

**MINUTEMAN NASHOBA HEALTH GROUP**

**Steering Committee Meeting**

Groton Town Hall  
Groton, Massachusetts

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 16, 2005 at 9:15 a.m.

**Committee Members Present:**

Tony Logalbo, Chair and Treasurer  
Pauline Paste  
M. Lawrence Barton  
Valerie Jenkins  
Paul Cohen  
Carol Vogel  
David Desgroseilliers

Town of Concord  
Lincoln Sudbury Reg. School District  
Town of Carlisle  
Town of Groton  
Town of Harvard  
Town of Stow  
Town of Tyngsborough

**Guests Present:**

Carol Cormier  
Joelle Carlberg

Group Benefits Strategies  
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Chair Tony Logalbo called the meeting to order at 9:15 a.m.

**Approval of the minutes of the meeting of February 9, 2005:**

Larry Barton moved to approve the minutes of the February 9, 2005 meeting as written.

Motion

David Desgroseilliers seconded the motion.

The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Review of FY06 funding options:**

Carol Cormier said that Tufts Health Plan had reduced the FY06 administrative fees to 5%. She said the revised Tufts fiduciary fees were more acceptable as well. She said Robert Anderson informed her that the Fallon administrative fee contains capitation charges, which the other health plans bill with the claims.

Ms. Cormier said she and Tony Logalbo reviewed the proposal for MNHG membership that had been made to North Middlesex RSD. She said the funding scenario that the Steering Committee approved is consistent with the terms of the proposal to NMRSD.

Tony Logalbo talked about the rate projections. He said the projected aggregate increase was 7.6% with the \$395K trust fund subsidy. He said the rates without using subsidy from fund balance suggest an increase of 9.3%. He said "Scenario C", as presented by Carol Cormier, is the funding scenario that the Steering Committee is recommending to the Board.

Larry Barton moved to recommend to the Board, the rates as presented in Scenario C using \$395,072 trust fund subsidy. He further moved that the final rates be rounded to the nearest whole dollar.

Motion

Valerie Jenkins seconded the motion. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

**Rate offer to Narragansett RSD:**

Carol Cormier reviewed the proposed rates for FY06 for Narragansett RSD. She said the Steering Committee had voted (on February 9<sup>th</sup>) to surcharge all plans 2%. She said she recommends not surcharging the POS and PPO/OOA plans. She said when MNHG offered NMRSD membership, there was no surcharge on the POS and PPO/OOA plans.

Pauline Paste said the Steering Committee should be consistent in its offerings to potential members.

Paul Cohen moved to offer membership to Narragansett RSD with a 2% surcharge on all plans, except the POS and PPO/OOA plans. He further moved that Narragansett RSD be charged the one-time member-joining fee of \$100 per subscriber not to exceed \$15,000, which should be paid no later than July 31, 2005.

Motion
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Valerie Jenkins seconded the motion. The motion passed by unanimous vote.

**Fallon and Tufts Optional Benefits:**

Tony Logalbo said that both Fallon and Tufts had some optional benefits that MNHG must vote on. He said some of the benefits would require collective bargaining with unions. He said one of the Fallon optional benefits is "\$0 co-payment for PCP visits for adult routine physicals and for pediatric well visits" and the current MNHG benefit is \$5 co-payment for all office visits. He said another of the optional benefits under Fallon is "Rx co-payments of \$10/20/40" and the current MNHG benefit is \$5/15/35 for Rx co-payments. He said GBS recommends no change on these benefits.

Mr. Logalbo said there were a couple of optional benefits under the Tufts plans. He said the nutritional counseling optional benefit is that the "8 visit limit be removed" and the current MNHG benefit has the 8 visit limit. He said another Tufts optional benefit is that there would be a "\$5 co-payment for office visits to get allergy shots" and the current MNHG benefit is that there is no co-payment for allergy shot visits. He said GBS recommends no change on these benefits.

Mr. Logalbo said the home hemodialysis benefit is that "home hemodialysis will be covered effective 1/1/05 when deemed safe and appropriate by a nephrologist or kidney specialist". He said this would be in addition to the current coverage for outpatient hemodialysis. He said this was a Tufts Health Plan change across the book of business for fully insured and self-insured clients.

Mr. Logalbo said there is a state mandated change in the level of the benefit for Early Intervention Services for Dependent Children. He said the level has been raised to cover up to \$5,200 per year, which was previously \$3,200 per year, and a lifetime maximum increase from \$9,600 to \$15,600.

Ms. Cormier said her understanding is that municipalities must adopt all state mandates. She said this particular benefit should have gone into effect June 1, 2004, so she would recommend adopting it immediately.

Mr. Logalbo asked Ms. Cormier if MNHG was required to notify unions of the added benefit.

Ms. Cormier said she would draft a letter for MNHG employers to send to its unions explaining the change in the Early Intervention benefit.

Pauline Paste moved to adopt the state-mandated Early Intervention benefit to all plans effective immediately. She further moved that MNHG would not accept any of the optional benefits proposed by Fallon and Tufts.

Motion
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Paul Cohen seconded the motion. The vote in favor of the motion was unanimous.

**Other Business:**

There was a discussion on the Webmaster stipend, which would be voted on at the Board meeting later this morning.

Canadian Rx -

Pauline Paste said she had voiced concerns at the last Steering Committee meeting in regards to the Canadian prescription drug program. She said she had felt that the Committee was moving quickly to approve the in-depth data analysis by The Abacus Group and she wanted to be sure that the \$15K was an appropriate amount for the analysis.

Dave Desgroseilliers said his understanding was that there were benefits, other than Canadian drug purchasing savings, which the Group could acquire from having the data analysis done.

Carol Cormier said she believes that The Abacus Group's data analysis could be worthwhile beyond what it would say about Canadian purchasing. She said there are services that The Abacus Group provides, other than Canadian prescription purchasing programs. She provided examples such as providing the information for members to talk with their doctors about changing from brand name drugs to therapeutically equivalent generics, which could generate a lot of savings. She suggested that the Committee members address their concerns with The Abacus Group representative at today's Board meeting to determine whether or not they find value in the proposed analysis and the Abacus program, myMedicationAdvisor.

Larry Barton said he understood Pauline Paste's concerns. He said \$15K does sound like a lot of money, but he said the Group has to realize that it will not make a return on investment if there is no investment made.

Paul Cohen asked Ms. Cormier when the data analysis would be complete.

Ms. Cormier said it would depend on when Abacus gets the data from the health plans. She said it would probably take a month to get the data and a month to do the analysis, so the Group would probably see the results of the analysis in May.

Mr. Barton asked if MNHG would need to contract with Prescription Benefits Services (PBS) in order to have the analysis done.

Ms. Cormier said there would be an amendment to the GBS contract, which would include this.

Larry Barton moved to adjourn the meeting. Pauline Paste seconded the motion.

Motion
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Tony Logalbo adjourned the meeting at 9:50 a.m.

*Prepared by Joelle Carlberg  
Group Benefits Strategies*