

Spectrum

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HMO premiums rise slightly; POS holds

Medical insurance premiums for most employees and retirees will rise slightly, or not at all, for 1996, the third year the University has made widespread use of managed health care, Jim McGill, UM System executive vice president, told the Board at its November 9 meeting.

Benefits for all existing plans will remain the same, although there will be a new \$5 per office visit copayment for St. Louis Group Health Plan HMO members. And while dental insurance premiums will rise 10 percent, accidental death and dismemberment insurance rates will fall more than 50 percent.

"Next year's health insurance rates are good news for employees, retirees and for the University as a whole," McGill said. "Managed care is keeping cost increases down for everyone, as President Russell anticipated in early 1993 when he suggested that we consider adopting it."

Premiums for the GenCare HMO, by far the most popular managed care plan, will rise about \$1 a month for an employee with no spouse or dependent coverage and by less than \$4 a month to cover an entire family.

In 1993, the monthly premium for family coverage for the standard offering, a \$250 deductible plan, was \$136.58 per month. Three years later, despite rising medical costs nationwide, premiums for GenCare HMO family coverage will be about \$15 less, or \$120.92 a month.

Premiums will remain the same for the Point-Of-Service, Out-of-Network Area and \$250 Deductible Non-Network plans and fall for the Catastrophic coverage plan and the Group Health Plan HMO in St. Louis. Because charges rose for Humana's Kansas City HMO, there will be a premium increase ranging from 7.7 to 13.1 percent for employees enrolled in it.

"We hoped managed care would reduce premium increases from about 15 percent a year to 7 or 8 percent," McGill reported to the Board. "We've far exceeded that goal: Premiums for our most popular offerings have increased by less than 3 percent per year."

"That means 1996's total health insurance costs will be \$13.7 million below what they would have been had our rates risen at the national health care inflation rate for three years," McGill said.

Besides maintaining its current health care plans, the University is offering employees and retirees in St. Louis and Rolla a new managed care program, the Physicians Health Plan POS. Those in southwest Missouri now have the option of joining a new Humana HMO serving the area.

Employee premiums for dental insurance will increase by 10 percent for 1996, because of an increase in the number of claims combined with higher costs per claim. The University will look into the possibility of pursuing a dental managed care program, McGill told the Board.

Premiums for accidental death and dismemberment coverage will drop by more than 50 percent, in part because of favorable rates negotiated with a new insurance carrier, saving employees about \$200,000 next year.

McGill also told the Board that the UM Retirement and Staff Benefits committee, augmented by individuals involved in the implementation of managed care, will soon begin a study of quality assessment standards and managed care plan designs.

The group's recommendations, which will take into account data from campus medical insurance oversight committees, are expected next Spring, and will help the University formulate managed care needs for 1997 and beyond.

A new issue of Health Spectrum, distributed to employees last week, provides a more detailed report on these changes.

McGill also reported that benefits information is now available via the Internet at the Faculty and Staff Benefits office's World Wide Web site. The URL is [HTTP://www.system.missouri.edu:80/hrs/benefits/announce.htm](http://www.system.missouri.edu:80/hrs/benefits/announce.htm).

Curators hear pros, cons of merger

About 150 people gathered in Columbia's Holiday Inn Executive Center on Nov. 9 to hear why the UM Board of Curators should or should not consider a merger between University Hospital and Columbia Regional Hospital.

The UM System administration is in an exclusive negotiating period with Tenet Healthcare Corporation, the owners of Columbia Regional Hospital. The board agreed to extend the negotiation period, which was slated to end in mid-November, to Nov. 30.

The proposed merger has met intense opposition from Mid-Missourians, including UM-Columbia faculty, hospital staff, legislators and other Boone County residents since the negotiations began at the board's behest on Sept. 21. More than 1,000 persons gathered in a town meeting at MU's Jesse Auditorium earlier this month to protest negotiations with Tenet, and curators invited opponents to address the board during a three-hour session.

The speakers generally agreed that while they find fault with Tenet in particular, they oppose any agreement between University Hospital and any prospective private bidder.

State Senator Joe Moseley, D-Columbia, praised the board for looking for alternatives to keep University Hospital prosperous in the increasingly competitive managed-care market, but said the hospital's current prosperity is evidence of the institution's ability to go forward on its own.

"We need to set aside any consideration of a private agreement," Moseley said. "There is no reason in my mind to delay until December. I fear that some support for University Hospital [in the General Assembly] may be decaying because this is lingering."

