Academic Specialist Advisory Committee Meeting
Thursday, March 20, 2014
Administration Building, Room 443

Meeting Minutes

Meeting called to order by Sarah Handspike at 11:02 AM.

Attending: Sarah Handspike, Mary Beth Graebert, Carmellia Davis-King, Sandra Eagan-Hill, Joy Landis, Jo Anne Latimore, Paul Streng, Kristin Getter, Michael Everett and Lucy Maillette
Ex Officio: Terry Curry & Donna Zischke
Absent: Kristy Dumont, Quinn Moreno, David Lusch, and Janet Byrne
Speakers: Renee Rivard

Motion to accept the agenda: Motion to approve agenda by Paul Streng and seconded by Michael Everett; carried unanimously.

Motion to approve February minutes: Motion to approve minutes by Sarah Handspike and seconded by Paul Streng; carried unanimously.

Renee Rivard, Director of Benefits

- Best Doctors
  - Annual report from Best Doctors program was shared with the committee (see attached). Renee will post this report at the Benefits website.
  - We want to make sure that the program is paying for itself; right now the return on investment is $1.20 for every dollar invested.
  - We have achieved about $433,119 is cost avoidance (e.g. if you were scheduled to have a procedure, but Best Doctors provided information that indicated you don’t need the procedure and you decide not to, it’s a savings).
  - There is a follow-up program to find out what people do with the information from Best Doctors.
  - It continues to be a well-received program; member satisfaction is very high (97%). We will continue the program for another year and monitor its impact.

- Healthcare Reform
  - We are tracking all employees (including students) to see if they are meeting the average 30 hour/week threshold for 2014. If so, they will have the option to access healthcare next year. Work study hours are not calculated in the evaluation of 30 hour/week threshold.
  - A report on how this change will affect units is provided through the EBS University Administrator tab.
  - Still awaiting response on whether Resident Assistants are included in this group.
We are close to releasing the process for how departments will be charged for eligible employees. Starting January 2015, whatever accounts they are hired on would be required to meet the healthcare cost, distributed evenly among the units/accounts.

Some scholarships are paid out more as a “job.” If students meet the 30 hour/week threshold, these scholarships will be charged the healthcare fee.

Students are not supposed to work more than 29 hours during the academic year, but many of them can work 40 hours per week during summer and breaks.

The monthly healthcare charge is going to start at $417, which could be shared between accounts/units.

Starting 2015, in the initial year of employment, there is an immediate eligibility for employees working 90 days, for certain classifications. Students do not fall into this classification.

Regular updates are available on the HR website through the “Healthcare Reform” tab on the left-hand column.

- Flexible Spending Accounts
  - MSU is engaging in a Request for Proposals for a flexible spending account administrator (currently Meritain Health). There have been a lot of issues raised with respect to Meritain Health.
  - We may be able to take advantage of some new technologies through a new vendor (e.g. take a picture of your receipt and send in electronically).

- Customer Satisfaction Survey
  - Survey will include questions about enrollment in supplemental insurance programs (Benefits Plus).
  - Purpose: trying to determine whether these programs are valuable.
  - Email will come from Sharon Butler; Renee has asked us to encourage our colleagues to participate in the survey.
  - Renee asked for feedback on Benefits Plus. There was some sense that the cost savings for vision insurance was not worthwhile, but one person on ASAC who has it found a sizable cost savings.
  - Someone in the Benefits office saved over $2,000 per year on auto insurance. However, someone else on ASAC said it was more expensive than their current plan.
  - The payroll deduction can be a real convenience.

- Cost & Quality Tools
  - Many vendors provide access to the price of medical services and a quality ranking of various providers.
  - There has been feedback, in particular from people in the consumer-driven plan (high deductible), that people would like to have access to price and quality information. Best Doctors has some information on quality.
  - MSU has four vendors coming in during April to investigate the possibilities.
Rather than Google for information, this system could provide relevant and convenient information to employees.

