



**DC Health Benefit Exchange Authority  
Executive Board Meeting Minutes  
Thursday, July 11, 2013  
5:30-7:30pm  
441 4<sup>th</sup> Street NW, Old Council Chambers  
Washington, DC 20001**

**Members Present:** Dr. Mohammad Akhter (Chair), Dr. Henry Aaron, David Berns, Dr. Leighton Ku, Diane Lewis, Kevin Lucia, Khalid Pitts, Kate Sullivan Hare, Saul Levin

**Members Absent:** Wayne Turnage, William White

**I. Opening Comments**

The meeting was called to order at 5:39 pm by Dr. Akhter. The quorum was represented by Dr. Akhter and Ms. Lewis in-person and Mr. Lucia and Dr. Aaron by teleconference. Dr. Akhter welcomed Board members and the public who joined by phone and in person.

Dr. Akhter opened by announcing that the Exchange is pleased with the news of lower insurance rates filed by United Healthcare and Aetna.

In addition, he announced that Dr. Saul Levin will leave the Board. He has been named the CEO & Medical Director of the American Psychiatric Association. In appreciation of his services, Dr. Akhter presented Dr. Levin a Public Health Service award on behalf of the Board.

**II. Approval of Minutes**

The minutes from the meeting of June 17, 2013 were unanimously approved by roll call vote from Board members present.

Board members Leighton Ku and Khalid Pitts joined by phone

**III. Executive Director's Report**

*Mila Kofman, Executive Director*

- *Community Outreach/Education:* A significant number of public outreach events have been planned for most of the wards in the city. The schedule and locations will be posted on the website. Board members will be asked to participate at these events.
- *Health Committee Round Table:* On June 25<sup>th</sup>, Ms. Kofman and Dr. Akhter testified at a Council roundtable led by Council Member Yvette Alexander, Chair of the Health Committee. Two public witnesses were the DC Chamber of Commerce and the Greater Washington Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. Each provided supportive testimony about their partnership with the Exchange including their outreach efforts.
- *Call Center Contract:* The contract was reviewed July 10, 2013 by the Council and approved unanimously.
- *New Staff:* Ms. Kofman introduced a new Exchange staff member, Ms. Ikeita Cantu Hinojosa, an attorney with extensive experience with the Affordable Care Act, and work experience with HHS.
- *Oversight Committee Request:* Ms. Kofman updated the Board on the status of the response to the letter and request for documents the Exchange received from the US House of Representatives Committee on Oversight and Government Reform. The letter requested information on the decision creating one big marketplace. Currently the Exchange is working on a response and providing information. The Exchange will be doing a briefing with staff of the Committee.
- *Federal Level Grant Submission:* The Exchange is assessing needs for additional grant funding and will be submitting another Federal Level 1 grant (duration 1 year) request in August.
- *Office Space:* Currently the Exchange is located in two small suites which are at capacity, inhibiting the ability to staff up. In order to accommodate the transition to the 37 full time employees contemplated, we are looking for temporary space for the next 8 months, followed by a move to permanent space in the spring. The choice has been narrowed down to 4 potential options. A permanent move will not occur before March 2014.
- *State Based Exchange Directors Meeting:* Next week, many of the State Based Exchange directors will be in DC to meet with the Administration including Treasury, HHS, Department of Labor, and at the White House to discuss implementation efforts.
- *Communications Request for Proposals (RFP):* There is a large procurement for Communications and Outreach that needs Board approval. We are currently going through an RFP process. A telephonic Board meeting will be scheduled next Monday, July 22, 2013 to follow up on this procurement.
- *Carrier Concierge Service:* Several IT contracted staff have been designated to work with carriers to ensure a smooth process for IT implementation for both entities.
- *In-Person Assisters (IPA):* the IPA grants administration vendor is currently reviewing the responses from the 83 entities that applied for IPA grants.

- *Rates:* We expect DISB Commissioner White to approve final health insurance plan rates as soon as tomorrow or early next week.
- *Employer Responsibility:* The Obama Administration has extended by one year enforcement of the requirement that all employers with 50 or more FTEs offer coverage to their employees. This has little impact on the Exchange
- *Inspector General Inquiry:* The Exchange received a written inquiry from the HHS Office of the Inspector General (OIG) seeking information to help devise a strategy for audits of Exchanges. The Exchange responded, asking that the OIG come back to us after the October 1 open enrollment begins

Board member Kate Sullivan Hare joined the meeting in-person.

Dr. Akhter reviewed the agenda for the remainder of the meeting.

