

**Berkshire Health Group  
(BHG)**

**Board Meeting #21- 04**

Monday, March 1, 2021 at 9:30 a.m.  
Meeting by Virtual Participation

**Meeting Minutes**

**Board and Alternates Present:**

Sharon Harrison, Board Chair  
Greg Boino  
Maureen Senecal  
Erika Snyder  
Joe Bergeron  
Karen Fink  
Chris Desjardins  
Lyndsay Broom

Berkshire Hills RSD  
Central Berkshire RSD  
Northern Berkshire Voc. RSD  
Hoosac Valley RSD  
Mt. Greylock RSD  
Town of Great Barrington  
Southern Berkshire RSD  
Town of Lenox

**Guests present:**

James Kelley, CPA  
Beth Piantoni  
Roslyn Broch  
Heidi Fountain  
Jonathan Payson  
Holly Day  
Joseph Anderson  
Karen Quinlivan

BHG Treasurer  
Berkshire Medical Systems  
Town of Williamstown  
Blue Cross Blue Shield  
Blue Cross Blue Shield  
Learn to Live  
Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc. (GBS)  
Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc. (GBS)

Sharon Harrison, Board Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:32 AM.

She disclosed that the meeting was being recorded and asked if there were any objections. There were none.

Ms. Harrison asked for a roll call of Board members who will be voting. The following voting members were present:

Sharon Harrison, Board Chair  
Maureen Senecal  
Erika Snyder  
Greg Boino  
Karen Fink  
Joe Bergeron  
Lyndsay Broom  
Chris Desjardins

Berkshire Hills RSD  
Northern Berkshire Voc. RSD  
Hoosac Valley RSD  
Central Berkshire RSD  
Town of Great Barrington  
Mt. Greylock RSD  
Town of Lenox  
Southern Berkshire RSD

**Approval of the minutes of January 25, 2021 (meeting #21-04):**

Maureen Senecal motioned to approve the Board meeting minutes of January 25, 2021.

Joe Bergeron seconded the motion.

Motion
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A roll call vote was taken

Sharon Harrison, Board Chair	yes
Maureen Senecal	yes
Erika Snyder	yes
Greg Boino	yes
Karen Fink	yes
Joe Bergeron	yes
Lyndsay Broom	yes
Chris Desjardins	yes

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

#### **Treasurer's Report:**

Treasurer Jim Kelley, CPA reviewed his reports as of January 31, 2021 (unaudited figures). The overall cash position increased by a net of approximately \$607,000 during January. The Operating Account decreased by a net of \$468,000 mainly due to increased investments. The Schwab money market account balance increased by a net of \$1,075,000 pending execution of a cash investment. Accounts Receivable member assessments increased by approximately \$42,000 during the month of January as two members were late in paying the monthly assessment. Due mostly to unfavorable claims experience in January, Prepaid Expenses decreased by a net of \$157,000 for the month of January. The investment account balance at MMDT increased by \$2,000 which represented interest income for the month. The investment account at Schwab decreased by approximately \$1,176,000 in January. \$1,065,000 of this amount was a liquidation to cash in order to fund the Schwab Cash Account. The group experienced an unrealized loss for January of approximately \$111,000 and a realized loss of approximately \$7,000 for the month. Overall, the group showed a loss for January of \$163,000 with the health fund generating \$61,000 loss and the dental fund a loss of \$1,000. The investment fund generated a \$101,000 loss for January. The surplus at the end of December was \$23,540,011.

#### **Investment Subcommittee Trust Fund Discussion:**

Sharon Harrison informed the Board that the second meeting of the investment committee spent a great deal of time reviewing various options, objective and values for investment holdings on behalf of the group. The investment approach to balances maintained above the actuarial reserve was discussed. The committee decided to recommend maintaining the 15% actuarial reserve, shifting the cap on equity investments from 35% of the Schwab holdings to 35% of all investment holding (after calculation of the actuarial reserve) and capping total equity exposure at \$7M. The actuarial reserve is to remain liquid and could go lower. The overall investment objective is to maintain return with limited risk to principal loss.

