefits, since they use formularies designed to help retirees make the best choice between plans.

4. Medical Cost Relief Program for Lower Income Employees – Chapin reviewed this [letter, overview](#), and [application](#) outlining the Medical Cost Relief Program. This program provides two cash payments to those whose yearly income falls below a certain level. A mailing was sent to all eligible employees around August 17, 2016, Chapin said, in addition to an email that went out to all employees detailing the program. Chapin advised members of BAC to notify their groups of the deadline for application: September 12, 2016. So far, Chapin said, 671 people have applied. Chapin added that once the application has been reviewed and processed, all tax forms are shredded to protect employee confidentiality.

5. Open Enrollment Communications Plan – Betty Gilchrist, communications associate, OHR, reviewed [this handout](#) detailing the communications plan for 2016 open enrollment. Gilchrist said that 19,000 employees are eligible to make changes during open enrollment, but only approximately 10,000 make any change.

Gilchrist then reviewed this [ACO mailing](#), which will be sent to employees in October. ACOs have been added in Duluth, Crookston, and Rochester, though employees need to live in those coverage areas to take advantage of the new offerings, Gilchrist said.

Gilchrist added that the 2016 Benefits Fair will take place November 15 on St. Paul campus and November 16 on Minneapolis campus this year due to the presidential election.

6. 2016-2017 Wellness Program Update – Manydeeds reviewed [this presentation](#) about the 2016-2017 Wellness Program. Additions to the program include a volunteer pledge, an advance care directive pledge, stress management coaching, and financial literacy workshops. The Eat Well on Campus program is another new offering, Manydeeds said, which will be available at all UDS locations (though it is not currently offered in Duluth).

7. Identity Theft RFP Committee Report – Chapin reviewed [this report](#) and [this booklet](#) from the Identity Theft Program RFP Committee. This program, Chapin noted, would be completely employee-paid, with no contribution by the University. Eventually this will be an offering employees can sign up for during open enrollment; in order to take advantage of the offering, employees would need to provide the company with a large amount of personal data, Chapin added.

Dale Swanson asked if retirees would be eligible for this new offering. Chapin said that she was not sure, but would check on this and get back to the committee with clarification.

8. UPlan Medical and Wellness Program RFP – Chapin reviewed [this handout](#) summarizing the Medical and Wellness RFPs.

9. BAC 2016-2017 Annual Schedule for Committee Review – Falkner reviewed the draft BAC annual schedule with the committee. Falkner advised the committee that BAC meetings should

not only be informational, but they should also take action on issues important to members. Falkner advised committee members to send her additional topics for the year via email.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Barbara Irish
University Senate Office