#### **IV. Issue for Consideration**

*Producer Advisory Committee Consensus Recommendations on Broker Training -- Lee Bethel, Chair*

Mr. Bethel took a moment to thank the committee and the Exchange staff for their assistance and hard work. Mr. Bethel presented the recommendations on broker training indicating that all brokers selling coverage through DC Health Link must meet the recommended requirements which he summarized.

#### **V. Public Comment**

Janice Hazel, an ANC Commissioner from Ward 7, stated her appreciation for the work of the Exchange, but expressed her concern that there had been insufficient outreach surrounding the IPA grants. Ms. Kofman responded that the Exchange engaged in aggressive outreach in various settings and welcomes those organizations who want to assist and do not need funding.

#### **VI. Additional Issues for Consideration**

*Consider and Vote on:*

- Producer Advisory Committee Consensus Recommendations on Broker Training*
- Producer Training Contract with the National Association of Health Underwriters*

Dr. Akhter asked Ms. Kofman to present information on the proposed vendor for broker training.

The National Association of Health Underwriters (NAHU) is the proposed vendor to do training for the producer community who wants to sell through DC Health Link. In order to minimize barriers, the Exchange is proposing to pay for broker training through 2014. With a budget of \$125,000, training would be provided for about 2500 brokers in DC, Maryland, and Virginia. NAHU is a national membership association with over 200 chapters across the US. Significant service includes training and educational opportunities for brokers including in person and online training.

Dr. Akhter then stated the proposed resolution.

Board member Leighton Ku joined the meeting in person.

*Discussion:*

Dr. Ku inquired if the brokers need to complete the training regardless of their licensure and Dr. Akhter and Ms. Kofman confirmed that that is correct.

*Vote*

A roll call vote of the Board members present was unanimous in favor of approving the Producer Advisory Committee Consensus Recommendations on Broker Training. Those voting in favor were: Dr. Aaron, Ms. Sullivan Hare, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Lucia, Mr. Pitts, Dr. Ku, and Dr. Akhter.

A motion to accept the proposed contract with the National Association of Health Underwriters to conduct broker training was made and seconded and a roll call vote of the Board members present was unanimous in favor of approving the contract. Those voting in favor were: Dr. Aaron, Ms. Sullivan Hare, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Lucia, Mr. Pitts, Dr. Ku, and Dr. Akhter.

*c. Consider and Vote on Partnership Agreement with the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington*

Ms. Kofman discussed the proposed partnership with the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington. The Restaurant Association would assist in educating workers and owners about DC Health Link and new coverage options. This is a difficult population to reach and includes a significant number of uninsured people. In addition, the Restaurant Association has strong capability in its use of social media and will utilize this and other opportunities to host and plan outreach events. The grant amount is \$232,687.

*Discussion:*

*Vote*

Ms. Sullivan Hare inquired whether the Restaurant Association has a similar agreement with Maryland or Virginia. Ms. Kofman was not aware of such an agreement. There is an expectation for the focus to be on businesses in the District.

A motion to accept the Partnership Agreement with the Restaurant Association of Metropolitan Washington was made and seconded and a roll call vote of the members present was 6 in favor of the partnership (Aaron, Akhter, Hare, Ku, Lewis, Lucia) and 1 abstention (Pitts).

## **VII. Staff Reports**

*Premium payment options using credit cards, Bonnie Norton and Mark Waterstrat-  
Chief Strategy Office of Benissance*

Mr. Waterstrat and Ms. Norton gave a presentation on credit card fees and related implementation issues for the Exchange. Mr. Waterstrat began the presentation.

- Role of Benaissance
  - Benaissance will process all premium payments made to DC Health Link and send payments to carriers
  - Individuals and Employers may pay premiums through different methods
- Credit Card Background
  - Benaissance will process all premium payments made to DC Health Link and send payments to carriers
  - Major factors in credit card transactions
  - Steps in purchasing process

Ms. Norton continued with the presentation.

- Market and Exchange Credit Card Acceptance
  - Individual market payment experience
  - Credit/Debit card fee experience
  - Card brand market share
  - Small business cards market share
  - Market usage of credit cards
    - Acceptance of credit cards by health insurance carriers now is highly variable and carrier/market specific
  - Credit card usage by other state exchanges
- Overview of credit card implementation options
  - Credit/Debit card acceptance & payer
  - Consumer cost options/examples
  - Recommendations

*Discussion:*

Several Board members inquired about credit and debit card fees including absorption of fees by the Exchange, difference in cost for individuals and small businesses, and surcharges.

In addition it was discussed that, for payment of premiums in the individual market, if the Exchange accepted credit cards, the associated fees are estimated to be about \$2,250 a year. The Exchange only collects the first premium payment in the individual market. Use by small business of credit cards would have significantly higher fees associated. Moreover, at the time of payment acceptance, Benaissance would not be aware of the card type, there being 15-25 different rates depending on the card. At the moment of the transaction, Benaissance does not know the fee and won't until the end of the month statement.

