

Members respond to new vision

In January, the Benefit Board presented a new vision designed to guide its strategic planning through the continuing healthcare crisis. By 2007, the Board envisions a new healthcare delivery system. In this system, PEBB members continue to have access to high-quality, affordable healthcare.

The Board asked members and other stakeholders for feedback on the vision. About 40 individuals shared their views in public meetings, which were held in 7 locations around the state. Almost 500 members responded through an online survey. More than 50 wrote detailed e-mails and letters to the Board.

Virtually all who commented expressed deep concern over healthcare quality and affordability. The range of their recommended solutions illustrates both the complexity of the problem and the diversity of PEBB's membership.

Some members said that comprehensive coverage is vitally important to them. Others said they would prefer a high-deductible catastrophic-coverage plan with lower premiums.

Some called for restructuring of family tiers. Others recommended that contributions cover only the employee. Still others stressed the need for full family coverage and fully paid premiums.

A few people asked that additional, specific services be covered. On the other hand, some people suggested that such benefits as dental coverage be discontinued to cut costs.

Some insurance carriers and other vendors complimented PEBB on its ambitious vision. They also noted new opportunities to participate.

Additional comments touched on individual responsibility for health risks. Example recommendations included free memberships in fitness clubs and higher premiums for members who smoke.

The range of responses reveals the vast variety in PEBB's pool of 110,000 members:

- Singles, couples and families of all types.
- Healthy babies as well as infants who need intensive care at birth and beyond.
- Family health histories that include every combination of health and illness factors.
- Young employees along with retirees not yet eligible for Medicare.
- Employees from 121 state agencies and seven university campuses.
- Individuals who deliberately make healthy choices along with those who don't.
- Individuals whose

combination of genes and circumstance has given them a lifetime of health or the challenge of a life-threatening or chronic illness.

The Board's Plan Design Subcommittee is reviewing the responses as it begins planning for 2004.

PEBB Vision for 2007

PEBB envisions a new state of health for its members statewide.

Key components of the PEBB program will include:

- An innovative delivery system in communities statewide that provides evidence-based medicine to maximize health and utilize dollars wisely.
- A focus on improving quality and outcomes not just providing healthcare.
- The promotion of consumer education and informed choices.
- Appropriate market and consumer incentives that encourage the right care at the right time.
- System-wide transparency through explicit, available and understandable reports about costs, outcomes and other useful data.
- Benefits that are affordable to the state and employees.

(Continued on page 2)

Members respond to new vision

Members respond to new vision *(continued from page 1)*

What is “evidence based medicine?”

Through the last century and into this one, hundreds (sometimes thousands) of clinical studies have been conducted on a variety of medical practices. Frequently, they show a range of results, which can lead to conflicting conclusions.

For the practitioner, evidence-based medicine evaluate the validity of these research studies through critical appraisals. The analyses sort through all the results to determine positive “outcomes” — what really appears to work. The practitioners then integrate the results into their practices and into decision-making with their patients or clients.

Duke University Medical School recommends that physicians follow this evidence-based process:

The patient

Start with the patient — a clinical problem or question arises out of the care of the patient.

The question

Construct a well-built clinical question derived from the case.

The resource

Select the appropriate resource(s) and conduct a search for the answer.

The evaluation

Appraise that evidence for its validity (*closeness to the truth*) and applicability (*usefulness in clinical practice*) of the conclusion.

The patient

Return to the patient — integrate that evidence with clinical expertise and patient preferences, and apply it to practice.

Self-evaluation

Evaluate your performance with this patient.

A gentle reminder

When you change your name or address, you have to notify lots of people. Don't forget to contact your agency benefit representative, too. Your representative will help you fill out a Medical and Dental Update form. The representative will then send a copy of the completed form to the carriers who provide your plans.

PEBB Health Center Update

775 Court St. NE • Salem, OR 97301

(800) 701-1333 • www.pebbhealth.org • (503) 362-1111 • pebbhealth@oregonwellness.com

Experts from the American Institute for Cancer Research believe you can reduce your risk of cancer if you make an educated effort to improve your diet. Some of the changes they suggest:

- Eat a diet with less fat, especially saturated fats found primarily in animal products
- Add more fiber into your diet

- Eat more fresh fruits and vegetables, especially yellow squash, carrots and leafy greens
- Use less salt or salted foods
- Cut out foods that contain nitrites and nitrates, such as bologna, hot dogs, and lunch meats
- Consume fewer barbecued and smoked meats

Changing food habits takes time. But by cutting back on fats, animal products and processed foods, you can improve your health and your feeling of well-being. You may even reduce the risk of developing cancer.

(Continued)

Programs at the PEBB Health Center

Registration is required for all programs. Handouts may be available if you are unable to attend. Feel free to bring your lunch to any of these noon-hour classes. For registration call (503) 362-1111 or (800) 701-1333, or send an e-mail to our **NEW E-Mail Address** pebbhealth@oregonwellness.com Check the Health Center website at www.pebbhealth.org for any updated class or lending library information. (Please follow your agency rules on use of the Internet at work.)