Moseley added that he had brought with him letters from 30 members of the General Assembly who oppose a merger.

Curator Fred Hall of Springfield asked Moseley whether the state could do anything to assure that the hospital would maintain the patient base it needs to continue solely in private hands.

"There are mandates that state legislators could impose," Moseley said, "but I can't see any way that the legislature would do so." He offered general assurances, however, that the General Assembly "wouldn't let University Hospital fail."

Edward Adelstein, a pathology professor, cited difficulties in the relationship between county - owned Boone Hospital Center and the company that leases it, BJC Health System, and urged curators to keep the hospital totally under "local" control.

"What we're really talking about here is a loss of control of our destiny," Adelstein told the board. He also said that the community was alarmed at the speed with which negotiations appeared to be proceeding, and added, "We have to stay the course with ourselves; we have to have local control."

Several nursing professionals shared their fears with the board. Kathy Evans, a registered nurse at University Hospital, told the board, "We've worked so hard to improve the reputation of University Hospital. We have a lot of potential here. I hope you will remember that."

Kathy Patterson-Kelly, a clinical nurse specialist, noted University Hospital's increasing profitability over the past few years and said, "We are a state hospital that looks, thinks, and acts like a private hospital."

More specifically, nurses said they anticipate a drop in the quality of care should a private company manage the hospital. Susan Taylor, a professor in the School of Nursing, cited studies that link an increase in mortality rates with cutbacks in experienced nurses, and warned that a private firm would seek to save money by reducing the number of senior nurses. Her comments were echoed by Belinda Heimericks, the executive director of the Missouri Nurses Association.

Mary Hussman of Mid-Missourians for Single Payer Health Care presented the board with a petition signed by more than 1,500 people opposing the negotiations. And Bob Muehl, a representative of local unionized public employees, said that retirement and other benefits were imperiled by a merger with a private firm.

UM System President George A. Russell responded with a review of the yearlong process under which the curators had reviewed hospital finances. He emphasized that the University would have to spend as much as \$200 million over the next five years to assure that University Hospital remains competitive, including new construction costs, purchases of information systems, and purchases of physicians' practices.

"The curators have concluded that it is not viable for University Hospital to remain what it is today a single hospital, in an over-bedded community, housed in a 40-year-old facility that does not house sub-acute services such as skilled nursing and home health care," he said.

Russell emphasized that the board has not ruled out the option of investing taxpayer dollars and issuing bonds in keeping the hospital public and independent, but said, "If the University is to go it alone, it must ensure referrals from throughout mid-Missouri and, to do so, must expand its clinics, purchase additional physician practices, and enter into financial relationships with other hospitals and sub-acute care facilities."

Russell and Executive Vice President James T. McGill reviewed the status of negotiations with Tenet so far. The unfinished proposal, which would require the board's approval, would have the University and Tenet each owning 50 percent of a new company encompassing both University Hospital and Columbia Regional. The University would be paid cash reflecting the difference in value between University Hospital and Columbia Regional a difference expected to be heavily favorable toward the University but not yet determined.

McGill said some issues in the proposal have been resolved. Tenet has agreed to provide the current level of indigent care as reflected by state appropriations, and to establish a baseline level of indigent care regardless of state appropriations.

It also has agreed to a continuation of current employee benefits, including the retirement program, for five years, and has agreed that University employees transferring to the new corporation would maintain their current job titles and salaries.

McGill also said that Tenet must understand the various payments made by University Hospital to different academic units of UM-Columbia, largely in support of the academic programs of the Health Sciences Center and for overhead functions provided by the UM System and the Columbia campus. Russell added that a yet -to-be-negotiated concern is the University's ability to "unwind" the partnership should the University find it disadvantageous.

Board of Curators President Adam Fischer of Sedalia ended the meeting with a forceful endorsement of the board's actions so far and reminded the audience that the board has a duty to research all its options before taking any action.

"As I stand before you today, I do not advocate an affiliation with Tenet," he said. "Neither do I oppose such an affiliation. I, like my fellow curators and everyone else in this room, except members of the negotiating team, do not have sufficient details to make a decision.

"Once the negotiating team has concluded its work, laid its proposal on the table, and made its recommendations, I will have an opportunity to do the same, consider the alternatives, and formulate my opinion."

Fischer said the board's responsibility is especially important because the entire UM System will bear the financial burden of keeping the hospital competitive.

