

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

GOVERNOR PHIL MURPHY

GOVERNOR MURPHY ESTABLISHES STATE HEALTH BENEFITS QUALITY AND VALUE TASK FORCE

Treasury to Restore Health Benefits Plan Design Committees

TRENTON – The rising cost of health benefits continues to be one of the largest cost drivers for the state of New Jersey and local governments. With stakeholders collectively acknowledging that change is necessary, Governor Phil Murphy today announced he will begin tackling the issue with the formation of the State Health Benefits Quality and Value Task Force.

“Recognizing the vital opportunity before us to ensure that we provide both quality and value through our state health benefits in the most cost-effective manner possible, I am creating the New Jersey State Health Benefits Quality and Value Taskforce. Focusing on quality and value will also ensure that we build a healthy and strong workforce for years to come,” **said Governor Murphy**. “I believe that by moving toward value based, and other smart purchasing strategies, in the State’s health benefits systems, we can lead by example in sharing our best practices and efficiencies with other health systems in the state, including Medicaid and the individual market.”

The new Task Force will be comprised of state and national health policy and purchasing experts, union and employer stakeholders, and experts from within the administration. This group will meet monthly and will work to identify specific near-term opportunities for reform, including best practices in health management, cost savings for the commercial health benefits Request For Proposal (RFP) for active employees, as well as recommendations for plan design opportunities by October 2018. Following the completion of that work, the Task Force will then explore more long-term and innovative reforms for the broader health benefits system and deliver a comprehensive report to the Governor.

The State Health Benefits Plan (SHBP), which was created in 1961, and the School Employees Health Benefits Plan (SEHBP), which was created in 2007, provide medical, prescription drug and dental benefits to state employees, local education employees, participating local government employees, and eligible retirees. Combined, these plans cover 499,508 active members and 311,080 retired members.

Governor Murphy’s Fiscal Year 2019 budget includes \$3.4 billion for health benefits coverage for members of these plans. This represents about 9.1 percent of the overall State Budget.

In addition, the New Jersey Department of Treasury is reconstituting the Plan Design Committees for both the state health benefits and school employee’s health benefits plans to leverage savings and institute potential improvements in the quality of care provided to state and local governmental employees.

Members of the State Health Benefits Quality and Value Task Force include:

State government experts

- Department of Treasury (Treasurer Elizabeth Muiio)
- Department of Banking and Insurance (Acting Commissioner Marlene Caride)
- State Comptroller’s Office (Comptroller Philip J. Degnan)
- Department of Human Services (Commissioner Carole Johnson)

Health policy/ procurement experts

- America’s Agenda (Mark Blum)
- Princeton’s State Health and Value Strategies (Heather Howard)
- Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (Joel Cantor)
- Seton Hall Center for Health Law and Pharmaceutical Policy (John Jacobi)

Unions, employers

- Communications Workers of America (Hetty Rosenstein)
- New Jersey Education Association (Kevin Kelleher)
- AFSCME (Steve Tully)
- American Federation of Teachers (Donna M. Chiera)
- International Association of Fire Fighters (Pete Nowak)
- Policemen's Benevolent Association (Kevin Lyons)
- NJ League of Municipalities (Michael Cerra)
- NJ Schools Boards Association (Jonathan Pushman)

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