Joe Bergeron said that this does place more of a responsibility for Jim Kelley and Gene Duponte to communicate on a regular basis what the total of investment holdings is. In the current environment, Gene Duponte was not looking at additional forms of investment unless the group increased the current capacity to utilize equity as part of an overall strategy. He was searching for a way to make it worth his and the groups effort.

Sharon Harrison said that previously the committee made a recommendation for a ladder approach to bond purchasing. Due to current market conditions, neither the committee nor the financial advisor are recommending purchases of additional bonds at this time. Should the return on bonds improve, bond investment will continue as prudent.

Maureen Senecal motioned to accept the investment procedure recommendation for 15% actuarial reserve and shift of cap on investments to 35% of all investment holdings up to a cap of \$7M.

Erika Snyder seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote.

Motion
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Sharon Harrison, Board Chair	yes
Maureen Senecal	yes
Erika Snyder	yes
Greg Boino	yes
Karen Fink	yes
Joe Bergeron	yes
Lyndsay Broom	yes
Chris Desjardins	yes

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

#### **Review and Approval of February and March 2021 Warrant Summaries:**

Motion
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Maureen Senecal motioned to accept the February and March 2021 warrant summaries presented.

Erika Snyder seconded the motion. There was a roll call vote.

Sharon Harrison, Board Chair	yes
Maureen Senecal	yes
Erika Snyder	yes
Greg Boino	yes
Karen Fink	yes
Joe Bergeron	yes
Lyndsay Broom	yes
Chris Desjardins	yes

The motion carried by unanimous vote.

**GBS reports:**

Joseph Anderson reviewed the *FY21 Funding Rate Analysis* with data through January 2021. He said that the composite expense-to-funding ratio for health plans was 84.8 % and was 88% for dental.

**Reinsurance:**

Karen Quinlivan reviewed the reinsurance reports. For the FY20 period through January, there were 5 claimants with claims above the the \$225,000 specific deductible. The aggregating specific deductible (ASD) of \$100,000 has been met. Total excess claims were \$571,530 and there were \$604,997 in reimbursements, leaving a credit balance of \$133,467. There were 21 claimants on the report of claims between 50% and 100% of the deductible with total claims of \$3,107,450. The FY21 policy period had 3 members on the report of claims between 50% and 100% of the deductible with total claims of \$595,726.

**Wellness program report:**

Beth Piantoni reviewed the current Wellness Program. All programs are virtual at this point but wide varieties of programs are offered. The Mindful Meet-Up Challenge was well received and gave participants the opportunity to take a break from their day for 5-10 minute sessions utilizing different techniques for reducing stress. The Winter Wellness Series has over 200 participants registered. On Tuesdays, there are scheduled fitness classes and on Thursdays, there are webinars on seven different topics on all areas of wellness. All participants who watch 75% of the sessions and complete an evaluation will be entered into a drawing for raffle prizes. There are 10 virtual fitness classes currently on the calendar. If participants attend 8 classes between March and April, they will be entered into a drawing for a prize. BHG Wellness Coaching has 5 active coaching clients. A flyer will be put in an upcoming newsletter to encourage participation. The Diabetes Care Program sent out new mailings on February 16, 2021. Members will be offered coaching with a nurse or a virtual group workshop, "The Benefits of Physical Activity with Diabetes- 30 Minute Group Discussion". Ms. Piantoni has been working with BCBS on using wellness credits to offer a variety of webinars on cooking, metabolism, reducing cholesterol, hormone balance and gut health. The theme for March is celebrating National Nutrition Month. This year's theme is "Personalize your Plate" and will be the focus of the March-April newsletter.

