

Executive Director Report

May 2022

By Sharon Becker, Executive Director, May 5, 2022

Administration

Annual Report – WSHIP’s Annual Report for 2021 has been completed. The report will be distributed via email in the next few weeks. A small number of printed copies will also be available.

Health Annual Statement – WSHIP has filed its Health Annual Statement with the Office of Insurance Commissioner (OIC) as required by RCW 48.41.070. The statement is due each year by May 1.

2023 Assessment Projections – Notification of WSHIP’s Projected 2023 Assessments was sent to member plans in March. Based on our preliminary financial information, we anticipate total CY 2023 assessments of \$16 million. These projections will be updated throughout the year. It is important to note that our projections are based on current market conditions (i.e., individual plans are offered in all counties; therefore, WSHIP non-Medicare plans remain closed to new enrollment).

Board

Member Plan Elections – The election process for Board member positions 2 (Health Care Service Contractors) and 9 (HMO’s) will take place at the May Annual Member Plan meeting. Results will be announced at the Board meeting which immediately follows. The results will also be posted to our website.

Governor-Appointed Positions – I am pleased to announce that Governor Inslee has appointed Jim Dixon to the WSHIP Board representing small employers. Mr. Dixon’s term is effective immediately.

The Governor has also appointed Halee Spencer to the Board effective June 1, 2022 representing consumers. Ms. Spencer will be filling the position currently held by Cary Ancheta who will be leaving the Board on May 31, 2022.

The large employer representative position on the WSHIP Board is still open and in need of applications. If you know of anyone interested in applying, please ask them to contact me or Ambar Algera, Director Boards & Commissions at the Governor’s office, at ambar.algera@gov.wa.gov.

Washington State Government

OIC Medicare Supplemental Plans Study – Included in the 2022 Supplemental Budget passed this last session was funding for the Office of Insurance Commissioner (OIC) to conduct an actuarial study regarding Medicare Supplemental plans. The study report is due to the Legislature November 15, 2022. It will “*assess options for enhancing consumer protections, expanding access to coverage, and accompanying regulations regarding Medicare supplemental insurance*”.

Legislature – All 98 House seats are up for election this fall, as are 23 of the Senate seats. Considerable turnover at the Legislature is anticipated with 22 lawmakers announcing they will not seek reelection, including the long-serving Chair of the House Health Care & Wellness Committee, Representative Cody.

HCA Health Care Cost Transparency Board – The Board was established for the purpose of reducing health care cost growth and increasing price transparency. Towards the end of this year, the Board will report to the Legislature on spending trends in the state. Data collected this year (the Board’s first data call) will help determine how much is spent on health care in Washington. This data will also set the baseline for tracking spending growth in future years, which will be measured against the benchmark.

Washington Health Benefit Exchange (HBE)

In 2021, the Legislature directed the Exchange to establish a state premium assistance program (Cascade Care Savings) for Washington residents earning up to 250% of the federal poverty level, beginning in 2023. Last month, the Exchange released its draft Cascade Care Saving policy for public comment. Current Chief Financial Officer (CFO) Jim Crawford has been named as the Exchange's Interim Chief Executive Officer (CEO), effective June 10, 2022, when current CEO Pam MacEwan retires.