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**Correspondence Memorandum**

**Date:** July 18, 2019  
**To:** Group Insurance Board  
**From:** Renee Walk, Strategic Health Policy Advisor  
 Office of Strategic Health Policy  
**Subject:** Pilot Programs Report and 2020 Proposals

**The Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) requests the Group Insurance Board (Board) approve the following pilot programs to be offered by health plans in benefit year 2020:**

- **Network Health Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP);**
- **Network Health/Delta Dental Evidence-Based Integrated Care Program (EBICP) coordination;**
- **Dean Health Plan acupuncture benefit.**

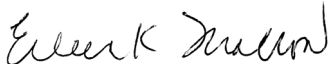
**ETF also requests the Board approve continuing existing pilot programs through 2020 to monitor impact for potential future benefit inclusion.**

**Background**

Historically, the Board has offered a standard group of benefits to all members who participate in the Group Health Insurance Program (GHIP). Health plans who provide GHIP benefits on behalf of the Board must offer the same benefit and cost sharing levels for each of the Board’s health program offerings. This is referred to as Uniform Benefits (UB). While this approach helps to ensure equitable service access among GHIP members, plans and providers often report that this stifles innovation. This is further complicated by statutory language that states the Board may not sign contracts that increase the cost of benefits over time<sup>1</sup>.

To help address the issue of new and innovative services while still managing costs, the Board introduced language in the 2018 Health Program Agreement (Agreement) at ETF’s request that allows health plans to provide pilot programs to GHIP members at no cost to the Board. ETF staff works with plans to monitor these programs and analyze

<sup>1</sup> [Wis. Stat. § 40.03 \(6\)\(c\)](#)

Reviewed and approved by Eileen K Mallow, Director, Office of Strategic Health Policy  
 Electronically Signed 8/5/19

Board	Mtg Date	Item #
GIB	8.21.19	5B

whether the pilot programs have an impact on member health and could potentially lead to lower utilization and cost in the future.

### **2019 Pilot Programs**

The first round of pilot programs were recommended by ETF and approved by the Board in May ([Ref. GIB | 5.16.18 | 4A](#)) and August ([Ref. GIB | 8.22.18 | 6A](#)) of 2018. These included several diabetes interventions that were initially deployed in 2019. ETF also recommended implementing a low back pain program through two health plans to start in fall of 2018, though implementation was delayed until the fourth quarter of the year due to inclement weather that caused health plan office closures.

#### WEA Trust Livongo Diabetes Pilot

Livongo is a diabetes meter and coaching program. Members are provided a cellular-linked diabetes meter that tracks both blood glucose and answers to lifestyle habit questions. If the meter records glucose levels that are outside of a designated range, the meter will provide real-time, text feedback to the member. Readings that are too far outside of range will trigger a phone call from a diabetes coach, and members may also opt to schedule coaching phone calls to help manage their diabetes. WEA Trust began enrolling ETF members in Livongo in the first quarter of 2019.

- *GHIP member enrollment as of 5/31/19:* 314 of 1,800 or 17% of estimated eligible members
- *WEA Trust goal enrollment:* 20% of eligible population
- *Cost to plan to provide program as of 5/31/19:* \$42,504
- *Estimated costs avoided:* Not yet calculable

#### WEA Trust Kii Back Pain Pilot

Kii is a mobile app that provides self-directed exercises for members who have indicated they have acute low back pain. The goal of the program is to help members manage low back pain without progressing to surgery when possible. Enrollment for this program began in the first quarter of 2019.

- *GHIP member enrollment as of 5/31/19:* 174 of 9,100 or 7% of estimated eligible members
- *WEA Trust goal enrollment:* 10% of eligible diagnosed population
- *Number of members completing the program:* 30 have reached maintenance phase
- *Cost to plan to provide program as of 5/31/19:* \$5,610
- *Estimated costs avoided:* Not yet calculable, though 170 members indicate initial reduction in utilization of services versus non-participants

#### Quartz MobileBack Pilot

MobileBack is Quartz's branded version of the Kii platform. Enrollment in Quartz's program began in December of 2018.