"The answers to the questions which we have propounded to the status quo are no-brainers, if you assume that the hospital will make in excess of \$20 million per year for the number of years it takes to amortize the bonds, and further that no additional capital contributions will be required to protect the hospital's market share," he said. "I respectfully submit that to make such assumptions ignores the clouds on the horizon and is the equivalent of burying our heads in the sand."

"Our exposure here is not just the hospital, but the entire University of Missouri System, for the full faith and credit of the University is involved. The hospital is a cash cow today, and may be tomorrow. But it has not always been, and we cannot assume, even with excellent management, that it will be in the future."

In conclusion, Fischer said, "I believe that we those of us on the Board of Curators, in the administration, and on the faculty and staff of this University owe the people of Missouri an open-minded evaluation of this proposal. Surely in this institution devoted to reason and truth, we can withhold a decision until the relevant facts have been put before us."

In other action at the Nov. 9 meeting, University President Russell said the Coordinating Board for Higher Education recommended an increase of \$35 million to the University for recurring operations, a 10.6 percent increase.

This includes the CBHE's inflationary increase and incentive funding, \$2.2 million for maintenance and repair and approximately \$4.6 million for technology, he said.

The Board also approved the following physical facilities projects: A schematic design for the Science and Technology Building at UM-Kansas City; improvements to the Stankowski intramural recreation area at UM-Columbia; and the sale of two pieces of unused property at UM-Rolla.

UMSL names O'Rourke endowed professor

Widening the scope of citizenship education and increasing the number of people it reaches is the mission of Timothy G. O'Rourke, the new Teresa M. Gischer Professor of Citizenship Education at the University of Missouri-St. Louis.

"Simply stated, my goal is to raise the profile and impact of citizenship education," O'Rourke says. "To expand our audience beyond middle and high school students in the St. Louis area to include people of all ages across Missouri and beyond."

To accomplish that goal, O'Rourke believes he will need the assistance of both his colleagues and his constituents. "What I hope to do is enlist faculty and students across campus in the grand enterprise of citizenship education," he says.

O'Rourke comes to UM-St. Louis from Clemson University, where he was chairman of the political science department. He holds doctoral and master's degrees from Duke University, and earned his bachelor's degree from the University of Pittsburgh.

His teaching and research interests are state and local government, urban politics, constitutional law and voting rights and representation. From 1985 to 1992 he served as executive director of the Virginia Commission on the Bicentennial of the U.S. Constitution.

"Dr. O'Rourke brings to the UM-St. Louis citizenship education program a wealth of experience in exploring the principles of governmental representation and responsibility," said Blanche M. Touhill, chancellor of UM-St. Louis.

The Teresa M. Fischer Professorship in Citizenship Education is an important addition to the Citizenship Education Clearing House (CECH) program, which since 1993 has operated out of the UM -St. Louis School of Education's Center for Excellence in Urban Education. The professorship was endowed by an anonymous donor in honor of the late Teresa M. Fischer, one of CECH's founders.

Non-partisan with respect to political issues, CECH is a 28-year-old program that works with public school students in St. Louis to improve civic education by promoting informed involvement in community and governmental affairs. Its primary goal is integrating participatory citizenship education into the schools' curricula, allowing students to develop and work on civic projects within their communities.

O'Rourke feels that citizenship education is important to the future of any region, and therefore wants to use upcoming milestones such as the bicentennial of the Louisiana Purchase and the centennial of the St. Louis World's Fair as events around which to build educational opportunities. "It is important for people to understand how their area fits into the overall panorama of history," he said.

UM-Rolla first research university to win a statewide quality award

The University of Missouri-Rolla recently became the first university to receive a Missouri Quality Award. The honor also makes UMR the first public doctoral-granting university in the nation ever to win such an award.

The award was presented Oct. 26 at the Excellence in Missouri Foundation's awards banquet in Jefferson City. The Excellence in Missouri Foundation sponsors the award.

The Missouri Quality Award is patterned after the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award, which was established in 1987 to recognize organizations that have made substantial improvements in their performance. The MQA uses the same criteria and performance standards as the Baldrige.

"There are about 25 states, including Missouri, that have award programs patterned after the Baldrige model, and to my knowledge UMR is the only public research university to win a quality award of this caliber," says John Politi, president of the Excellence in Missouri Foundation, which sponsors the award.

According to the Office of Quality Programs at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, which tracks state quality awards, no other public research university has won such an award.

Missouri Gov. Mel Carnahan presented the award during the annual Missouri Quality Award ceremony in Jefferson City. The ceremony was part of the Third Annual Missouri Quality Conference, also sponsored by the Excellence in Missouri Foundation.

