

Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC)
April 1, 2021
Minutes of the Meeting

[**In these minutes:** Employee Benefits Update; Virgin Pulse Wellbeing Program Review; Pharmacy Communications; Employee Comments - Virgin Pulse]

PRESENT: Dale Swanson (chair), Amy Monahan (vice chair), Jon Christianson, Nikos Papanikolopoulos, Fred Morrison, Christine Bakke, Shannon Farrell, Cynthia Murdoch, Kerry Witherell, Kim Little, Carmen Sims, Terri Wallace, Nancy Fulton, Greg Thurston, Deb Pavlica, Mary Blissenbach, Steff Yorek

REGRETS: Karen Lovro, Susan Kratz, Mary Rohman Kuhl

ABSENT: Jennifer Schultz, Kenneth Horstman, Jakub Tolar, Christine O'Connor

GUESTS: Lucas Dudgeon, senior client success manager, Virgin Pulse; Chelsey Peterson, client success associate, Virgin Pulse; Jill Mojden, strategic director for client success, Virgin Pulse; Michelle Dirckx, strategic account manager, Medica

OTHERS: Karen Chapin, Ryan Reisdorfer, Katie Kolodge, Annie Harvieux, Karen Wallin, Laura Manydeeds, Curt Swenson, Linda Blake, Ryan Hanson

Vice chair Amy Monahan welcomed the committee and members introduced themselves.

1. Employee Benefits Update - Ryan Reisdorfer, health programs manager, Office of Human Resources (OHR), provided an update on employee benefits. He stated that OHR recently resolved an issue revolving around spousal life insurance when both spouses are University employees. Previously the policy did not allow working spouses to cover each other for spouse life insurance. The University negotiated with Securian Life to allow this coverage going forward. Reisdorfer also stated that through the American Rescue Plan Act signed by President Biden, employers will now be given the option of increasing their dependent care flexible spending account (FSA) from the annual maximum of \$5,000 to \$10,500 for the 2021 plan year. OHR is currently waiting on federal guidelines to decide if the University will implement this change for University employees. The law also states that the University must 100% subsidize COBRA insurance coverage for eligible employees and ex-employees for the period April - Sept. 2021. This process is also awaiting federal guidance and OHR is hard at work identifying those employees who are impacted by that change.

2. Virgin Pulse Wellbeing Program Review - Monahan introduced the following individuals from Virgin Pulse to provide an update and review of the University's Wellbeing Program:

- Lucas Dudgeon, senior client success manager, Virgin Pulse
- Chelsey Peterson, client success associate, Virgin Pulse
- Jill Mojden, strategic director for client success, Virgin Pulse
- Michelle Dirckx, strategic account manager, Medica.

The team presented a [slide deck](#) and highlights were as follows:

- Virgin Pulse's goal is to change lives for good.
- As members are likely aware, the wellbeing platform changed last year after Virgin Pulse acquired RedBrick.
- Overall, a wellbeing program is aimed at behavior changes to help people live a healthier life.
- Virgin Pulse has a large partner ecosystem which allows many different programs and solutions for employees.
- During the 2019-20 program year, the wellbeing program continued on a three year increase in engagement by employees and eligible spouses.
- A consistent goal is to create sustained engagement throughout the entire year. The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic did have an adverse impact on overall engagement, but has rebounded in 2020-21.
- A consistent 46% of employees have earned their premium incentives through the wellbeing program in 2019-20. Thus far in 2020-21, under the new Virgin Pulse platform, 20% of employees have already reached their goal.
- As COVID-19 impacted many workplaces, Virgin Pulse has strived to provide end-to-end solutions focused on mental health and wellbeing support, workplace safety, digital therapeutics, and crisis response.
- Employees have recently engaged more heavily with University-linked programs and services.
- Enrollment in the new platform is ongoing and persistent engagement has increased, partially due to the new daily incentives to earn points.
- Virgin Pulse has recognized that enrollment can be a challenge, especially since the University has had three wellbeing providers over the past five years. This can create culture shock.
- Virgin Pulse plans on implementing a member experience improvement plan which includes an emphasis on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Monahan noted that she is a little frustrated with the consistent need to sign in to the mobile app and utilize the duo-factor authorization, however believes the app is vastly improved over RedBrick. Manydeeds noted that there should now be the capability to save one's credentials.

3. Pharmacy Communications - Karen Chapin, pharmacy programs manager, OHR, shared some information regarding some upcoming pharmacy communications for those individuals with diabetes. The first is [a letter](#) which indicates that employees will be able to get a free blood glucose meter from one of two companies: TRUE METRIX Air or CONTOUR NEXT. Additionally, [a second letter](#) will indicate that coverage for Continuous Glucose Monitors (CGMs) will move from the medical plan with Medica to the pharmacy plan with Prime Therapeutics. The letter highlights that if an employee currently has a DexCom or FreeStyle Libre CGM or wants to change to one of these CGMs, they will need a new prescription from their health care provider for the CGM. The health care provider should send the new prescription to their pharmacy before May 1, 2021. Katie Kolodge added that the first communication went out this morning.

4. Employee Comments - Virgin Pulse - Carmen Sims then provided an overview of employee comments regarding Virgin Pulse and the Wellbeing Program,, taken from the annual BAC survey. Sims presented a [slide deck](#) and highlights were as follows:

- Out of the 723 responses, 280 were positive, 405 were negative, and 38 were neutral in nature.
- Of the favorable feedback, the most common comments were in regard to the number of options to get points, as well as the upgrade from RedBrick to Virgin Pulse.
- Most negative feedback fell into two categories. The first was the general dislike of the wellbeing program due to its invasive nature and the amount of time it takes to complete. The second category of dislike was the platform and apps of RedBrick as many found it too hard to navigate and many devices were not supported easily.

Monahan noted that general comments about the Wellbeing Program tend to be on the negative side and Laura Manydeeds, wellbeing consultant, OHR, added that significant improvements have been made over the years as a direct result of these comments from employees. Manydeeds felt that as people engage more with the program and become more familiar with the various options, they will become more likely to get engaged. Chapin opined that for a few people, the program has changed their lives for the better.

Steff Yorek commented that the program has improved significantly over the past few years but still sees some barriers. For example, the yoga programming that has been offered is not exactly in a style that coincides with her needs. Kim Little informed the committee that she has heard from co-workers that they are feeling a little overwhelmed by the new system and needing to learn the new platform on top of everything else happening during the pandemic.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick
University Senate Office