**Learn to Live Presentation:**

Heidi Fountain introduced the topic of the Learn to Live Program. Back in late fall there was a cost and utilization review done for BHG and one of the recommendations to the Board was to add the Learn to Live Program. One of the identifiers was that 24% of BHG members have a behavioral health condition and 19% had two or more. It was listed as one of the top modifiable health risks. Learn to Live is a new program. It is an online, self-directed program to help members address mild to moderate behavioral health issues such as depression, anxiety, stress, insomnia and substance abuse. It uses evidence-based principles of cognitive behavioral therapy. It is geared for those who have not sought outside help or are not interested in seeing a therapist. One in five people have a mental health issue, which can contribute to absenteeism and diminished presenteeism. It targets people that would otherwise not seek care for a variety of reasons. The cost of the program is \$.99 PMPM, which equates to about \$20,000 annually.

Holly Day from Learn to Live said that the program has been in the market for over 5 years with a national presence covering over 3.5M lives. The program was founded by a practicing psychologist who found that Cognitive Behavioral Therapy could be put in a digital format. It is the most common type of therapy today. It is tooled and process driven. They work with a number of groups in Massachusetts including MIIA, Mayflower Municipal Health Group, Boston Children's Hospital and WBGH. Ms. Day noted that more days

of work loss and impairment are caused by mental illness than chronic conditions. The program targets members who do not seek help for reasons such as social stigma, access to care, and high costs. The program engages those who may not use EAP, in-person therapy, wellness coaching or primary care. Outcomes show that the program is on par with clinical studies and similar to in-person care and meds. If members need more than the digital content, there are coaches on staff that can be accessed via text, email or phone 24/7. Access to the program is based off an access code and would only require 60 days for rollout. The program drives all quarterly promotional campaigns. Proven outcomes for the program include increased productivity at work, less absenteeism, and progress improvement on emotional and physical health.

Sharon Harrison asked if the cost has to be shared by the group for all members or if this can be done on a subscriber-by-subscriber basis.

Heidi Fountain stated that the plan has to be offered across the board. Participation is available to all enrolled subscribers and family members 13 and over.

Sharon Harrison said that the \$20,000 cost seems high based on the estimated utilization numbers of only 20%.

Maureen Senecal said that they have an EAP program that works through their Workman's Comp policy for individuals and families. This would seem a duplication of coverage and not necessary.

Lyndsay Broom agreed.

Karen Finks supported the program as something to try in an effort to help employees.

Joe Bergeron was hesitant to add a program that other members feel is redundant.

Maureen Senecal asked if the \$.99 PMPM was the only cost or if there was a cost for each utilization.

Heidi Fountain responded that there was not.

Joseph Anderson said that given the current environment, this seems to be the trend in behavioral therapy and there was no long-term contractual commitment to trying the program so he recommends consideration.

The decision was made to move this item to the next meeting for further discussion.

### **BCBS Report:**

Heidi Fountain said that there were no other updates for the month.

### **Ongoing items:**

The first item for consideration is how to handle the Trust Fund excess by either having a one month premium holiday or return of Retiree Drug Subsidy (RDS). This item was moved forward for another meeting.

The second item is the current cash investing environment and approach. Currently money is invested at MMDT and Jim Kelley has been looking at other investment opportunities. There is one Money Market account that is paying .25% and is FDIC insured. MMDT is currently .14% and is uninsured.

Mr. Kelley said he looked into CD's but rates were not good. Other programs had fees that were prohibitive.

Karen Fink said that Adams Bank has opened a government banking division and has given some excellent rates on Money Market Accounts.

Jim Kelley was going to look at those options that provide safety as well as return on investment.

He also said that the quarterly report from Peoples United came out and it had quarterly returns of 3.8%.

**Other Business:**

The next BHG Board meeting was scheduled for Monday March 29, 2021 at 9:30 A.M.

There was no other business.

Joe Bergeron motioned to adjourn the meeting.

Erika Snyder seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken.

Sharon Harrison, Board Chair	yes
Maureen Senecal	yes
Erika Snyder	yes
Greg Boino	yes
Karen Fink	yes
Joe Bergeron	yes
Lyndsay Broom	yes
Chris Desjardins	yes

The motion carried by unanimous vote. The meeting adjourned at 11:01 A.M.

*Prepared by Karen Quinlivan  
Gallagher Benefit Services, Inc.*