



## Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium

P.O. Box 7 • Ithaca, New York 14851 • (607) 274-5590

Headquarters: 215 N. Tioga Street, Ithaca, NY 14850

[www.healthconsortium.net](http://www.healthconsortium.net) • [consortium@tompkins-co.org](mailto:consortium@tompkins-co.org)

*"Individually and collectively we invest in realizing high quality, affordable, dependable health insurance."*

### MINUTES – DRAFT

#### Greater Tompkins County Municipal Health Insurance Consortium Joint Committee on Plan Structure and Design

May 2, 2024 – 1:30 p.m.

GTCMHIC Conference Room – 408 East Upland Road, Ithaca NY

#### **Present:**

##### ***Municipal Representatives: 13 members***

Laura Shawley (Vice-Chair), Town of Danby; Amanda Anderson, Town of Dryden; Angela Conger, Village of Groton; Ronnie Hardaway, Village of Lansing; Nancy Niswender, Village of Groton; Rita McCarthy, Town of Erwin; Judith Drake, Town of Ithaca; Ruth Groff, Town of Lansing; Amie Hendrix, City of Geneva; Krissie Brown, City of Cortland; Scott Dunham, Seneca County; Kemi Shokunbi; City of Ithaca; Janine Bond, Town of Hector

##### ***Municipal Representatives via Proxy: 6 members***

Lou Anne Randall, Town of Cuyler (Proxy – Judith Drake); Tom Brown, Town of Truxton (Proxy – Judith Drake); Courtney Manty, Town of Locke (Proxy – Fred Mackey) Bud Shattuck, Village of Union Springs (Proxy – Judith Drake); Ed Wagner, Town of Owasco (Proxy – Judith Drake); Jeff Walker (Proxy - Mark Whitmer)

##### ***Union Representatives: 10 members***

Allison Lazarus, City of Geneva CSEA Laborer's Unit; Pam Ferrara, Seneca County CSEA Local 850; Zach Nelson, Ithaca City Admin. Unit, CSEA Local 855; Jeanne Grace, City of Ithaca Executive Unit; Ian Tompkins, City of Ithaca DPW Unit; Elizabeth Buckley (Hujar), TCPL Staff Unit; Jonathan Walz-Koeppel, TC3 Professional Admin. Assoc. Unit; Nate Bates, CSEA 855 Blue Collar Unit; Lannie Doherty, Town of Camillus–Clerical; Alex Walbridge, City of Geneva Firefighters IAFF

##### ***Union Representatives via Proxy: 1 member***

Jason Thayer, TC3 (Proxy – (Melinda Russell)

##### ***Others in attendance:***

Elin Dowd, Executive Director; Kylie Rodrigues, Benefits Specialist; Teri Apalovich, Finance Manager; Lynne Sheldon, Clerk of the Board; Brandon Holt, Excellus BCBS; Kelli Lasher, Excellus BCBS; Shawn Marsh, Excellus BCBS; Steve Locey, Locey & Cahill; Sunday Earle, TC3; Leslie Moskowitz, City of Ithaca; Chuck Guild, CSEA Local 855; Jason Warchal, Excellus BCBS, Sean Marsh, Excellus BCBS; Melissa Greenthal, Town of Erwin; Mary Ellen Albrecht, Town of Lansing; Eddie Shea, Town of Moravia; John Geer; TC3; Dan Burkey, Lifetime Benefit Solutions; Carl Cadregari, Foxpointe Solutions; Joe Scotti, CanaRX; Jennifer Slywka, City of Geneva, Jason Preston, City of Geneva; Sarah Thomas, Tompkins County; Elizabeth Weatherby, Town of Ulysses; Morgan McCarthy, Excellus BCBS; Christine Van Horn, City of Geneva CSEA

### **Call to Order**

Ms. Shawley, Vice Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:32 p.m.

### **Changes to the Agenda**

There was an addition of another set of minutes from November 2, 2023 (as well as the August 3, 2023 minutes) to approve as the committee did not reach a quorum at the November 2, 2023 meeting.

### **Approval of August 3, 2023 and November 2, 2023 Minutes**

Approval of the August 3, 2023, minutes were deferred until this next meeting as attendance did not reach a full quorum.

It was MOVED by Ms. Drake, seconded by Ms. Albrecht and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of August 3, 2023, as submitted. MINTUES APPROVED.

It was MOVED by Mr. Shea, seconded by Ms. Drake and unanimously adopted by voice vote by members present, to approve the minutes of November 2, 2023 as submitted. MINTUES APPROVED.

### **Executive Directors Report**

The Consortium's Open House was held prior to the meeting and Ms. Dowd thanked all the guests who attended.

Ms. Dowd explained that Excellus BCBS will be showing a review of claims from last year and will show very specific areas. She said the importance of this review as a group is when benefits are changed, members know why recommendations and changes are made.

Ms. Dowd said that Insero & Co., CPAs had met with the Audit and Finance Committees a few weeks ago and the Audit Committee where they approved the annual audit. She said after the Consortium's audit was approved, the Annual Report will be completed and sent out to Directors this week along with the first quarter Executive Director Report.

