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Correspondence Memorandum

Date: September 4, 2017

To: Employee Trust Funds Board
 Teachers Retirement Board
 Wisconsin Retirement Board

From: Mark Lamkins, Director, Office of Communications

Subject: Communications Update

This memo is for informational purposes only. No Board action is required.

WRS Employee Benefits Seminar

The Office of Communications worked with the Member Services Bureau to revamp the *WRS Employee Benefits* seminar (a.k.a., field presentation), which is offered each fall and spring throughout the state. The seminar is designed for state and local government employees – new hires, mid-career and near retirement – who want to learn more about their Wisconsin Retirement System benefits and get their questions answered by a knowledgeable benefits specialist.

The goals were to create a more engaging learning environment, reduce the attendee’s time commitment and direct members to online resources. The seminar was condensed from a two-hour to a one-hour format, with a high-level overview of the WRS, including:

- separation benefits
- survivor benefits
- beneficiary designation
- retirement benefits, eligibility and how to apply
- disability benefits
- returning to work after retirement

Complex benefits information has been simplified and transformed into colorful infographics, friendly terminology and familiar situations for easier understanding. We also promote the many ways members can stay connected to the Department of Employee Trust Funds via the web, *ETF E-mail Updates*, the Customer Service Call Center and Twitter.

Reviewed and approved by Pamela Henning, Assistant Deputy Secretary

Electronically Signed 9/12/17

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Seminar attendees will be surveyed to measure the overall quality and value of presented information and to help us identify possible future improvements.

It's Your Choice 2018

The It's Your Choice open enrollment period for the group health insurance program is October 2-27. Prior to this time members should receive their targeted decision guides; eLearnings and other resources will be made available on the ETF website. Information about plan changes under the current fully insured model and the possible need for members to choose a new plan have already been shared with employers and members via the web and the September editions of *WRS News* for retirees and *WRS News Online* for employees.

Based on feedback from the Member Communication and Education Workgroup and member online surveys, we made several improvements to health benefits communications, such as:

- An interactive online map of health plans by county, the plan's major health care systems and links to the plan's provider directory
- Maps of health plans by county were added to the printed decision guides
- Reorganized content and quick links on the web to improve access to the most searched-for benefits information
- Additional details to help clarify the different options for employee reimbursement accounts and the health savings account

Both the website and guides include a take action checklist that walks members through the steps and important considerations when choosing a plan design option, a health plan, supplemental benefits and where to go to enroll or make changes. A new eLearning includes real-life scenarios with costs to help members choose a health plan that best fits their individual and family health care needs.

ETF will provide an overview of health plan changes for 2018, a Medicare Advantage survey for members and possible new program options for 2019 to the UW-Madison Retirement Association at the end of September.

User Engagement Metrics for June-August 2017

- [ETF E-mail Updates](#) – 48 emails sent; 83,883 total subscribers.

Members, employers and other stakeholders can subscribe to *ETF E-mail Updates* to stay apprised of retirement, health and other WRS benefit news. Almost half of the total subscribers include emails collected from webinar registrations and the Customer Service Call Center.

- Twitter [@WI ETF](#) – 102 tweets; 59,400 impressions; 608 total followers.

We hit more than 600 followers this quarter, which is a 41% increase in followers over the past 12 months. The number of tweets typically decreases during the

summer months, corresponding with breaks in the outreach and education schedule. In correlation, the number of impressions also decrease. However, impressions were 35% higher than the same quarter last year (June-August 2016). Here is one of the top viewed tweets:



Self-insurance continued to be a topic of interest among the media and other stakeholders. The Joint Committee on Finance ultimately rejected changing the fully insured group health insurance program to a self-insured model in 2018.

- ETF website, etf.wi.gov – Please see Attachment A for website trends, including a comparison of unique visitors, number of visits and viewed pages. There was a 10% increase in the number of viewed pages for this quarter compared to the same time last year. Following a similar pattern as Twitter engagement, there was a significant decrease in the number of viewed pages from the previous quarter (March-May 2017).

For June-August 2017, August had the highest number of pages viewed at 309,490. The Top 10 pages viewed for this month are:

1. [WRS Trust Funds Investment Performance](#)
2. [Members Tab](#)
3. [Member Education](#)
4. [It's Your Choice 2017 Landing Page](#)
5. [Employer Resources](#)
6. [Contact ETF](#)
7. [Retirees Tab](#)
8. [WRS Benefits Summary](#)
9. [Publications](#)
10. [It's Your Choice 2017 State Employees](#)

Given the ongoing stakeholder interest and media coverage of the group health insurance program's changes for 2018, it's not surprising the It's Your Choice section of the website was among the top-viewed web pages.

Other Updates

- **Domestic Partners** – With the elimination of the Chapter 40 domestic partnership program in the proposed state biennial budget for 2017-2019, ETF is evaluating the impact on retirement, health, disability and other WRS benefit programs. This effort includes assessing and updating program benefit materials, agency systems and processes, and notifying affected members in compliance with the implementation of the law.

- **Customer Interaction Council** – This new internal council, with core membership of business area subject matter experts and led by the Office of Communications, is focused on centralizing and synergizing the development and management of customer communications. The council will have oversight for program brochures, template letters, print forms and eForms that generate or affect myETF transactions, workflows and business processes.
- **WREA** – Secretary Conlin has been invited to present at the Wisconsin Retired Educators Association (WREA) Annual Convention on October 4, 2017 in Elkhart Lake, WI.

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

Attachment A: ETF Website Trends

ETF Website Trends, etf.wi.gov (as of September 4, 2017)