- *GHIP member enrollment as of 5/31/19:* 158 members (Quartz was not able to provide an estimate of eligible members)

- *Quartz goal enrollment:* Quartz did not establish a specific goal enrollment for the first year of the program
- *Number of members completing the program:* 5 have reached the maintenance phase (53 screened out due to medical conditions)
- *Cost to plan to provide program as of 5/31/19:* \$3,000
- *Estimated costs avoided:* Not yet calculable

#### StayWell/Navitus It's Your Health: Diabetes Pilot

This program is a collaboration between StayWell, ETF's wellness program vendor, and Navitus, the Board's pharmacy benefit manager. Members who participate in a diabetes coaching program through StayWell are eligible to receive their diabetes medications for a reduced cost. This program began enrolling participants in March of 2019.

- *GHIP member enrollment as of 6/30/19:* 399 of 1800 or 22% of estimated eligible members
- *ETF goal enrollment:* 25% of eligible members in year one enrolled in cost share reduction
- *Members who have received reduced copay medications:* 122 non-Medicare and 89 Medicare members
- *Average number of drugs per member:* 2.85 prescriptions for non-Medicare members and 2.22 prescriptions for Medicare members
- *Estimated costs avoided:* Not yet calculable

#### Dean Living Healthy Plus Diabetes Pilot

Building on the foundation of the *It's Your Health: Diabetes* program, Dean Health Plan is allowing members who participate in a StayWell coaching call to receive certain diabetes lab tests and office visits without cost sharing.

- *GHIP member enrollment:* 37 members
- *Costs to health plan:* <\$100
- *Estimated costs avoided:* Not yet calculable

All vendor partners who currently have pilots underway have indicated it is too soon to determine any savings potential, due in part to small enrollment numbers. Vendors will continue to promote enrollment in programs, and ETF will work with IBM Watson, the Board's data warehouse vendor, to develop return on investment analyses for each program. ETF recommends the Board approve continuing these programs in 2020.

#### **2020 Pilot Program Proposals**

ETF received three pilot proposals from two different health plans that it recommends to the Board for implementation in 2020.

#### Network Health/Delta Dental Evidence-Based Integrated Care Program (EBICP) Coordination

In 2018, the Board added coverage for Delta's EBICP program, which increases the preventive benefit for members with certain chronic or significant medical conditions.

Network proposes to partner with Delta to assist members in accessing this additional benefit if needed. Network has selected members who are diabetic or who have a high-risk pregnancy for this outreach. Network and Delta will work with ETF to monitor how many members avail themselves of the additional benefit and look at whether there is any change in utilization or cost for these members.

- *Estimated number of eligible members: 1,500 to 2,000*

#### Network Health Diabetes Prevention Program

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has developed an evidence-based protocol for individuals who are pre-diabetic. The protocol focuses on behavior change strategies, including increased exercise and better dietary habits. As noted in StayWell's disease management reporting, diabetes is one of the most prevalent chronic conditions in the GHIP population. The CDC Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) is a year-long series of classes led by certified DPP instructors. Members are eligible for the program if they have a BMI of 30 or greater and a fasting blood glucose level of between 110 and 125 mg/dL. Network Health Plan has implemented one DPP class in their non-GHIP population and aims to offer two additional courses to GHIP members. Courses range between 12 and 24 participants. One group will be focused in the Outagamie/Winnebago County region, where Network Health is headquartered, and the other will be focused in the Waukesha/Milwaukee/Racine area, where their other service area is focused. ETF investigated adding the DPP program as a covered benefit for 2020 but given the resource-intensive nature of the program, the pilot opportunity through Network will be an opportunity to study whether the program can be cost-effectively delivered to the GHIP population.

- *Estimated number of eligible members: 24 to 48*

#### Dean Health Plan acupuncture benefit

As concerns regarding pain medications continue to mount, patients and providers alike have begun to seek alternative ways to manage pain. Many people find acupuncture to be a helpful treatment for managing such symptoms. Health plans have provided this as a service to GHIP members in the past, but the benefit has not been formalized under the Uniform Benefits. Dean Health Plan has proposed allowing GHIP members to access their benefit at no cost to the Board. The benefit would allow ten visits to an in-network acupuncture provider during the benefit year. Dean would work with ETF and IBM Watson to monitor health outcomes for members who take advantage of this benefit, to determine whether they are more or less likely to use other services or pharmaceutical pain remedies.

- *Estimated number of members to use the benefit: ~100-150 members, or ~400 visits*

Staff will be available at the Board meeting to answer questions.