

AlaskaCare Third Party Administrator
Changeover Status
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Medical Information Director

I was invited by Retirement and Benefits to attend several days of meetings in mid-August in Juneau with R&B, Wells Fargo Insurance Services (WFIS) and some of WFIS's partners (subcontractors under the TPA.) An evening meeting took place on August 12 at which all medical providers in Juneau were invited to meet with R&B, WFIS, and Beech Street staff. About 16 representatives of various providers attended; more than one person from some providers. WFIS provided an overview of where they were in the contract implementation process and then opened up the meeting for questions. There were many. Most prominent was that of all providers present, only one had received any reimbursement for claims sent in since 7/1/09, and that was only for a total of \$240. WFIS acknowledged the process had been slowed by making sure every claim went through additional scrutiny to ensure accuracy during the initial phase of the contract. Payments are going to speed up. Many other issues were brought forth and WFIS says they will try to address them.

I spent most of Thursday and Friday, Aug. 13-14 with R&B, WFIS, Envisions RX, Costco, Magellan Behavioral Health & other partners. Not only did I get a chance to meet many of the employees of these firms that are working on providing services to our members, but we also tied in via video teleconference with the employees at the Service Center in West Virginia that process our claims, answer our questions, etc. There was a time during the meetings when I was allowed to provide information to the participants about issues that had come up, some of which had been resolved, some were still being resolved. Most staff seemed to be very open about some of the mistakes that had been made, glitches that occurred, and were trying to make the process go as smoothly as possible. There were what I thought sincere apologies for the problems, such as when computer system kicked out all RX claims for retirees age 65 and older, and tried to send them to Medicare [Part D] for payment.

I was also impressed that they heeded my plea to resolve prescription drug issues immediately at the local level so that retirees can get their medications, rather than taking days going "up the chain" when there was a problem. With less than 1.5 months into the contract, the little data available was not particularly meaningful, but the claims numbers and amounts seem fairly consistent with recent years.

We have been told we will be invited to sit in on future meetings. We hope so. I think we have shown we want to work with these folks to make sure good service is delivered to retirees and that we "add value" when we are part of the conversations.

Retirement and Benefits has developed a 1 page chart about who to contact if you have questions, depending upon the issue. They asked us to have you access that chart on their web site. It should be there now.

Our members advise us there are still plenty of issues with the administration. Some are as follows. Members say prescription medications that had been paid for by the previous TPA are being denied. Diabetic supplies that had been paid for previously are being denied. Electronic coordination of benefits on RX still is a problem. So our advice is to continue to let Retirement

and Benefits and Wells Fargo if you are experiencing problems, and we would appreciate knowing of the problems you are encountering and what the outcome of your contacts with the appropriate contacts at R&B, WFIS, EnvisionsRX, etc.