

## Letter 1 with response

**From:** [John Peters](#)  
**To:** [ETF SMB.GIB Feedback](#)  
**Subject:** ETF Health Care Options for Retirees  
**Date:** Tuesday, November 17, 2020 2:15:24 PM  
**Attachments:** [ETF Letter, 11-17-20.docx](#)

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Hello,

I retired from UW-Madison in February 2014. At the time, I escrowed a significant amount of sick leave to cover future health care premiums. I took another full-time position outside of Wisconsin that included health insurance. I am planning on retiring from that position in February of 2021. Like many retirees, I do not plan to spend all of the year in Wisconsin so I need a national plan for health care insurance. The options for national plans are very limited. Also, retirees are not allowed to use the escrowed funds for supplemental plans such as dental or vision care.

I request that the Governing Board consider offering more national options for health care and allow the use of escrowed funds to pay for supplemental coverage so that my wife and I will have more options available to us next year and beyond.

I have attached my request in memo form as well for your use. Thank you for your consideration.

Best,  
John Peters



**STATE OF WISCONSIN**  
**Department of Employee Trust Funds**  
Robert J. Conlin  
SECRETARY

Wisconsin Department  
of Employee Trust Funds  
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Fax 608-267-4549  
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December 22, 2020

Dear Mr. Peters,

Thank you for reaching out to the Department of Employee Trust Funds (ETF) regarding the potential for including more national options for health insurance and the use of escrowed funds to pay for supplemental plans such as dental or vision care. Your letter will be forwarded to the Group Insurance Board (Board) for consideration as plans are reviewed. In case it's helpful, I've included some information about the current supplemental plans offered through the Group Health Insurance Program (GHIP) available to retirees.

The Board currently offers two plans with nationwide coverage to retirees with Medicare. They are the It's Your Choice (IYC) Medicare Plus supplement plan offered by WEA Trust, and the IYC Medicare Advantage plan offered by UnitedHealthcare (UHC).

While participating HMOs could offer a provider network that extends beyond Wisconsin to our members, most have chosen not to do so. There are several practical limitations that prevent Wisconsin-based HMOs from expanding to other states. For example, seeking licensure in another state requires significant time and resources and our participating plans see little chance of this type of expansion being cost-effective. Further, HMOs in other states have shown little interest in providing coverage for our retirees, in part because older individuals typically use more services than younger individuals, so retirees are more costly to insure. Given the relatively small number of retirees living outside of Wisconsin, we have found that the IYC Medicare Advantage plan and IYC Medicare Plus plan offer the best option for flexibility to our members.

Regarding your request for expanded options for the use of accumulated sick leave conversion credits, this program is set forth in §40.05(4)b of the statutes. The program was designed to help pay the cost of health insurance during the retirement years of former State employees. Because this program is defined in the statutes, the Board has no authority to allow retirees to use these credits to pay for insurance other than that offered by the health plans under contract with the Board. Any changes to this program will require legislative action.

For plan year 2021, the GHIP has a new administrator for vision, DeltaVision. Members and their covered dependents can receive annual eye exams and coverage allowances towards glasses or contact lenses following a copayment with supplemental vision coverage. DeltaVision, in partnership with EyeMed Vision Care is offered in many states

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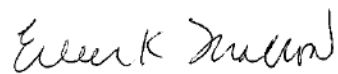
throughout the nation and offers an EyeMed provider locator to assist in your search for a provider wherever you may reside, which can be found at <https://eyedoclocator.eyemedvisioncare.com/member/en?networkSetId=1166&networkDDDisabled=true>. For GHIP members that were enrolled with VSP for plan year 2020, your enrollment will continue with DeltaVision unless you canceled during open enrollment.

Dental coverage for the GHIP is provided by Delta Dental and offers four plans for members to choose from. A member may be covered under their medical coverage and qualify for the Uniform Dental plan. Please note, in this instance, Uniform Dental is added to your health insurance premium. A member is also able to enroll in a supplemental dental plan without enrolling in Uniform Dental. Two of the four plans offer coverage for out-of-network providers under the Select and Select Plus plans. To check whether a specific provider would be covered, please visit Delta Dental's website at <https://www.deltadentalwi.com/s/find-a-provider?persona=members>.

Long-Term Care Insurance for the GHIP is available through Mutual of Omaha, administered by HealthChoice and available to residents of Wisconsin. This plan can be purchased any time of the year for those who qualify. Each member's policy will be individually underwritten. Premiums are based on that person's age, gender and health at the time of enrollment. Subscribers are able to choose from a range of options but will need to contact Mutual of Omaha for additional information at (800) 833-5823.

Again, thank you for reaching out to ETF. We value member feedback and will consider the information as we look at future offerings for the GHIP. We hope that you find this information useful. If you have additional questions, customer service specialists are available Monday-Friday from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. (CST) at ETF by calling (877) 533-5020.

Sincerely,



Eileen Mallow, Director  
Office of Strategic Health Policy  
Department of Employee Trust Funds