**Q&A #4**

**University of Arkansas**

**RFP #102720 – Benefits Consulting Services**

1. The Official Price Sheet references “Attachment A.” Attachment A is not included in the RFP.

**ANSWER:** The Official Price Sheet will be revised and added as an Addendum on HogBid.

1. Are valuations of retiree welfare benefit liabilities consistent with GASB 74 and 75 required as part of this RFP?

**ANSWER:** No. A Separate actuarial services vendor provides the required GASB reporting for retiree benefits. Those services are not part of this RFP.

1. How often does the actuary develop reserve estimates for IBNR claims and for claims fluctuation?

**ANSWER:** Not less than quarterly. Additionally, upon request.

1. Describe the timing associated with medical plan and dental plan premium rate changes and employee contribution changes.

**ANSWER:** The University’s plan year is calendar year. Premium adjustments are most often made at the beginning of the fiscal year (July). Open enrollment is held annually in November with major plan design decisions made by not later than August (preferred).

1. Describe the variety of employer contribution arrangements toward medical and dental coverage across the System.

**ANSWER:** Please refer to the University’s benefits website at <https://www.uasys.edu/> for details on the premium allocations at each UAS campus.

1. Describe any variations in benefits including grandfathered provisions among the various campuses in the System.

**ANSWER:** Variations in benefits offered do exist between campus locations. Examples include paid leave, the offer and funding of STD, coverage levels for basic employer-paid LTD and LTD plan design features for physicians at the UAMS campus. Closed-group, grandfathered benefits do exist in very limited manner for retiree benefits, disability insurance and dependent life insurance. Additional customization is required to reflect programs for affiliated entities and retiree participants.

1. Describe the plan design and contracting arrangements pertaining to any domestic network in the health plan (academic medical center).

**ANSWER:** The University’s health plan provides for out-of-pocket discounts to participants using the health services available through three campus provider locations (UAMS, UALR, UAF). Reimbursement schedules are customized through providers and the health plan TPA and communications specific to the incentive program (SmartCare) are developed.

1. Describe how the pharmacy benefit management programs and formulary are monitored, what the consultant’s role is in that process and how often the consultant attends meetings?

**ANSWER:** The University maintains a custom formulary and mandates pass-through pricing arrangements. Network access, claims processing, specialty distribution, rebate administration and related are managed through PBM services. Formulary changes/additions are reviewed in quarterly meetings with the PBM, consultant, UAS staff and physicians and pharmacists. The consultant representative will actively participate in the meetings (pharmacy expertise and/or pharmacist necessary) and will be available for ongoing review and participation in pharmacy issues.

1. With respect to communication services will the University expect the consultant to pay for printing expenses and/or postage out of its communication budget?

**ANSWER:** The University requires full disclosure of all commissions and other income associated with work for the University. Commissions will offset various expenses and may include communications services.

1. How often does the University meet with the consultant to discuss benefit communication matters?

**ANSWER:** Benefits communications meetings currently are scheduled weekly. Meeting schedules may be adjusted based upon activities and issues. As with other services, the consultant will be available for ongoing support as needed.

1. To what extent are employee surveys about benefits contemplated for the future?

**ANSWER:** A broad survey of benefits in higher education across Arkansas and the SEC is conducted every three years. Annual limited scope benefits surveys are conducted, and specialized/topical surveys are conducted as needed.

1. How would you characterize your benefit design and communication strategy for the next three to five years?

**ANSWER:** The University faces issues common to most higher education employers. The current COVID pandemic adds complexities and unknowns.

1. What types of modifications to the benefits website and the benefits enrollment system does the University contemplate as necessary to comply with 36 C.F.R. § 1194.22 and Arkansas Code Annotated § 25‐26‐201?

**ANSWER:** The successful consulting vendor will provide a range of compliance evaluation and guidance including recommendations on any potential accessibility concerns.

1. Are clinical audits and claim audits desired as part of the scope of services?

**ANSWER:** Yes. The consultant will coordinate vendor evaluations as needed. Medical claims processing is scheduled for review in 2021.

1. How often will clinical experts from the consulting firm be expected to participate in regular meetings related to case management, disease management of other medical management programs?

**ANSWER:** The University conducts monthly claims calls with the health plan TPA to review CM, DM, and high-cost projections. A consulting representative with experience in CM will be requested for participation in the meetings.

1. Is the consultant expected to maintain a health data warehouse and provide health care analytics as part of the scope of services?

**ANSWER:** At this time, the University does not maintain or otherwise have third-party data warehouse services. Campus level data is maintained separately, and vendor data is maintained separately. At this time and for the near term it will be extremely useful for the consultant to consolidate and maintain various data sets in support of plan analyses.

1. What are the types and frequency of competitive bidding required for the various benefit plans? How is the consultant expected to contribute to the proposal evaluation process?

**ANSWER:** The University schedules benefits services and products for formal RFP review every five years. The consultant does not participate in the selection of vendors but will broadly participate in the RFP process through data compilation, preparing pricing projections, providing network discount projections, insured plan design comparisons and through participation in vendor presentations. RFPs for six products or services are expected within 2021.