



Utah Health Exchange Advisory Board Meeting Summary Wednesday, December 22, 2010

The Utah Health Exchange Advisory Board met this week to welcome the new OCHS Director, Patty Connor and to discuss the status of Utah's Health Exchange as 2011 approaches.

While the Utah Health Exchange (UHE) retained only 11 of its original 99 eligible small business applicants, all 11 renewed for 2011, and 43 new business have signed up for 2011.

According to data collected by Exchange staff from brokers whose clients dropped out, there are three reasons for the high dropout rate: "shopping, not buying," timeline challenges, and—the deal breaker—high prices. Premium rates quoted in the Exchange are on average 20-30% higher than those quoted outside the change, and in at least one case were a whopping 56% higher!

The Advisory Board discussed the following attention to these problems:

- The time line has been modified to streamline the application process. The effectiveness of the changes will be evaluated with the next round of applicants.
- The price inconsistency issues are more serious—and more difficult to address because of the dire lack of transparency in the insurance industry. Some of the issues that must be examined include creating a way for small business owners to compare prices in and out of the Exchange, creating a "watchdog" for the underwriting process, and promoting transparency in the insurance industry—a core goal of Utah's Health System Reform efforts.

With only three Utah Health Exchange staff and one independent actuary assigned to address these critical problems, it is likely the Exchange will continue to struggle to attract small businesses.

The Utah Health Policy Project urges the Utah Health Exchange Advisory Board and the Utah Health Exchange to do everything they can to make transparency a key component of the Exchange.

What can you do?

The board is looking for feedback on small business experience with the Utah Health Exchange. If your business is using the exchange, applied to use the exchange, or just poked around on the website to see what it was all about, please send your feedback about your experience to Korey Capozza, Advisory Board Chair, at exchange@utah.gov or call 1-877-213-1993.

Utah Health Exchange "is designed to connect consumers to the information they need to make informed health care choices, and in the case of health insurance, to execute that choice electronically." For more information go to <http://www.exchange.utah.gov/>