Building Community: Creating Partnerships

Employee Council Meeting
October 18, 2006 at 12:00 Noon
Jones Room, 3rd Floor Woodruff Library, Room 320

ATTENDANCE

PRESENT:

Abreu, Berky       Ali, Yasmin      Asherman, Laurie
Ashley, Sharon     Bianchi, Felicia  Blackmon, Melissa
Brennan, Kathleen  Burton, Louis     Clawson, Margaret
Commodore, Ruth    Crabb, Jennifer   Culliton, Jackie
Doherty, Susan     Elliott, Cheryl    Englehardt, Matt
Foster, Zandra     Garrett-Bell, Jamila Goetz, Betty
Gresham, Brenda    Hinson, Katherine  Howard, Marsha
Jaleel, Joyce      Johnson, Tawana    Kelly, Kenny
Kerry, Sandra      King, Linda       Koffsky, Ed
Long, Nina         Martin, Missie     Matkins, Margaret
McBride, Bill      Ndubuizu, Iruka    Nichols, Carol
Rackstraw, Joanne  Ratliff, Susan    Sheldon, Linda
Solomon, Trish     Stephens, Stephanie Stewart, Glenda
Wilson, Dee

ALTERNATES:

Pike, Cecelia

EXCUSED:

Alexander, Chris   Duncan, Carol     Hayes, Darlene

ABSENT:

Brown, Jim         Chebat, Patricia   Escobar, Alex-PCORE
Ethridge, Bob      Morgan, Sian       Myers, Jill
Turner, Audrey     Williams, Anthony  Wilson, Brenda
Worthy, Robin
Welcome

Introduction of Guest Speakers
President, Linda Sheldon welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the guest speaker – Theresa Milazzo, Associate VP of Human Resources, and Jody Martin, Director of Benefits who also attended.

Open Enrollment and Benefits
Theresa Milazzo spoke about the Open Enrollment Period and changes to employee benefits this year. She stresses that Human Resources is taking a more active approach to communications. Her presentation to the Council was a leadership presentation asking Council representatives to help make the open enrollment period a positive experience for all. She started with a review of current medical cost trends. Focus groups were held on campus to gather opinions from staff and faculty, including University and Healthcare employees. The findings of the focus groups follow:

- Some participants could not identify their health plan
- Faculty and Staff value choice of doctors, access to doctors and low cost
- Some faculty and staff have a limited choice of Core doctors and facilities close to home
- Participants understand why using Emory providers is important
- Few BCBS POS (EmoryCare Direct) participants were concerned about EmoryCare being eliminated
- Faculty and Staff have very high and unfulfilled expectations of communication around annual enrollment and medical benefits
- Personal, face to face communication preferred
- Last year’s enrollment experience for EmoryCare participants was poor

Key improvements made for 2007 include:
- Elimination of BCBS POS plan (EmoryCare Direct)
- Improvements rather than changes to the plans
- Simpler, more descriptive plan names: Focus on the plan design
  - Aetna POS (EmoryChoice)
  - BCBS PPO (HealthChoice)
  - Aetna HDHP
- Small changes to “core” copays and deductibles in Aetna POS and BCBS PPO (same copays for primary care and specialists)
- Lifetime maximum moved to $1.5 million for all plans
- Remove limit on out-of-network visits and inpatient days for mental and behavioral health care (improved mental health parity)
- Smaller than anticipated rate increases
5% increase on faculty and staff paid rates

- Lower premiums and deductibles in High Deductible Healthcare Plan (HDHP) to make the plan more affordable to a larger population
- Prescription drug tier changes – based on consultation with a committee of healthcare professionals

Human Resources wants to communicate that the changes are important and are based on current health plan trends. The communication strategy is:

**Objectives**

- Improve understanding of benefit choices and changes
- Help faculty and staff become better consumers of health care services
- Set the table for more substantial changes in 2008
- Increase the value faculty and staff perceive Emory provides in their medical benefits