Board member Khalid Pitts left the meeting

*Staff Update on Advisory Committees, Ms. Purvee Kempf*

*Producer Advisory Committee:* Future meetings will entail input from the producer/broker community to know how to partner with them effectively and to see how they are connecting with the community.

*In-Person Assister Program (IPA):* Progress is being made with this program and individual assisters will be ready to serve the District's hard to reach population by the opening enrollment date, October 1, 2013. These assisters will be working in the community for outreach, enrollment, and eligibility. Ms. Cantu Hinojosa has been designated the internal point person on staff for the IPA program. There is approximately \$6-6.5 million available in grants to qualifying entities. Grant reviewers have begun the process of assessing the submissions. Grants will be awarded in late July. IPA entities will be invited to a kick off program that will be held in August to discuss expectations of the grantees. In addition, we will work with the Department of Employment Services to identify individuals who want to serve as IPAs with the grantee organizations. Training will begin the last week of August and continue to the last week of September.

Ms. Kempf noted that IPAs are going out to the community personally. IPAs must engage in eligibility and enrollment, which is a major component of their responsibility.

*Staff Update on Implementation, Ms. Bonnie Norton*

*Consumer Assistance and Outreach Advisory Committee:* This committee is currently focusing on recommendations for the Certified Application Counselor (CAC) Program who have similar responsibilities to Assistors but will not be paid. The committee is developing details and requirements for this program.

*Carrier Certification Process:* The Exchange is establishing a concierge team for DC Health Link to work with each carrier, ensuring that they make it through the training process. The Department of Insurance, Securities and Banking is

anticipating approving most rates and forms by July 22, 2013, when carriers will be able to access DC Health Link online for the first time. Carrier certification documentation and finalized plans will be uploaded within the next few weeks, and plans will be fully certified and ready for use on the Exchange by the end of August.

*Discussion:*

Ms. Norton responded to questions pertaining to maintaining quality control of information from CACs and the contact center. There will be similar training like the IPA training for CACs. The Exchange will provide them with the necessary outreach and educational materials. The contact center will be supported by a program that identifies conflicting responses, in which case we will identify and monitor those types of issues.

In addition, there was an inquiry if IPAs or the contact center would know whether particular providers are included in plans on the Exchange. There will be a provider directory online at DC Health Link for each plan. Those directories do not include the names of specific clinics.

Board member Saul Levin left the meeting

*Discussion:*

Public Commenter, David Israel, inquired who will be the vendor for the contact center. Ms. Kofman responded that we have not approved a contract yet.

Dr. Akhter announced that Board member Khalid Pitts had, via telephone, changed his previous vote for DC Restaurant Association from “yes” to “abstain”.

Board member Diane Lewis presented a Public Health Service award to Dr. Akhter in honor of his dedication and service. Dr. Akhter accepted the award stating that he is honored and humbled to serve in the position as Chairman of the Board, and learned much from each Board member.

### **VIII. Annual Elections**

At the last meeting, July 11, 2013 was selected as the date for the annual election of officers. Nominations received at the last meeting include Diane Lewis for Chair, Dr. Henry Aaron for Vice Chair, and Khalid Pitts for Treasurer/Secretary. All three candidates accepted their nomination. Before moving to the vote, Dr. Akhter asked if there were any additional nominations. None were brought forward.

Dr. Akhter then called for a vote on the nomination of Diane Lewis as chair. A roll call vote of the voting members of the Board present was held and Ms. Lewis was elected by a unanimous vote. Those voting in favor were: Dr. Aaron, Ms. Sullivan Hare, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Lucia, Dr. Ku, and Dr. Akhter.

Dr. Akhter called for a vote on the nomination of Henry Aaron as vice chair. A roll call vote of the voting members of the Board present was held and Dr. Aaron was

elected by a unanimous vote. Those voting in favor were: Dr. Aaron, Ms. Sullivan Hare, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Lucia, Dr. Ku, and Dr. Akhter.

Dr. Akhter called for a vote on the nomination of Khalid Pitts as Treasurer/Secretary. A roll call vote of the voting members of the Board present was held and Mr. Pitts was elected by a unanimous vote. Those voting in favor were: Dr. Aaron, Ms. Sullivan Hare, Ms. Lewis, Mr. Lucia, Dr. Ku, and Dr. Akhter.

**IX. Move to Closed Session**

Upon a unanimous roll call vote of the members present, the meeting went into executive closed session at 8:00pm to consider procurement issues.