

THE SEHCB REPORT

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SEHCB Rolls Out Initial Best Practice Standards

Focused on improving health of public school employees and their families

Cheryl Reeves
SEHCB Staff

The School Employees Health Care Board has announced the first set of best practices to be adopted by all health care plans providing coverage to public school employees and their families.

The first set of best practices requires that all health care plans providing coverage to public school employees and their families institute disease state management, implement wellness programs, provide access to specialty and transplant networks, and conduct periodic dependent eligibility audits.

The proposed best practices are expected to be considered for formal adoption by the Board at its May meeting. Once adopted, the best practices will go through the state's rulemaking process and are expected to become law sometime in the fall.

*Questions or comments?
Contact the SEHCB at
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From the Desk of The Executive Director

Who are those people and what are they doing to my health plan?

Bruce J. Gilbert
Executive Director, SEHCB

As most of you know, the School Employees Health Care Board was created by the legislature in 2005 to help school boards throughout the state improve the benefits and health status of their employees. With the assistance of an Advisory Committee composed of 18 members from nine constituent groups, the Board is empowered to establish best practice standards designed to lower healthcare expenditures without reducing benefit levels or shifting costs. It is my responsibility, as Executive Director, to advance the mission and strategic goals of the Board.

Many of those whom we are committed to assist misunderstand who and what we are. The Board is not an "outside" group requiring changes in district health plans. Nearly all of the Board and Advisory Committee members have been actively involved in public education for many years. Our membership includes teachers and school treasurers, administrators and superintendents, all of whom recognize that the ever-increasing cost of healthcare is diverting important resources from Ohio's public education efforts. One of the best ways to address that problem is to have all of the interested groups come together and work to identify and implement strategies designed to meaningfully improve the health of, and the quality of the healthcare available to, public school employees and their families.

That's who the SEHCB and Advisory Committee are and what they're meant to do.

Ohio's 600-plus school districts sponsor over 200 health plans. Some of the plans are fully insured. Some are self-funded. Some districts have plans which cover only their own employees. Other districts are members of risk pools or purchasing cooperatives.

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LEARN MORE ABOUT THE SEHCB

Information about the School Employees Health Care Board and its activities can be found on our webpage at www.sehcb.ohio.gov.

The Board's website includes announcements, contact information, meeting minutes, educational presentations, and a calendar of Board events.

If you have any questions about the website, or the Board and its activities, you can contact us by telephone at (614) 728-7518.

SEHCB CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON PROPOSED BEST PRACTICES

DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2008

PLACE: 8050 N. HIGH STREET, COLUMBUS

TIME: 9:30 AM

Opportunity for public comment on initial best practice standards.

MAY BOARD MEETING

DATE: TUESDAY, MAY 13, 2008

PLACE: 8050 N. HIGH STREET, COLUMBUS

TIME: 9:00 AM

Regularly scheduled meeting of the Board and Advisory Committee.

JUNE BOARD MEETING

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 11, 2008

PLACE: 8050 N. HIGH STREET, COLUMBUS

TIME: 9:00 AM

Regularly scheduled meeting of the Board and Advisory Committee.

JULY BOARD MEETING

DATE: THURSDAY, JULY 17, 2008

PLACE: 8050 N. HIGH STREET, COLUMBUS

TIME: 9:00 AM

Regularly scheduled meeting of the Board and Advisory Committee.

Some districts utilize carriers to provide administrative services. Others use regional or local third party administrators.

Our unique challenge is to attempt to identify and implement best practices which will help all of the districts assure that their healthcare dollars are wisely spent, maximizing value and measurably improving the health of the state's 200,000 public school employees and their 400,000 dependents.

The initial best practice standards proposed by the Board are solidly evidence-based.

- *Successful wellness programs can be found in public school systems in Texas, New York, Nevada and dozens of other states.*
- *More than thirty states have implemented disease state management programs that have demonstrated higher compliance rates and reduced costs.*
- *The use of transplant and specialty networks not only provides access to high quality healthcare but significantly lowers the costs associated with complex conditions or catastrophic medical events.*
- *Dependent eligibility audits have led to millions of dollars in savings by public sector health plans in Michigan, Minnesota, Alaska and Georgia.*

As this first set of standards moves through the adoption and rulemaking processes, the members of the Board and Advisory Committee will be identifying and evaluating other potential best practices. Topics currently under discussion include vendor compensation transparency, strategies to control the cost of prescription drugs, quality standards for claims handling and other administrative services, a formal and transparent procurement process for the purchase of health coverage, and the selection of key indicators to be included in reporting by health plans in order to understand the factors that drive trends and outcome variances.

We'll be emailing this newsletter regularly to make sure that you're kept aware of our progress, as well as each set of proposed best practice standards. Your opinions and feedback are important to us, so please feel free to email or call or come to a Board meeting and share your thoughts.

I look forward to working with you to improve the health of all of Ohio's public school employees and their families.