- **Community Blue**
  - Benefits was made aware that when BCBS updated their claims process in response to healthcare reform, Community Blue was charging a 10% co-pay for in-network services. They will fix the system and reimburse employees that were overcharged. There were about 500 individuals impacted, and they have been notified by Blue Cross directly.
  - This problem does not impact employees with Blue Care Network.
  - There has been an issue with Caremark recently; employees have been asked to pay the wrong co-pay amount. Benefits office has requested an audit of claims to ensure that no one has overpaid.

**Chairperson’s update (Sarah Handspike):**

- **MSU Distinguished Academic Staff Award**
  - There are currently four awards given out for academic specialists and ten awards given out for faculty. There are 743 specialists; with Extension specialists included, there are 1,022 altogether. Because there are ten awards for faculty (with about 2,000 members), the numbers suggest that five awards would be more fair.
  - We could split the money for four awards over five. However, if possible, it would be preferable to have the same amount for each award. The quality of candidates suggests that an additional award at the same amount would be appropriate.
  - Terry has asked for a formal written request. It should include information on the ratio of awards to faculty/academic staff body and the number of quality nominees that are submitted.
  - There were eight nominees put forth this year. Perhaps ASAC could do something to promote the availability of the award to encourage additional nominees in the future.

- **Successful Spring Program**
  - The program on work-life health went well and met a need in the specialist community.
  - Seventy-three people were registered for the program. There was bad weather and a lot of schools closed that day, so there were probably 50 people in attendance.
  - Based on the evaluation, 88% felt that the program was very good to excellent.
  - Lisa Laughman spoke on work-life balance, which was well received. Lori Strom spoke about the Family Resource Center. John Kermite from Olin Health Center talked about LifeRX; many people were previously unaware of this program.
  - There was a need for a break, but there wasn’t enough time. The program could have gone 3 hours.
  - There were a number of prizes for LifeRX and a culinary class at the UClub; people stayed around for the raffle drawing.
o There were several suggestions for future program topics.

- Future programming
  o One specialist asked how ASAC could get involved in campus security.
  o There will be a training opportunity in April.
  o The whole concept of individual security could be a good topic for a forum next year. Penny Fisher was scheduled for the last forum but she had to cancel at the last minute.

Asc Prov Ast VP Academic Human Resources update (Terry Curry)
- The Provost search has been completed. President Simon will recommend Acting Provost June Youatt to the Board of Trustees in April.
- There will be movement on the ISPD, engineering and communication arts and science dean searches. Candidates should be on campus before the end of the semester.
- A new policy for ASAC consideration has been taken to the faculty. The policy states that no faculty with a full-time paid position at MSU may hold an appointment at another institution without approval. This policy would affect outside work for pay and sabbatical appointments. It isn’t that you can’t do it, but it has to be approved first.

New Business
- Raise recommendation for next budget year
  a. Faculty have a draft recommendation, which Donna Zischke will share with Sarah.
  b. We will have to turn something in before our next meeting. In past years, we have followed the faculty request. We have discussed the possibility of asking for more because the divide between faculty and specialist salaries continues to grow.
  c. We have not collected enough data to support a higher raise than faculty receive.
  d. Sarah moved to follow the faculty recommendation; Paul Streng seconded it. Carried unanimously.
  e. Sarah will share information on the faculty recommendation when she receives it.
- 2014 Elections Update/Results (Michael Everett)
  o Results
    i. Research: Sobha Romanand
    ii. Outreach: Mary Beth Graebert
    iii. Teaching: David Gilstrap
    iv. Advising: Jennifer Gansler and Regan Kania
    v. Curriculum Development: Scott Schopieray
    vi. Fixed term: Michael Zaborowski
  o Next phase, we will look for people who can be appointed by Terry. Another request for nominees will be issued for three appointed slots.
- Future Procedures and Policies for Elections
o If there is not an automatic inclusion of a fixed term appointee through the election process, we should ensure that one is appointed.

Old Business

- Photos to Kristin (getterk@msu.edu)

Motion to adjourn by Sarah Handspike, seconded by Paul Streng. Motion carried unanimously.

Meeting adjourned: at 12:12 pm

Next scheduled meeting: April 17th

Attachments:

- Benefits Update Agenda
- Best Doctors 2013 Annual Report
- Best Doctors Report Executive Summary