Diabetic Foot Care:

Presenter: Dr. Tom Mesdag

Date: Tuesday, April 8

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Dr. Tom Mesdag will discuss diabetes routine foot care. He will also advise where to go for intervention and present case histories and examples.

IBS and Other Gastrointestinal Disorders

Date: Tuesday, April 15

Presenter: Jeanine Olson, ANP

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Learn how to identify symptoms of irritable bowel syndrome (IBS) and how to manage this disorder. Also, learn about the features of an “abdominal migraine” and dietary measures that may be helpful.

Anxiety and Depression

Presenter: Dr. Patrick Mooney

Date: Wednesday, April 16

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Anxiety and depression are two of the most common disruptors of human psychological life. They take a toll on self-esteem, family relationships, work productivity, and life satisfaction. Dr. Mooney will discuss how often they combine as a “tag team” leading to worry about future events and demoralization in the present.

Diabetes and Depression:

Presenter: Denise Cedar, RD,
CDE

Date: Thursday, April 17

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Depression is more than a “bad day.” People with diabetes are twice as likely to suffer from depression, which also increases the risk of poor glucose control and diabetic complications. What is depression and what can you do about it?

Home Control of Asthma and Allergies

Presenter: Megan Osborn, ANP

Date: Wednesday, April 23

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Do you or does someone you know struggle with management of asthma and/or allergies? Learn preventive measures that can improve control these conditions.

Eating More Fiber

Presenter: Megan Osborn, ANP

Date: Wednesday, April 30

Time: Noon-1 p.m.

Fiber-what’s the value in it? Learn why it’s an important component to diet, and discover some enjoyable fiber sources.

The PEBB Health Center’s lending library has materials related to these topics and more. Call or e-mail now for your library card so you can take advantage of the resources available to all PEBB members.



- *Living with Diabetic Complications*
- *Numb Toes and Aching Soles; Diabetes Foot and Skin Care*
- *Diabetes and Depression* (audio tape);
- *Living with Asthma*
- *Allergy Fighter*
- *The Allergy Self-Help Cookbook*
- *Treating IBD* (Irritable bowel disorder)
- *The New Eating Right for a Bad Gut*
- *Gastrointestinal Disorders and Nutrition*
- *Get a Life and Humor your Stress* (videos dealing with stress)



The questions and answers presented in this

column are initiated by timely topics of general interest, not by individual inquiries submitted to PEBB.

Q *Does PEBB provide this newsletter electronically?*

A Yes. PEBB does produce electronic versions of this and other information materials. You can find the newsletters on the Web at <http://pebb.das.state.or.us/newsindex.htm>.

PEBB continues to distribute paper copies for several reasons:

- Employee and agency feedback continues to encourage PEBB to use every possible medium to communicate. A recent survey reports that almost 80 percent of PEBB members read this newsletter for benefits information.
- Agencies do not all have the same e-mail capabilities, which doesn't allow statewide distribution of the newsletter using e-mail.

- Agency Internet policies differ as well. Not all state employees have access to the Internet at work, so some aren't able to view the newsletter online.
- Employees are more likely to take the paper copy home, where their families have access to important health and benefit information.

By request, whole agencies with e-mail access to all their employees can distribute the electronic version of the newsletter as an e-mail attachment. This allows PEBB to reduce the number of printed copies.

As state information technology changes, PEBB will continue to adjust its communications methods.

PEBB Resources

Access PEBB, insurance companies and other benefit resources using the contact information below. The insurance company Web sites include provider directories. You can also link to insurance company Web sites from the PEBB Web site.

Public Employees' Benefit Board (PEBB)

(503) 373-1102, (800) 788-0520
<http://pebb.das.state.or.us>
inquiries.pebb@state.or.us

Associated Administrators, Inc. (Dependent Care FSA)

(800) 334-4340
(503) 220-3805
www.aai-pca.com

BestChoice Administrators

(800) 556-3137
(503) 765-3581

Health Center

(800) 701-1333
(503) 362-1111
pebbhealth@oregonwellness.com

Cascade East Health Plan (medical)

(866) 577-CEHP (2347) toll-free
www.cehp.org

Kaiser Permanente (medical & dental)

(800) 813-2000
www.kp.org/nw

Nationwide Insurance (auto)

(888) 628-4663 media code 8425
(888) 662-8446 (TDD)

ODS Health Plans (dental)

(800) 452-1058
www.odshp.com/pebb/

Regence BlueCross BlueShield of Oregon (medical)

(800) 826-9813
(503) 220-3849
www.or.regence.com/pebb

The Standard Insurance Company (life & disability)

(800) 242-1888
www.standard.com

Unum (long-term care)

(800) 227-4165
www.unumprovident.com/enroll/pebb

VSP (vision)

(800) 877-7195
www.vsp.com

Willamette Dental Insurance (dental)

(800) 460-7644
www.denkor.com

PEBB Mission

To provide a high quality plan of health and other benefits that are affordable to both the employee and the state.