The Excellence in Missouri Foundation established the award to recognize businesses, universities and public-sector organizations that pride themselves on continuous improvement, high performance and customer service. The award winners are selected by the MQA Board of Overseers, which reviews applications and the reports from teams of examiners that visited the sites of applicants.

"We're pleased to be the first research university in the nation to receive such a prestigious honor," says UMR Chancellor John T. Park. He adds that UMR submitted its MQA application to get an outside opinion of its processes.

"When we submitted our application for the Missouri Quality Award, our goal was not to win the award but to get an outside evaluation of our internal processes, to see how well we are serving our students, alumni, industry and other stakeholders," Park said. "We wanted to get the feedback of people in the business sector.

"Winning the award, however, is a pleasant outcome of this entire process."

The award comes four years after the campus started using total quality management techniques to measure how well it serves its students, alumni and the broader public. The campus has used the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award standards as a means to measure performance in a variety of areas.

The standards are designed to gauge an organization's leadership, use of information, planning, staff development, quality assurance, measurement of processes and customer focus.

"Not very many campuses are willing to go through this rigorous and time-consuming process," says Park. "But it's a self-assessment worth doing, because it gives you an objective look at how your organization is meeting its stated goals."

UMR uses the Baldrige criteria for planning purposes as well as for examining the campus' processes for serving students and other "stakeholders" such as alumni, the public and the businesses that hire UMR graduates. The campus is working with the National Institute of Standards and Technology to create a Baldrige category to promote quality in higher education.

Show Me Safety begins at UM

A comprehensive initiative designed to help make University faculty and staff more aware of safety issues in the workplace begins this month, according to Bill Payton, Director of Risk and Insurance Management for the UM system.

Dubbed "Show Me Safety," the new program includes monthly safety articles and/or paycheck stuffers covering various safety issues in the workplace. The University will concentrate on a different safety issue each month. Look for upcoming articles on preventing back injuries, eye and face protection and hearing protection.

"We recognize that University employees already perform their functions in a relatively safe manner. But that doesn't mean that we all can't improve on-the-job safety, often with minor changes in our behavior," said Payton.

Accidents can happen at any time. That's why it's important to behave safely all the time. Safety experts report that most accidents result from unsafe attitudes or behaviors.

For example, most employees occasionally move some heavy object in the office or laboratory. By using the proper lifting technique the chances of being injured straining back muscles, for instance can be minimized.

"Report any accident as quickly as possible. That allows the University to correct any unsafe situation, thereby protecting others from injury," said Payton.

Preventing accidents not only reduces unnecessary pain and suffering, it is good economics. The University's Workers' Compensation costs have more than doubled since 1992. Last year alone, the University, which is self-insured, paid out \$2,477,791 in claims. Because such claims are paid from funds set aside for salaries and benefits, safety is to everyone's financial advantage.

The University is looking at a number of different alternatives to cut Workers' Compensation costs. This calendar year, the University changed to the Managed Care Program Network in hopes of saving \$10,000 to \$15,000 per month.

"Regardless of his or her position, every employee is exposed to minor safety risks, of one sort or another, from time to time. That's why we are launching this campaign to make people aware of what can go wrong and what they can do to prevent it," said Payton.

MU leads alliance to encourage minority enrollment

Increasing the number of minority students in science, engineering and mathematics is the goal of a new multi-institutional consortium, funded by the National Science Foundation and matching grants, to be headquartered at the University of Missouri-Columbia.

The Heartland's Alliance for Minority Participation has been organized with the four University of Missouri campuses and the UM System, two state universities and two community colleges in Missouri. The project director is Charles Sampson, associate dean of the graduate school at MU, and the project is planned to be operational in August 1995.

The alliance has won funding from the National Science Foundation in the amount of \$4,953,386 and is one of only five such alliances in the country selected for NSF funding this year. With matching grants of \$7,838,386 from the nine Missouri institutions and approximately 41 corporate donors, the project has a total five-year budget of \$12,791,416. Participants include Central Missouri State University; Lincoln University; Southwest Missouri State University; St. Louis Community College; the four University of Missouri campuses at Columbia, Kansas City, Rolla and St. Louis; and the University of Missouri System.

The impetus for the award stems from MU's efforts, spearheaded by Sampson, to increase opportunities for Missouri minority students in academic disciplines where they are traditionally under-represented.