**Approach**

- Assist leaders in understanding the issues and choices, so they can play a proactive role
- Create more opportunities for faculty and staff communication
- Provide more advance communication, with crisper, shorter content
- Reinforce consumerism with year round communications

Human Resources requests that Council members, in our role as campus leaders, do the following:

**Lead**

- Encourage faculty and staff to read the material and learn about the changes and options for this enrollment
- Remind faculty and staff that they have an obligation to become informed so they can make their own informed choices
- Know Emory’s benefits and how they affect faculty and staff retention and satisfaction
- Encourage faculty and staff to make selections early in the process

**Understand**

- Know the plans at a high level
- Understand what is changing and why

**Support**

- Support the changes and improvements in the health plans
- Encourage and promote active healthy lifestyles
- Support our sustainability goal: Healthy Living-Learning-Working Community

**Explain**

- Emphasize that faculty and staff should become informed and prepared to make choices and decisions as consumers
- Direct faculty and staff to the right information resources
- Encourage faculty and staff to attend information sessions
Emphasize that one on one individualized sessions are not practical or feasible for all faculty and staff.

Take initiative in explaining the changes

Additional informational sessions and open Q&A sessions are available to staff. Open enrollment starts next week and all should look for an insert in the Emory Report or on the website for information.

Discussion followed with a request made for a FAQ link on the website to answer the most common questions. Ms. Milazzo pointed out that there is an online healthcare calculator that can help give a cost perspective comparison of the plans. She clarified the intentional use of E-VIP line. When that number is called, you reach a nurse who evaluates if your time frame for an appointment is medically appropriate or if it should try to be scheduled sooner. It is not meant to be a preferred service to get employees in to see a doctor sooner than others, but that was not originally well marketed to employees.

**Diversity Leadership Introductions and Presentations**

Linda Sheldon introduced Jennifer Crabbe, present as a representative of the President’s Commission on Race and Ethnicity, and Cheryl Elliott, present as a representative of the President’s Commission on the Status of Women. Both are Employee Council members.

**OLD BUSINESS**

The September minutes were approved.

**Treasurer's Report**

Chris Alexander reported in abstentia, that the budget is on track.

**Election of President-Elect/Secretary Positions**

Iruka Ndubuizu was elected President-Elect by a voice vote. Jackie Culliton moved into the Secretary position vacated by Iruka. Nominations are requested to elect someone to the Secretary-Elect position at the next Council meeting.

**Introduction of New Members**

New members not present at the September meeting were asked to stand and introduce themselves.

**Volunteers for Senate Representatives and Committees**

Linda Sheldon called for volunteers to fill vacancies on the University Senate. Stephanie Stephens announced that Zandra Foster and Kenny Kelly have agreed to fill two vacancies but three openings remain and will need to be filled by the next meeting.

**NEW BUSINESS**

**Committee Chair Updates:**

**Membership:**

Stephanie Stephens is updating the membership roster and trying to fill vacancies. She needs one more person to serve on the Membership Committee.
Communications:
Katherine Hinson asked for five people to serve on the Communications Committee.

Special Issues:
Iruka Ndubuizu needs five committee members.

Strategic Planning:
Matt Engelhardt announced that this committee will have five sub-committees this year: Leadership, Benefits, Training, Work-life Balance, and Community. He will ask for sub-committee leaders during the caucus period. The Benefits subcommittee needs one more member.

Chairs of each committee were asked to send the names of their group members to Linda Sheldon. Members were urged to join at least one committee in the Council.

Announcements
Linda Sheldon made a reminder to all to gather questions from our constituents to submit to Mike Mandl on the new parking and transportation changes taking effect on February 1, 2007. A request will be made to Mike Mandl to put out an email to all.

Linda Sheldon asked that all Council members think about how we communicate with our constituents – through newsletters, bulletin boards, emails with links to Employee Council minutes, email alerts, etc. Discussion followed about gaining support from upper management for this communication and the Executive Committee will take up the issue on how to work that out. All members were asked to consider formalizing their communication system to provide continuity of communication through changes of representatives over the years.

Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jackie Culliton
Secretary, Employee Council