

**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
GUILFORD COUNTY WELLNESS SUB-COMMITTEE**

August 26, 2016
Greensboro, North Carolina

The Wellness Sub-Committee appointed by the Board of County Commissioners met on August 26, 2016 at 10:00 am in the Blue Meeting Room, located on the first floor of the Old Guilford County Courthouse, 301 W. Market Street, Greensboro.

PRESENT: Commissioner Committee members Chairman Jeff Phillips and Commissioners Alan Perdue, Carolyn Coleman and Ray Trapp (arrived at 10:13am).

ABSENT: NONE.

ALSO PRESENT: County Manager, Marty Lawing; Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier; Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board; John Dean, Human Resources Director; Jason Jones, Sr. Budget Analyst; Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Division Director; Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director; Yvonne Moebs, Risk Management Director and members of the media.

I. WELCOME/CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Phillips called the meeting to order at 10:09 am.

County Manager Marty Lawing stated the purpose of the meeting was to allow three (3) vendors the opportunity to present their ideas on the structure of a Guilford County employee wellness clinic. He noted the differences between each company and their presentations, and requested the sub-committee offer their recommendations regarding which group could deliver the best clinic structure for the County. Lawing detailed presentations would last approximately twenty (20) minutes, with allowance for discussion by committee members at the end of the meeting.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the difference between the presenter's potential administration of a wellness clinic and United Healthcare's administration of Health Risk Analysis screenings.

Lawing noted the selected provider would have access to review employee claims.

Commissioner Trapp arrived to the meeting at 10:13am.

Chairman Phillips noted no final decisions will be made at this time, and the committee would discuss next steps after the presentations.

Merle Green, DHHS-Public Health Division Director stated the employee wellness committee drafted seventeen (17) wellness goals, and would compare these to the information offered during the presentations.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if current costs will be compared to potential savings garnered by establishing a clinic.

Lawing confirmed staff will analyze the return on investment.

II. PRESENTATIONS

A. Synergy Healthcare

Matt McQuide, President of Synergy Healthcare, introduced his team and discussed trends and related formulas in determining the costs of healthcare plans.

McQuide stated his organization identified improving member health as the primary goal in decreasing healthcare costs. He noted early disease detection reduces treatment costs, while management of chronic conditions decreases service demands. McQuide discussed health risk assessments as a function of healthcare management, and noted an on-site clinic reduces costs and increases convenience. He shared services offered at their clinics and potential incentives aimed at improving health outcomes.

McQuide reviewed their proposal for Guilford's on-site wellness clinic and noted the goal to open three (3) locations within the County. He confirmed competitive fees and immediate savings would result in future long-term cost reductions.

Green confirmed increased clinic attendance would decrease costs, and noted the preference for prevention versus visits for illness.

McQuide stated visits for illness can lead to preventive efforts.

Dean noted the wellness clinic is not designed to replace an employee's primary care physician.

McQuide confirmed the clinic is primarily for follow-up or immediate illness visits.

Jim Albright, Emergency Services Director, questioned if the clinic will cover all Guilford County plan beneficiaries, and if clinic staff will dispense medication.

McQuide stated these options are dependent upon the clinic style chosen by the County.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the type of providers housed within the clinic.

McQuide stated primarily physician assistants and nurse practitioners would staff the clinic, and noted there would be no cost savings if the clinic hired physicians.

Yvonne Moebs, Risk Management Director, questioned if the group would have a local supervising physician, and if the providers would specialize in internal or family practice.

McQuide confirmed the supervising physician would be local and providers would primarily specialize in family practice.

Green questioned the type of incentives offered.

McQuide discussed incentives for participation and health improvements.

Moebis questioned how the group assure employees that their healthcare information was protected.

McQuide stated they would hold employee meetings to communicate goals, standards and protections for the clinic participants.

Commissioner Trapp questioned if the provider or healthcare group would offer education.

McQuide confirmed both entities offer healthcare education, and noted the need to educate employees on immediate treatment of chronic conditions to reduce risks and encourage lifestyle changes.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if the providers had experienced staff visiting the clinic inconsequential reasons.

McQuide stated there is potential for non-essential visits, but noted the rarity of excessive visits to the clinic.

Chairman Phillips questioned potential clinic locations.