"Our specific objectives are to increase the number of talented students from these groups by a minimum of 15 percent at the undergraduate level and a minimum of 50 percent at the graduate level," Sampson said.

"Given what we know from research in these disciplines, we believe this endeavor requires special efforts to assist these students with bridging some traditional barriers as they move from one academic tier to another."

These academic tiers are identified as pre-college, undergraduate, and graduate education, and the alliance's efforts will focus on assisting students in overcoming obstacles as they move from one tier to the next. "These barriers are primarily economic and social, but for some students, there are also academic hurdles," Sampson said.

"We have developed a three-prong approach to address these hurdles through early identification of students at the high school level; assisting students to complete their degrees at the baccalaureate level; and assisting students to apply for and complete their degrees at the graduate level."

Each alliance member has the option to design programs that fit its individual needs. At MU, the first step will be to sponsor a Graduate School Fair. Universities from the Big 12 and Big 10 conferences and elsewhere will be invited to participate to let students know what graduate programs are available at their respective institutions and what they need to know in order to apply to these programs.

"We have found that traditionally under-represented groups in the hard sciences, engineering and math are just not aware of what is available to them in higher education," Sampson said. "Because the alliance funding allows each member to tailor its efforts to fit its own needs, we will be able to address this barrier specifically."

Support from University of Missouri System President George Russell was instrumental in securing NSF funding, Sampson said. "In the final stage of the process, President Russell led a delegation of leaders from the alliance institutions to Washington, and it was the presentation by this group that led to this prestigious award," Sampson said.

The support of corporate donors indicates the need for such a project is widely recognized. "We could not have made this project a reality without the corporate matches," Sampson said. "Their support indicates a real commitment to increasing opportunities for minorities in higher education."

Companies offering financial support to the Heartland's Alliance for Minority Participation read like a who's who of American business and industry. They are: Allied Signal, Anheuser-Busch, ACF Industries, AT&T, 3M, Bechtel, AP Green Industries, ABB Power, T&D Co., Alcoa, Burns & McDonnell, Amoco, Caterpillar Inc., Boeing Commercial Airplanes, Chrysler Corp., General Electric Co., Conoco, DuPont, Hallmark Cards, John Deere, Ford Motor Co., General Motors Corp., Exxon, McDonnell Douglas Aerospace, Northrop Corp., Southwestern Bell, Phillips Petroleum Co., Sverdrup, TRW Inc., Union Electric, PPG Industries, Monsanto, Martin Marietta Energy Systems, Torres Consulting Engineers, G.S. Technologies, J.S. Alberici Construction, Kerr-McGee Corp., E.T. Archer Corp., Eastman Chemical Co., and Granite City Steel Co.

UM seeks proposals for faculty exchanges

In order to foster and enhance intercampus collaboration, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs invites proposals for the support of faculty exchanges among the University of Missouri's four campuses. Proposals may be funded for exchanges beginning as early as the winter 1996 semester.

Under this program, the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs provides \$4,000 to the "sending campus" for a one-semester exchange, or \$8,000 for an academic year exchange, along with \$500 per month for temporary living expenses to the participating faculty member. The campus which receives the visiting faculty member will provide the following:

- (a) \$2,000 per semester to the "sending campus," plus travel or moving expenses to the participating faculty member, and
- (b) normal office space and research facilities for the visiting faculty member.

The "sending campus" thus recovers \$6,000 per semester, which may be used to hire temporary replacements for the participating faculty member or for any other purpose. The visiting faculty member is typically expected to teach one course per semester during the exchange period and to collaborate in research efforts with faculty on the "receiving campus."

Proposals should describe the benefits of the exchange to the "receiving campus" and to the professional development of the faculty member and also should describe the courses to be taught and research to be undertaken.

Statements supporting the proposal and approving the funds transfers should be obtained from the appropriate department chairs, deans and chief campus academic officers, and should be included with the proposal.

Please send proposals for intercampus faculty exchanges to the Office of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, 309 University Hall, by no later than Dec. 1, for exchanges to commence during the winter 1996 term or by March 1, 1996, for exchanges to commence during the fall 1996 or the 1996-97 academic year. Questions about this program may be directed to Vicki Dennison at (314) 882-6396.

University of Missouri System Board of Curators Meeting Dates

1995

- December 14-15 Columbia

1996

- February 22-23 St. Louis
- April 25-26 Rolla
- Kansas City June 27-28
- August 29-30 Portageville (Delta Center)
- October 24-25 Columbia
- December 12-13 Columbia