

Public Employees Benefits Board
Meeting Minutes

October 22, 2014
Health Care Authority
Sue Crystal Rooms A & B
Olympia, Washington
12:00 p.m. – 12:16 p.m.

Members Present:

Dorothy Teeter
Melissa Burke-Cain
Greg Devereux

Members on Phone:

Marilyn Guthrie
Marc Provence
Yvonne Tate
Mary Lindquist
Harry Bossi

Call to Order

Dorothy Teeter, Chair, called the meeting to order at 12:06 p.m. Sufficient members were present to allow a quorum. Board and audience self-introductions followed.

Dorothy Teeter: This is a special meeting of the Public Employees Benefits Board. There is one item before the Board today. Lou McDermott will bring us up-to-date on the proposed changes to Resolution 4 that was approved on July 31, 2014. Materials are behind Tab 3.

Lou McDermott: Basically, during the Board season there was a lot of interest in the transgender benefit and having that available to our members. We went through the Board season working with our clinical staff, our program, with Regence, Group Health, and Kaiser. We determined what we felt could be done for 2015 – mental health visits and medications would be authorized for treatment of Gender Dysphoria, effective 1-1-15 and the surgical treatment would be authorized in July.

During the Board season there was a letter from the Office of the Insurance Commissioner that was sent to all the carriers indicating that, basically, they felt it was not appropriate to discriminate against folks with Gender Dysphoria and that they should make treatment available. That took time to get through all the legal departments and committees of the carriers. Based on our conversations with the carriers, we felt we had the most aggressive timetable we could offer. The carriers have since changed their position. Group Health, Kaiser, and Regence are all going to be implementing the full benefit effective 1/1/15. They

have been working closely with our clinical staff. We feel that the criteria are appropriate, the timeline is appropriate, the carriers will be ready; therefore, we are asking the Board to change the July 1 start date for the surgical benefit to January 1 to be in sync with the carriers.

Greg Devereux: I would just say that I really appreciate that everyone looked at it very closely and that it is moved up six months. I think that's great and I really do appreciate that we're doing this.

Dorothy Teeter: Thanks, Greg. Hearing no other comments from the Board, I am going to read the proposed amended resolution and then ask for questions or comments before we vote on the item.

Amended Procurement Resolution 4: Resolved, Resolution #4 from the PEBB's July 31, 2014 meeting is amended to state the following:

Resolved, that effective January 1, 2015, all PEBB medical plans (non-Medicare and Medicare), including the Uniform Medical Plan Classic, the UMP Consumer Driven Health Plan, and all the fully-insured Group Health and Kaiser medical plans, will administer and include benefits for covered non-surgical health care services, covered prescriptions, and covered surgical services for the treatment of gender dysphoria.

Moved. Seconded. Approved.

Voting to Approve: 6

Voting No: 0

Dorothy Teeter: That's a unanimous vote for making this change. Thank you all. We have one person, Kathryn Mahan, signed up to speak.

Kathryn Mahan: Thank you, Madame Chair. On behalf of the group of people who worked so hard on this, I want to say thank you up front so that I don't forget to do that. I've been a subscriber for a long time. I've been a Group Health customer for twenty-six years and I really like that coverage. It works very well for my family. I don't always get everything that I want, but it's been very good for us. And it's been a very large part, being as I am a parent of a whole lot of kids, it's been a very large part of my decision to stay in government service.

What I want to say is, first off, I really appreciate what you've done because this is going to help me personally. Group Health has already been working with me and I am going to be using these services next year. And it's something I never thought I'd be able to do, so that's important. You probably already know this because you work in this field, but some people don't think about this. I have a lot of kids and how well I care for them is based upon my own mental and physical health. And by helping me, you are actually helping ten of us and I'm just very pleased with what you've done. Thank you.

Dorothy Teeter: Thank you very much for your comments and that's a very inspiring thought to take forward with us as a reminder that as we make positive impacts on some people's lives, they have ripple effects for many others, so thank you for that.

Meeting adjourned at 12:16 p.m.