



## MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Health Care Commission  
Duane Goossen, Chair  
Steve Dechant  
Sandy Praeger  
Nancy Ruoff  
John Staton

**FROM:** Doug Farmer

**DATE:** May 12, 2010

**SUBJECT:** **HealthQuest Strategy for 2011 and 2012**

The Health Care Commission has taken several important steps to move the State Employee Health Plan (SEHP) in the direction of adopting a healthy living strategy. For Plan Year 2008, members were provided with health coaches, health screenings, online health assessments, and tobacco and weight control programs. Members were provided incentives for participation. Members received discounted tobacco control medication, and members participating in the Health Assessment were offered a \$50 gift card.

Beginning with Plan Year 2009, members who were non tobacco users were given a premium discount. Tobacco users were given the option of participating in a tobacco control program and were eligible to receive the same premium discount for the year by completing the program.

For Plan Year 2010, the SEHP offers all of the wellness benefits offered in Plan Years 2008 and 2009. Encouraging members to be tobacco free and to participate in the health screening and health assessment are cornerstones of the HealthQuest program. Eligible members are offered a \$50 gift card incentive for participating in a health screening and completing the online health assessment. The benefit of a health screening is that it increases member awareness of potential health risks. The health assessment raises awareness of each member's overall health and provides feedback to them on specific lifestyle choices impacting their overall well being.

For Plan Year 2011, the same three programs that are available today will be offered. We are proposing a change in the tobacco program to move it from a post-open enrollment program to a pre-open enrollment program for Plan Year 2012. To do this, we propose during open enrollment to allow members who use tobacco to enroll in the tobacco control program and if they complete the program successfully, they would be eligible for the discounted health plan rates for all of Plan Year 2011 and Plan Year 2012. Employees in Plan Year 2012 would disclose their tobacco status and enroll in the tobacco control program to receive the discounted rates for Plan Year 2013.

Employees who enroll in the tobacco control program but fail to complete the program would lose the discount for Plan Year 2011. These employees would, however, be given one opportunity to rejoin the tobacco control program to pre-qualify for the 2012 discount. This information would be communicated to members along with the timeline for rejoining the program.

Moving to a pre-qualified status will make members aware prior to open enrollment as to whether or not they qualify for the discount. Members will know whether or not they have completed the tobacco program and qualify for the discount prior to open enrollment and prior to making their plan choices for the coming year. The change to a pre-qualified arrangement will:

- Reduce member disruption, questions and frustration.
- Reduce the amount of work required of agency human resource professionals.
- Eliminate the need for retroactive payroll changes.
- Allows SEHP staff to resolve any program issues before the discount period begins.

A communication strategy will be developed with the vendor to communicate this change to members during open enrollment 2011.

**Recommendation:**

We recommend the tobacco program be moved from a post-open enrollment program to a pre-open enrollment program beginning with Plan Year 2012.