

**Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC)**  
**February 11, 2021**  
**Minutes of the Meeting**

[**In these minutes:** Employee Benefits Update; Election of BAC Vice Chair; Update on BAC Survey and Solicitation for Volunteers to Review the Results; Open Enrollment Changes Report; 2019 - 2020 Wellbeing Program Review; 2020 - 2021 Wellbeing Transition to Virgin Pulse]

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

**REGRETS:** Cynthia Murdoch, Kenneth Horstman, Mary Rohman Kuhl

**ABSENT:** Jennifer Schultz, Christine O'Connor

**GUESTS:** Doug Swyter, finance analyst, Office of Human Resources (OHR); Laura Manydeeds, wellbeing consultant, OHR

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

Chair Dale Swanson 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 started by stating that the process for reporting an employee death is being reviewed internally in OHR. Additionally, OHR intends to conduct an anonymous survey relating to the open enrollment process and employees may notice a name and logo change to their flexible savings accounts as Discovery Benefits was recently acquired by a company called WEX. Swanson commented that if the virtual benefits fair conducted during open enrollment was well received, it might be a good idea to offer it permanently in a hybrid fashion moving forward.

**2. Election of BAC Vice Chair** - Amy Monahan was elected the vice chair for the BAC for the 2021-22 academic year.

**3. Update on BAC Survey and Solicitation for Volunteers to Review the Results** - Swanson stated that the annual BAC employee survey was live and would be closing soon. He then proceeded to request volunteers to review and summarize the de-identified results and the volunteers were as follows:

- Delta Dental - Linda Blake
- Virgin Pulse - Carmen Sims
- Discovery Benefits (WEX) - Greg Thurston

- Fairview Specialty Pharmacy/Prime Therapeutics - Karen Lovro
- Medica Elect/Essential Plan - Jon Christianson
- All Other Medica Plans - Kerry Witherell

**4. Open Enrollment Changes Report** - Swanson introduced Doug Swyter, finance analyst, OHR, who presented a report on the changes that employees elected to make regarding their health plans during open enrollment. Swyter presented a [side deck](#) and highlights were as follows:

- The most common changes occurred in individuals moving from the Medica Elect/Essential plan to a Medica Accountable Care Organization (ACO) plan, with the most common being the Vantage Plus ACO. Also, the Medica Regional plan saw a reduction of over six percent in enrollment while the Medica Health Savings Account (HSA) plan saw an increase of over 7%
- There was very little movement in both the retirees Age 65+ plans as well as the dental plans, other than 332 employees who had previously waived their dental coverage have now opted in.
- The final page of the report showed the migration of employees between the various coverage levels which depends on the type of dependent coverage an employee carries.

Sims asked how total enrollment numbers went up despite the University instituting a hiring freeze. Swyter replied that it is possible that certain life events (job loss, marriage, having children, etc.) may have caused an upswing in employees utilizing or adjusting their benefits accordingly.

**5. 2019 - 2020 Wellbeing Program Review and 2020 - 2021 Wellbeing Transition to Virgin Pulse** - Laura Manydeeds, wellbeing consultant, OHR, then presented information regarding a full review of the Wellbeing Program over the past year, including the transition to a new platform administered by Virgin Pulse. Manydeeds presented a [slide deck](#) and highlights were as follows:

- Over the past three years, engagement with the Wellbeing Program has trended upwards with 59% of employees participating along with 43% of spouses (when applicable) in 2019-20. Engagement is most active among females.
- Specific programs with the highest participation rates include the non-tobacco user pledge, the annual flu shot pledge, and the “Wellbeing My Way” program.
- One of the goals of the Wellbeing Program being moved to the Virgin Pulse platform is to create longer and more sustained engagement by members throughout the year.
- As of February 2021, nearly 37% of eligible employees have enrolled on the new platform, with the highest participation coming from female employees in their 30s.
- Thus far, the most popular specific programs have included the Journeys, annual flu shot pledge, Wellbeing My Way, and access to the biometric health screening form for a primary care physician.
- With all the new options and ways to receive wellbeing points in the new platform, employees are still taking advantage of University specific programming.
- Challenges will occur throughout the year, starting with the February Resilience Challenge which can earn members 100 points over the course of the month.

Katie Kolodge asked if there has been any feedback on the resilience challenge and Manydeeds replied that anecdotally, she has received positive feedback from managers. Witherell commented that she has heard a few complaints about the lack of diversity in Whil yoga and mindfulness instructors. Manydeeds commented that she has brought this concern to the attention of Virgin Pulse and Whil. She added that Virgin Pulse has recently added a diversity and inclusion officer to take a deep dive into the content that they offer.

Reisdorfer commended Manydeeds and Linda Blake for their work with vendors in converting a number of these programs to virtual settings over the past year. Manydeeds added that there are still challenges, including the notifications to employees and spouses having earned points being listed separately. She is working with Virgin Pulse to create messaging and emails that will notify and confirm when employees meet their premium incentive goal.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick  
University Senate Office