Ms. Dowd reported that members may be receiving more than usual emails and apologized. She said the Department of Financial Services (DFS) has new regulators and has been requesting that the Consortium handle resolutions, signature pages, and code of ethic forms a bit differently than previous years. She also said that we are trying to cut back on emails being sent out, so the Consortium has added additional items onto the Consortium's website. She said if a member has not been receiving items that you would like to be receiving, to please reach out to the Consortium staff. Ms. Dowd encouraged members to distribute wellness challenges, and wellness newsletters to their employees to promote healthy behaviors.

### **Benefit Specialist Update**

Ms. Rodrigues said Facebook is one of the tools the Consortium uses to promote the Wellness Program. She reported that the Consortium has seen an uptick with individuals following the Consortium's page. She said the Consortium's goal is to reach 150 followers by the end of this year.

Ms. Rodrigues informed that the month of May wellness event is "Cultivating Healthy Spaces". She said plants and herbs were delivered to all participants, who were thrilled to receive them. She added this event is promoting preventative health and wellness across the Consortium's membership.

Ms. Rodrigues said that Excellus BCBS is presenting a virtual MD Live class, which is highly beneficial for individuals who work with benefits for their members, come to the class and learn about the program, so you can help promote it across your staff.

Ms. Rodrigues announced the Consortium is hosting a first-time Mental Health First Aid training class next month. The goal of the class is to teach individuals to be more aware of mental health in your environment and how to handle a mental health crisis. She said the class was offered to all benefit clerks, or an alternative representative. She also added the class is free as Excellus BCBS is covering the cost.

Ms. Rodrigues wanted members to be aware of a change on contraceptives limits and refills. She said when the Consortium was reviewing Summary Plan Documents (SPDs), it came to attention that a mandate came out in 2023 that the Consortium was not following. The New York State mandate states that an individual can fill a 12-month supply of contraceptives all at once. Ms. Rodrigues said normally benefit changes come to Joint Committee first, however, explained the Consortium had to push this through, since the Consortium learned this mandate wasn't implemented on time, so the Consortium went straight to the Executive Committee with a resolution.

### **Committee Chair's Report**

Ms. DeVoe was excused from today's meeting.

Ms. Dowd said the Consortium will elect a Joint Committee Chair at the July meeting. She said Kate DeVoe has said that she would be willing to chair again. Ms. Dowd said if there are others that are interested, or someone has a suggestion of an individual(s) to come forward and be part of that vote to be chair. Ms. Dowd added that the Consortium's MCA, the chair of the Joint Committee, must be a labor representative.

Ms. Dowd also added that there are two board of director seats that need to be filled by labor representatives. She said that Chuck Guild, from Newfield, CSEA Local 855, has stepped forward as a nominee, and the Consortium is currently asking other labor representatives to step forward as a candidate as well.

Ms. Dowd said that the Board of Directors meets twice a year. She said the Consortium holds an educational session in August, and the annual board meeting that you would attend in-person in September at the Consortium Headquarters.

Ms. Shawley said every year the Consortium must comply with the Affordable Care Act (ACA) regarding the Consortium's metal level plans. She said this year there will need to be potential changes to the Platinum Plan. She said Locey & Cahill will run actuarial values and will come back to the Committee to make suggestions to ensure plans will fall within the actuarial parameters to be compliant with the law. She said one example could be simple changes such as raising the deductible a little bit, and/or lowering the out-of-pocket maximum to fit into those parameters. Ms. Shawley said this information will be discussed Okay, we can go right then to our Utilization Review and Brandon from Blue Brandon hold from Blue Cross with blue shield is here. To give us the utilization review on our medical plans.

### **Utilization Review: Medical Claims 2023**

The Excellus BCBS Team consisting of Brandon Holt and Kelli Lasher presented a 17-page Utilization Review to Committee members. (See Page -Lynne to add)

### **Utilization Review: Prescription Claims 2023**

Ms. Dowd presented a 13-page Pharmacy Benefit Performance report from ProAct for the 2023 Year. (See Page-Lynne to add)

### **Excellus Pharmacy Trend Review**

Morgan McCarthy, from the Excellus BCBS Benefit team held in great detail a presentation regarding current pharmacy trends. She discussed that Excellus wants members to be able to access the care that they need, but in the most cost, effective way.

Ms. McCarthy discussed in depth biosimilar medications which are a biologic medication that has no clinically meaningful differences from an already FDA approved biologic therapy. She said currently there are 49 biosimilars approved for 15 different reference products at Excellus.

Ms. McCarthy said at Excellus, they want to increase the biosimilar conversion by having preferred products that will help optimize in that cost and lower trend while still ensuring optimal member outcomes.

### **Next Meeting Agenda Topics**

Chair and Board Seat Elections  
Review Bylaws  
Actuarial Value Calculator

**Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

*Next Meeting: July 11, 2024*

*Respectfully submitted by Lynne Sheldon/Clerk of the Board*