

Benefits Advisory Committee (BAC)
April 25, 2019
Minutes of the Meeting

[**In these minutes:** Employee Benefits Update; Plan Review - Health Partners Dental; Employee Comments - Health Partners Dental; Medical Evacuation Program through Redpoint plus UHC Global 2018 Final Report]

PRESENT: Tina Falkner (chair), Dale Swanson (vice chair), Jon Christianson, Amy Monahan, Christine Bakke, Candice Kraemer, Cynthia Murdoch, Susanne Vandergon, Brenda Reeves, Connie Rosandich, Terri Wallace, Kenneth Horstman, Amos Deinard, Jody Ebert, Christine O'Connor, Steff Yorek

REGRETS: Susann Jackson, Nancy Fulton

ABSENT: Nikos Papanikolopoulos, Fred Morrison, Susan Kratz, Carl Anderson, Kathryn Brown, David Bodick, Jennifer Schultz

GUESTS: Amy Mahan, director of special government accounts, HealthPartners Dental; Kristin Harrer, account manager, HealthPartners Dental; Elizabeth Erdmann, client service representative, HealthPartners Dental; David Gesko, senior vice president and dental director, HealthPartners Dental; Jeff Ogden, vice president, HealthPartners Dental

OTHERS: Karen Chapin, Ryan Reisdorfer, Mary Blissenbach, Linda Blake, Curt Swenson, Jean Leuthner

Chair Tina Falkner welcomed the committee, and members introduced themselves.

1. Employee Benefits Update - Karen Chapin, pharmacy programs manager, Office of Human Resources (OHR) notified the committee that Sue Jackson is retiring and will no longer be a member of the BAC. Sue extended an invitation to all BAC members to attend her retirement party.

2. Plan Review - Health Partners Dental - Falkner introduced Amy Mahan, director of special government accounts, HealthPartners Dental; Kristin Harrer, account manager, HealthPartners Dental; Elizabeth Erdmann, client service representative, HealthPartners Dental; David Gesko, senior vice president and dental director, HealthPartners Dental; and Jeff Ogden, vice president, HealthPartners Dental, to present an overview of the HealthPartners (HP) Dental plan. Mahan began the presentation by sharing a [slide deck](#) with the committee.

Ogden continued the presentation by stating that HP covers 50% of the University's dental business. HP partners with over 2,700 dentists in Minnesota and covers over 193,000 locations nationwide. They are working to expand their national network through a new partnership with Cigna. Amos Deinard asked to what extent do dentists within the HP system recommend that children under the age of 6 receive fluoride varnish on their teeth four times a year. Ogden

replied that the dentists within their system are very aware of the issue in Minnesota and that it is an emerging issue nationwide, but does not have specific figures on the subject.

Harrer then described plan options at the University. There are two options with nearly identical in-network coverage. The UPlan HealthPartners Dental plan has in-network coverage only and includes 3,470 members. The UPlan HealthPartners Dental Choice plan includes some coverage for out-of-network providers and has 3,024 members. Deinard noted that children without dental coverage often present at emergency rooms when they have a dental issue which can be very expensive. Gesko added that early dental health education is important for children and their parents.

Harrer continued by providing claim costs and other statistics in 2018 compared to 2017. In 2018, total per member per month (PMPM) costs decreased by 1.7%. The highest utilizers of dental preventive care are those over the age of 65 and children between the ages of 5-14. Females have a higher utilization rate than males. On average, about 70% of all services received are preventive and diagnostic in nature, including exams, cleanings, x-rays, and sealants. About 22% are basic restorative services such as filings, oral surgery, periodontal care, and endodontic services. Only about 7% of services cover major restorative or other miscellaneous dental procedures. Jon Christianson asked if the 1.7% cost reduction correlates to service reduction. Ogden said that there has not been a reduction in the number of visits so it should mean that the reduction is due to fewer major or more expensive procedures or services. Steff Yorek asked if people are spacing out their visits in order to save on costs. Ogden replied that HP clinics are working hard to keep costs as flat as possible so members can receive services when needed or recommended.

Ogden then turned his focus on discussing what HP has done to combat the opioid epidemic. Dentistry is responsible for 17% of opioid prescriptions, many resulting from wisdom teeth extractions. New opioid guidelines developed here at the University of Minnesota have greatly reduced the number of prescriptions overall. The guidelines include a review of prescription history, use of Minnesota's prescription monitoring program, patient consultation to cover proper use, drug interactions, risks and potential effects, and proper disposal. As a result, HP clinics have cut the number of opioid tablets by 54%. The clinics have also reduced the number of prescriptions by 30%. The average number of tablets prescribed was reduced from a week supply to a four day supply.

Gesko then presented information about vaping and oral health. He stated that the FDA now considers e-cigarettes a nationwide epidemic. The introduction of e-cigarettes and vaping has caused the first increase in teen tobacco use in Minnesota in 17 years. Vaping can cause periodontal disease as nicotine constricts blood vessels, decreasing the blood flow to gum tissue. Yorek asked if there are any resources available for explaining the dangers of vaping to young people. Gesko replied that there are several resources on the internet that one could Google search. Gesko concluded by describing other services beyond dental care, including blood pressure monitoring, dental record and medical record integration, and a clinic decision support system to improve dental provider delivery of brief tobacco interventions and QuitLine referrals. Dale Swanson asked what steps are being made to integrate medical records that are non-HP

providers. Gesko stated that the “EPIC” system has a feature called “care everywhere” which is able to see records from other care systems.

Christianson asked about the difficulty of switching from out-of-network dentists to an in-network dentist. Chapin replied that one would simply go to the new dentist and ask them to receive records from the old dentist. Ryan Reisdorfer commented that if you are looking to switch dental plans, one must wait until open enrollment or have a qualified status change. Gesko added that HP has capacity in all of their clinics to add new patients. Christianson commented that it would be nice to have performance ratings for each of the clinics so patients can compare and shop around. Gesko said that there is an organization called “Minnesota Community Measurement” that offers ratings and opinions for doctors but dentistry just isn’t there yet.

3. Employee Comments - Health Partners Dental - Linda Blake then gave an overview of University employee comments from the recent BAC survey regarding HP Dental. Blake stated that there were 36 total comments, 30 of which were positive in nature. There were four comments dealing with plan design and high out-of-pocket costs that sometimes come as a surprise to the member.

4. Medical Evacuation Program through Redpoint plus UHC Global 2018 Final Report - Blake then provided [information](#) on the emergency travel assistance program. She provided information about where to find these resources on the OHR website and the services that these vendors provide. Redpoint became the new vendor for these services as of January 1, 2019. UnitedHealthCare Global was the vendor for 2018 and handled 93 cases that year.

Hearing no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

Chris Kwapick
University Senate Office