McQuide spoke the need for easy accessibility to the clinic through multiple locations, but noted this decision would be determined by the County. He reiterated his team is dedicated to ensuring the volume of visits results in cost savings to the County.

B. Healthstat

Kristen Layton, Healthstat Vice President of New Business Development, reviewed the company model, and noted their goal is 80% of employees utilizing the proposed on-site clinic. She stated the minimum cost savings in the initial year would be approximately \$1.4 million, but anticipated a higher return on investment as clinic participation increased.

Thomas Revels, Healthstat President, reiterated increased clinic utilization would result in disease management and significant cost-savings.

Layton stated a primary goal is to identify chronic diseases, offer treatment and encourage lifestyle changes. She reviewed their proposed service model of one (1) clinic staffed by a full-time nurse practitioner (NP) for forty (40) hours/week, collaborating with a licensed practical nurse (LPN) who would research primary care providers, schedule clinic appointments and coordinate patient services. Layton confirmed the prescriptions administered by the clinic would follow a standard formulary, and noted there was a one-time set-up fee of \$75,000. She noted the County's ability to add or remove options from the service model, and confirmed the fee includes health risk analyses for employees.

Green questioned what company would offer lab analyses.

Layton stated Quest Diagnostics would be utilized and noted the County has the option to limit services, based upon cost. She confirmed staff would be qualified to draw blood onsite.

Commissioner Coleman questioned the role of the clinic medical assistant.

Layton reviewed the roles of the certified medical assistant (CMA) and NP.

Revels noted the providers will offer education, counseling and lab services, as the volume of clinic patients will be lower than those seen in physicians' offices.

Chairman Phillips questioned the facility costs and potential location for the clinic.

Revels stated his team determined the most convenient location based upon clusters of employee locations.

Layton reviewed the option for two (2) locations and noted staff could divide their time between offices in Greensboro and High Point.

Green questioned the potential increased costs associated with multiple locations.

Revels stated staffing costs will remain the same, as scheduling will be based upon the needs of each location.

The sub-committee discussed staffing and scheduling options for multiple clinic locations.

Revels discussed fixed fee strategies, and noted these will allow more intensive services for a smaller volume of patients. He shared the data collected by staff will allow the provider to review risk factors. Revels spoke to potential savings realized within the first eighteen (18) months of operation, and noted the primary goal is sufficient participation to ensure those with chronic conditions are actively seeking assistance and placed on a treatment plan.

Green questioned the participation incentives.

Commissioner Trapp left the meeting at 11:21am.

Revels expressed his belief that clinic operations would generate participation, and shared ideas for incentives. He noted the incentive system is unique to each organization.

Layton stated the implementation manager will promote the clinic through information sessions, marketing and employee outreach activities.

Chairman Phillips questioned the opportunity to observe clinic models in other counties and municipalities.

Layton spoke to the success of a clinic operated by Durham County, and suggested the committee visit this location.

C. Cone Health Employee Health & Wellness Services

Lisa Pennington, Cone Health Executive Director, reviewed the six (6) key components of improved health. She cited on-site clinics and virtual healthcare as functions of improved health and decreased healthcare costs. Pennington stated decreased health spending resulted from early intervention, access to care and re-direction of care.

Pennington proposed a clinic service model staffed by a NP and CMA, and noted while appointments are encouraged, they will assist walk-in patients. She confirmed staff would address acute and chronic care needs, occupational needs and dispense prescriptions based upon a pre-determined formulary developed by the County.

Pennington reviewed virtual health options accessible from smartphones and personal computers, and noted a landing page would be created specifically for County employees. She stated the co-pay would be determined by the County, and the cost of virtual healthcare is a monthly fee of \$2.25/employee.

Pennington discussed options for an onsite wellness coordinator to develop employee wellness and fitness programs, offer chronic care management and patient education. She reviewed healthcare claims potentially impacted by lifestyle changes. Pennington noted the online wellness platform is designed to track healthcare goals and incentivize achievements. She shared Cone Health's wellness incentive program and its return on investment, and spoke to the benefits of incentives in healthcare management.

Steve Neorr, Cone Health Senior Vice President, stated Cone Health partners with 80% of community providers, and noted healthcare information for many County employees is already in their database. He confirmed they have the ability to identify high-risk employees before they begin to accrue significant healthcare costs.

