

Minutes
Owning Your Own Health Committee
August 20, 2014 – 9:30 a.m.
Scott Heyman Conference Room

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Present: Mack Cook, Ted Schiele, Beth Miller, Ken Foresti, Leslie Moskowitz (arrived at 9:45 a.m.), Don Barber

Call to Order

Mr. Cook, Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

Approval of July 16, 2014 Minutes

It was MOVED by Mr. Cook, seconded by Mr. Schiele, and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of the July 16, 2014 meeting as submitted. MINUTES APPROVED.

Report from the Executive Director

Mr. Barber reported he has been attending all of the Consortium’s Committee meetings. The Joint Committee had an interesting meeting earlier this month when there was discussion of a resolution to endorse the Platinum Plan as an additional plan offering within the Consortium. There was a contentious discussion and it was discovered after the meeting that one person who voted was not entitled to a vote. In summary, the discussion was split between management endorsing the addition of the plan and labor being in opposition. This will come forward to the Board of Directors at its August 28th meeting.

The planning for flu clinics is underway. It is important to note that any Consortium member can attend any of the clinics. Ms. Jobin is working with Ms. Masucci on securing a second date for the County. There are currently a number of clinics set up on one date at various locations and she is looking to expand that to another date. She said the County chose to have ProAct set up the appointments for the flu clinics.

Ms. Moskowitz arrived at this time.

Mr. Cook asked if the flu clinics could be an opportunity to raise awareness of the wellness profile at these events and if so what resources would be available. Mr. Cook said he is learning that it is a continual effort to convey the message of wellness and suggested using every opportunity to send a message to employees. Mr. Schiele said utilizing the time that members are at a clinic is a good idea; however, it is still up in the air as to what it is the Consortium is trying to promote. Mr. Barber said the City of Ithaca and the County have their own wellness programs and could use those events to promote their own programs.

Ms. Miller said she thinks putting any type of wellness information out to members makes sense. She said she will be trying to gather statistics on web usage to see how many “hits” the Consortium’s Excellus landing page is getting. She said she would like to promote the Blue 365 Program which is part of the Consortium’s package at no additional cost. She would also like to begin in 2015 by helping Mr. Barber with the Consortium’s newsletter and by bringing what is going on at the national level down to an individual Consortium message. Mr. Schiele said when he thinks of a wellness program he thinks of a workplace running a program

and within that program that it could utilize a program like the Blue 365 but thinks of a wellness program as trying to bring a community together to support each other.

Ms. Jobin spoke of the “lack of connection” with employees and said she has sent out information on the Blue 365 and other wellness programs during times of open enrollment or in the months when people aren’t typically active and does not receive any feedback. She questioned how programs are going to be connected to employees who don’t show interest. The County recently ran a Step Up Program that was well run with a number of participants through the Personnel Department with the winners receiving a healthy catered lunch in the park. This program provided a connection to employees and she questioned how to reach employees with the other ideas that are being suggested. Mr. Cook said he thinks efforts have to continue even though it is working against human nature and trends and any opportunity to get in front of employees and spouses should be taken advantage of.

Mr. Barber spoke of the large task in trying to change the culture and mindset of people who have felt up to know they were invincible. The concept of having personal contact is a strategy that works and he agrees with Mr. Cook in using the flu clinics as a way to get a message out; however, that message needs to be strategic. He spoke of the issue that was discussed at the Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design about how an urgent care versus emergency room usage will not only help with a person’s time but will also help with lowering the contribution towards their health insurance premium. Another message could relate to back injuries which account for a great amount of the claims costs. Ms. Miller will provide some literature to be circulated at flu clinics. Mr. Schiele suggested there be something that indicates the Consortium is doing wellness activities and there is an effort to initiate wellness programs by the Consortium. This could be a way to find “champions” for these efforts. Mr. Barber agreed with Mr. Schiele’s comments but stated efforts to help move wellness will need to come through the individual municipalities. Mr. Barber will work on gathering some information to bring back to the next Committee meeting. Mr. Foresti said he will also prepare information.

