

RI Health Benefits Exchange Advisory Board
Tuesday November 13, 2012
1:00pm – DOA Conf. A
Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Vice Chair Geoff Grove Members: Michael Gerhardt, Linda Katz, Commissioner Koller, Director Licht, Amy Zimmerman

Absent: Chair Meg Curran, Marta Martinez, Dwight McMillan, Margaret Holland McDuff, Secretary Costantino, Pam McKnight,

I. Call to Order

Vice Chair Geoff Grove called the meeting to order with Exchange Director Ferguson at 1:00pm. The Vice Chair asked for any comment on the meeting minutes from the last session – as there were no corrections or additions, the minutes were approved.

II. Review of Materials

Director Ferguson introduced the topics for the meeting including updates on consumer support and the SHOP. The Director also drew attention to the new staff and consultants list for the Exchange and encouraged Advisory Board members to use this contact list as a resource.

III. Consumer Support – Amy Black, Exchange Team

a. Contact Center RFP Process:

Ms. Black was introduced as one of the new members on the team. She informed the Advisory Board that she will be working on public outreach for the Exchange and explained that the Advisory Board will be receiving a draft Contact Center RFP for their review and comment. This draft RFP will also be posted for public comment. The public comment period will be roughly a week to ten days. The timeline for completing the RFP process will be approximately one month once the RFP is finalized and posted by DOA for bidder responses.

Advisory Board Discussion:

Advisory Board members commented favorably on the transparency of the process, particularly the use of a public comment period to help frame the RFP since the Contact Center will be critical to the success of the Exchange.

b. Consumer Support Advisory Board Subgroup:

Ms. Black reviewed the discussions at the prior Advisory Board meeting regarding the establishment of a sub group of the Advisory Board to focus on Consumer Support in all its forms.

Advisory Board Discussion:

Advisory Board members discussed how best to include a sub group of the Advisory Board in the discussions of Consumer Support going forward. After discussion of options it was concluded that Linda Katz, as well as other interested Advisory Board members, would work with the public stakeholder work group that had already begun to meet in the past to discuss these issues, rather than create an additional sub group of the Advisory Board in addition to the stakeholder work group.

Decision: Linda Katz, and any other Advisory Board member who expresses an interest in meeting to discuss Consumer Support strategy, will be included in the meetings of the Consumer Support stakeholder work group (rather than convene *both* a stakeholder work group *and* an Advisory Board sub group. Ms. Black and others on the Exchange team will take responsibility for convening this work group.

It was noted that other ad hoc work groups – to focus on such issues as insurance affordability – might be needed over time.

IV. Director's Report

Federal Approvals and Requirements:

The Director noted that the deadline for submission of the Exchange Blueprint and supporting materials has been moved from November 16th to mid-December. In light of this change Blueprint materials will be shared with the Advisory Board in early December, for review prior to submission. The Director reported that the federal review with the Exchange team in early November was very positive and that it appears that everything is on track for approval of the submission in December however there is acute awareness that the timelines for implementation are very challenging and that continues to be a major theme in all the discussions with the federal agency.

Advisory Board Discussion:

Advisory Board members discussed the implications of the presidential election and whether the reelection of the President would have the effect of lengthening the implementation period. After Advisory Board discussion it was concluded that implementation needs to move forward as quickly as possible, in spite of the vagaries of the broad potential for a variety of Congressional or administration adjustments post-election.

Advisory Board members also noted the challenges of coordinating with the implementation schedule for Medicaid expansion and discussed how challenging these interrelated requirements will be.

The Director provided the Advisory Board with an update on the status of the technology RFP and noted that a vendor has been selected and that contract negotiations are under way. The goal is to conclude the contract discussions and have the vendor start work as soon as possible.

Discussions with Health Insurers:

The Director provided an update on her ongoing discussions with R.I. health insurers regarding the standards for Qualified Health Plans as well as creative approaches to offering innovative insurance options in the context of the Exchange.

Advisory Board Discussion:

Advisory Board members discussed the timing and issues surrounding the review of plans and rates by the Office of the Health Insurance Commissioner and Commissioner Koller noted that he is coordinating the efforts of his office with those of the Exchange and that he expects to review plans and rates beginning in March and April of 2013. The Director assured Advisory Board members that all insurers are involved in these discussions, that brokers will also be integrated into the discussions and that she will keep the Advisory Board fully informed as these discussions unfold.

V. SHOP Presentation – John Cucco, Exchange Team.

John Cucco was introduced as another new member of the Exchange team and provided an overview of SHOP options. [Presentation available here: {insert link}]

Advisory Board Discussion:

The Advisory Board engaged a broad discussion of SHOP issues and options, including how best to mitigate against adverse selection in the SHOP context. Discussions about broadening employee options in the context of the employer support of employee health insurance also focused on the difficulties associated with presenting sufficient information for consumers to base their choices on anything other than overall plan price. The Director noted that the issue is to develop sufficient data to be able to offer the consumer and employers information about value as distinct from price.

The SHOP presentation and discussion was held for further discussion at an upcoming Advisory Board meeting given the time constraints and desire to conform to the time posted for the meeting.

VI. Public Comment

Vice Chair Grove asked for public comment – none was offered and thus the meeting was adjourned.

VII. Adjourn