Phillips questioned the estimated costs for the initial year operations, and potential net savings.

Pennington spoke to significant savings achieved through decreased costs for lab fees, and spoke to cost avoidance models for other companies, and discussed the potential cost savings achieved through the use of Cone's Telehealth virtual healthcare program.

Commissioner Coleman questioned if the NP would have access to medical records.

Pennington confirmed the NP will have access to records which are overseen by a care manager. She noted all providers within the Cone data management system have access to this information.

Commissioner Coleman requested clarification of the virtual health concept.

Pennington stated an employee could conduct a phone or video conference with a board certified provider who assesses symptoms, and if needed, will send electronic prescriptions to a local pharmacy. She confirmed Telehealth program notes would be available for review by the clinic NP.

Green questioned the location of the wellness clinic.

Pennington suggested placing the clinic near the largest volume of employees, but noted County staff have the option to utilize existing Cone Health wellness clinics for a flat fee of \$68.

Chairman Phillips requested a summary of the up-front and ongoing costs and potential savings for the wellness clinic, and clarified the proposal should include costs for implementing the Telehealth program.

Pennington stated the Telehealth virtual health program costs would decrease from the initial \$2.25/employee/month if a NP is located at the on-site clinic.

III. DISCUSSION

Chairman Phillips shared Commissioner Trapp requested the County seek a proposal from United Healthcare (UHC) for wellness clinic administration.

Commissioner Coleman expressed her concerns regarding potential conflicts of interest if the County's claims administrator provides medical services to employees.

Chairman Phillips requested a proposal from UHC presented to the committee for consideration.

Lawing noted he would request this information from the company.

Chairman Phillips requested more specific cost information from Cone Health.

Commissioner Perdue suggested the committee speak with organizations receiving services from these companies to determine their level of satisfaction.

Chairman Phillips questioned Synergy Healthcare's experience with wellness clinics for municipalities.

Lawing stated Synergy was primarily a benefits administrator and shifted into wellness within the past two (2) years.

Jason Jones, Sr. Budget Analyst, spoke to the volume of clients Synergy assists throughout North and South Carolina.

The committee discussed Synergy Healthcare's history and experience in administering wellness programs.

Commissioner Perdue spoke to the benefits of the Cone Health patient management system and its ability to encourage employee participation.

Albright spoke to the need for employees to identify a PCP home to reduce healthcare costs, and encourage wellness and lifestyle changes.

Chairman Phillips noted UHC has a wellness benefits option.

Albright stated UHC previously provided no direct clinical care or follow-up when chronic issues were identified.

Moebs spoke to the need for a personable NP who can easily relate to employees, to staff the wellness clinic.

Chairman Phillips expressed concerns with the NP and other clinic staff working directly for the wellness provider.

Lawing confirmed the providers had extended an invitation to County leadership to participate in the interview process for clinic staff.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns with the recommendation for two (2) person staff within the clinic, and shared Synergy staff were better prepared to present their proposal to the County. She voiced her support for Synergy or Cone Health as wellness clinic administrators, but noted the need for additional cost information from Cone staff.

Green shared the goals prepared by the employee wellness committee, and noted emphasis was placed on preventative measures.

Chairman Phillip expressed his agreement with Commissioner Coleman's suggestions, and spoke to the need for additional information on the proposed number of clinic sites and locations, and upfront and ongoing expenses. He shared his preference to pilot the program with one (1) initial site to gauge interest, with additional sites included in phases, which would require staff floating between locations.

Green spoke to the benefits of a virtual health option if one (1) clinic location was initially chosen.

Commissioner Coleman expressed concerns with potential skepticism from employees regarding the role of clinic nurse practitioners.

Lawing shared his prior experiences with on-site wellness clinics, and spoke to the competence and personability of the NP as critical to encourage employee participation and success.

Deputy County Manager Clarence Grier spoke to the potential for co-location opportunities with Guilford County Schools, if Cone Health was chosen as the wellness provider.

Lawing suggested a work session with the Board of Commissioners to discuss the results of the biometric screenings, UHC claims and the top two (2) provider proposals near the end of September.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous consent at 12:31pm.

Ariane Webb, Deputy Clerk to Board