Report on Bio-Metrics Screening

Mr. Cook reported Cortland will finish its program this week and will follow-up with the survey and will submit to Mr. Schiele.

Mr. Schiele reviewed survey results from the City of Ithaca on how the coaching services went and said there was a coaching session and a follow-up to that. Of the individuals who responded who used the coaching services they felt it was a valuable and worthwhile experience.

Health Policy Template for Municipalities

Mr. Barber said at the last meeting there was discussion about helping municipalities that do not have a wellness program to move towards having one and this Committee took on the task of trying to put together a resolution that will be presented to the Board of Directors and shared with municipalities. What is implied by this action would be as a Committee and as a Consortium we would be supporting those entities with information and ideas of how to implement wellness initiatives.

Mr. Cook said the Consortium cannot dictate to municipalities what they should do but this would provide more of a concise template for municipalities to use. Mr. Schiele spoke in support of the template and offered suggestions that were accepted as friendly.

Mr. Cook said it is the responsibility of organizational heads to change the culture and unfortunately many elected leaders look at health care as a line item in the budget and ask no questions and there is a disconnect that they are responsible and can control health care. He thinks the resolution shows they have a role to play in being the leaders in this. Mr. Barber said this Committee could be a venue for municipalities to report on a regular basis on initiatives that are taking place and progress that has been made.

Mr. Schiele said if the Consortium has some mechanism for bringing reports forward it could be included that a wellness advisory committee would participate in the Consortium's wellness committee. Mr. Barber suggested the Board of Directors approve a resolution that directs the various municipal wellness committees to participate in the Owning Your Own Health Committee's work. This would also provide an opportunity for sharing of ideas and overcoming barriers.

Mr. Barber will work with Mr. Cook on developing a resolution for the Board of Directors that will ask wellness committees to report and participate in the Owning Your Own Health Committee and that this Committee would provide support to those starting up. The resolution and the Wellness Policy Resolution Sample will be presented to the Board of Directors at the August 28, 2014 meeting.

The following template was agreed to provide to municipalities as a sample policy:

Wellness Policy Resolution Sample

Whereas, physical health or wellness is a personal asset that frees one to concentrate on work, family and relationships, and hobbies, and

Whereas, wellness is a dynamic process of learning new life skills and becoming aware of and making conscious choices toward a balanced and healthy lifestyle, and

Whereas, wellness cannot be guaranteed by any set of actions, **yet** wellness can be improved and increased by personal choices, and

Whereas, workplace environment, policies, and incentives can support and provide awareness for wellness choices, and

Whereas, Article 47 of NYS Insurance Law requires and envisions a partnerships between employer and employees in directing their health insurance, and

Whereas, employer and employees are collaborating to fund Health Insurance, and

Whereas, the cost of health insurance and time loss due to illness and injury are both directly reduced when its members are in good health,

Now therefore be it resolved that the (municipality) seeks to become an active partner with staff in raising healthy choice awareness, promoting healthy behaviors by providing information and opportunities, and facilitating wellness action steps

Be it further resolved that the (municipality) creates a Wellness Advisory Committee charged promoting health and wellness of staff and their family through education and program initiatives that:

- Encourage habits of wellness
- Increase awareness of factors and resources contributing to well-being
- Inspire and empower individuals to take responsibility for their own health
- Recommend action steps to create a workplace culture that encourages environmental and social support for healthy lifestyle choices

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Be It Further Resolved that the (municipality) appoints: _____ to the Wellness Committee and directs the committee to report back to the (municipality) the status of their deliberations by _____.

Next Agenda Items

At the next meeting there will be a review of marketing information of flu clinics, discussion of the feedback from the Board of Directors on the wellness resolution, and a review of the results from the bio-metrics screening programs and comparing the two programs. Mr. Barber suggested someone who participated in the program attend and speak to the Committee about their experience.

Adjournment

On motion the meeting adjourned at 10:32 p.m.