

**Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC)**  
**January 19, 2023**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**

[In these minutes: Report on Lyra Health, New EAP Program; RFP Updates; BAC Vice Chair Election for 2023-24]

**PRESENT:** Dale Swanson (chair), Lynn Blewett, Scott Creer, Shannon Farrell, Cynthia Murdoch, Kim Little, Carmen Sims, Jean Otto, Natalie Buckman, Alexis Elder, Nancy Fulton, Greg Thurston, Christine Kiel (proxy for Jakub Tolar), Mary Rohman Kuhl, Mary Blissenbach

**REGRETS:** Amy Monahan (vice chair)

**ABSENT:** Maria Hanratty, Nikos Papanikolopoulos, Kenneth Horstman, Susan Kratz, Deb Pavlica, Steff Yorek, Christine O'Connor

**GUESTS:** Ryan Reisdorfer, health programs manager, OHR; Kirsten Cegla, Lyra Health

**OTHERS:** Katie Kolodge, Karen Chapin, Laura Manydeeds Fiero, Linda Blake, Libby Stille, Rikita Davis, Shane Lueck, Kari Seime, Nora Hayes

Chair Dale Swanson welcomed the committee and members introduced themselves.

**1. Report on Lyra Health, New EAP Program**

Ryan Reisdorfer, health programs manager, Office of Human Resources (OHR), provided an update regarding the University's new Employee Assistance Program (EAP) administrator, Lyra Health. Kirsten Cegla from Lyra Health joined the meeting as well. Reisdorfer presented a [slide deck](#) and highlights were as follows:

- Lyra Health replaces Sand Creek as the University's EAP provider and has been in place since January 1, 2023.
- The University of Minnesota purchases confidential EAP services to help employees with a variety of issues that come up in life. The EAP is designed to improve mental and emotional health, reduce stress, and enhance life at work and home. The University is expanding its EAP to include more services in the area of mental health and substance use disorders with Lyra Health.
- Lyra Health has a global network of behavioral health providers (20,000+), which adds over 600 behavioral health care providers who are accepting new clients and over 100 providers that can support pediatric mental health in Minnesota who are accepting new clients.
- The EAP is available to all benefits-eligible employees on all system campuses including spouses and dependent children. Members can receive up to 8 counseling sessions per issue at no cost.
- Employees should create a free account at [umn.lyrahealth.com](http://umn.lyrahealth.com).
- Services provided by Lyra include:
  - workforce transformation,

- preventative, clinical, and complex care options,
- work-life services, and
- 24/7 care navigators.
- If employees are currently seeing a counselor through Sand Creek (the previous provider) they will be able to continue with their current counselor through their 8th session.

Linda Blake added the care navigators are great resources for any questions or transitions. There will also be future conversations about adding some of these benefits and services to the wellbeing program.

Swanson asked about mental health emergencies and gave an example of a suicidal person. Cegla commented that if a person is in a potentially suicidal situation, one should call 911 first and then refer to a care navigator after the incident. Reisdorfer added that if members are currently seeing counselors through the medical plan, they should not necessarily transition to a Lyra-based counselor. There are multiple avenues to receiving adequate mental health care.

Lynn Blewett asked if the contract with Lyra cost more than Sand Creek and Reisdorfer replied that it does cost more due to the predicted increase in the use of these services. Blewett asked if the counselors are a part of Medica. Reisdorfer said that Lyra is a vendor of Medica so Lyra will bill Medica for services and be more seamless for members.

## **2. RFP Updates**

Reisdorfer then provided an update on the following ongoing RFPs:

- The medical plan administrator (currently Medica) RFP has been released and vendors are starting to submit responses. The committee is now scoring those submissions and should be finalized by early February with interviews planned to be completed by early March. They intend to present recommendations to the Board of Regents by May.
- The wellbeing program administrator (currently VirginPulse) RFP is ongoing and will include some web portal usability testing. This RFP has a similar timeline to the medical plan administrator.
- The flexible spending account and health savings account administrator RFP will be launched by the end of January. The plan is to award the new contract with a start date of January 1, 2024. It will likely go to the Board of Regents in June or later 2023.

Blissenbach noted that the EAP is a sub-vendor to Medica and asked if the medical plan administrator changes how it would impact those other services. Reisdorfer clarified that if the medical plan administrator changes, they would be fully aware and need to incorporate the University's other vendors. They have to commit to working with those vendors through the end of their contracts.

## **3. BAC Vice Chair Election for 2023-24**

Amy Monahan was elected vice chair to the BAC for the 2023-24 academic year.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick  
University Senate Office