

Dear Faculty and Staff at Fairmont State University and at Pierpont Community and Technical College,

July 1, 2015, is here, and the latest PEIA cuts take effect today. PEIA is the only insurance option for state employees, including teachers, professors, firefighters, police officers and state troopers, and service personnel. This list includes all of us and many people we know and rely on to create the communities we live in.

As you know, the state legislature funds PEIA but has not added any money for the past three-plus years. Medical costs have continued to climb at the rate of 6-10% each year. Moreover, as PEIA adds members, the same bulk amount of funds has to provide benefits for a greater number of people.

Last year, the PEIA Finance Board was charged with cutting \$30 million dollars of state employee benefits in order to balance its budget. These cuts, again which will take effect July 1, 2015, include:

- No coverage for massage therapy;
- Increase Primary Care Office Visit copayment from \$15 to \$20 per visit;
- Increase Specialist Office Visit copayment from \$25 to \$40 per visit;
- Increase deductible by \$25 for single coverage and \$50 for family coverage;
- Increase outpatient surgery copay from \$50 to \$100;
- Increase emergency room copay to \$100 with no discount;
- Increase family out-of-pocket maximum for PEIA PPB Plans A and D to twice the employee only amount;
- Add \$100 copay per admission to existing deductible and 20% coinsurance for inpatient hospital care;
- Increase Generic Drug Copay for 30-day supply from \$5 to \$10 and for 90-day supply (maintenance only) from \$10 to \$20;
- Increase Preferred Brand Drug Copay for 30-day supply from \$15 to \$25 and for 90-day supply (maintenance only) from \$30 to \$50.

PEIA's shortfall will continue to increase each year the legislature chooses not to add money to PEIA's budget. Next year, PEIA will have to cut benefits again – that is, in addition to all the cuts that have already been made – by \$125-130 million dollars --

in other words, cut four times as many benefits as were cut this past year, unless the legislature increases funding to PEIA.

At this point, because we're getting closer to elections, the rumor is that by the conclusion of the upcoming 2016 legislative session, public employees will receive a 1% to 2% raise. To do this, the legislature will allocate \$30 to \$40 million dollars. If you look at PEIA's need for \$125 to 130 million, any employee raise leaves all employees still responsible for \$90 to \$100 million. That is, whatever raise you receive, your PEIA costs will amount to at least three times the value of that raise. Your raise will not cover what PEIA needs; you will lose more money than you gain.

We cannot control medical costs. **We can, however, pressure our legislators to do the right thing and fund PEIA at a level that allows us to keep our solid health care benefits.**

If we do not work together, given the economy of West Virginia and our legislative make-up, we will not succeed, and you will continue to have your income reduced each year by rising PEIA costs.

Please mark your calendar for **Monday night, November 2, 2015**, when there will be a PEIA public hearing at the **Ramada Inn, 20 Scott Avenue, Morgantown, WV**. If you would like to speak to the Finance Board about how this year's cuts are affecting you, you need to be there by 6:00 p.m. The meeting begins at 7:00 p.m. If you don't want to speak, please be there as moral support. We need to have as many bodies in the audience as possible.

Whether or not West Virginia's public employees can afford health care for themselves and their families affects their quality of life, as well as the willingness of others to accept jobs in our state. Let's be a state that respects its teachers, its police, its state troopers, its fire fighters, and its service personnel. If we all work together to preserve human dignity and the quality of health care, we can succeed.

Please stay aware, and please participate in as many actions to save your health care as you possibly can. Let's begin by showing up at the PEIA open meetings.

Thank you.

All best,  
Sue



## Public Hearing Schedule November 2015



Customer Service: 5:00 - 6:00 pm

Registration: 5:00 – 6:00 pm

Public Hearing: 6:00 – 8:00 pm

| DATE                        | LOCATION   |
|-----------------------------|--|
| Monday, November 2, 2015    | <b>Ramada Inn</b> , 20 Scott Avenue,<br>Morgantown, WV   |
| Tuesday, November 3, 2015   | <b>Holiday Inn</b> , 301 Fox Croft Avenue,<br>Martinsburg, WV  |
| Monday, November 9, 2015    | <b>WV Northern Community College</b> ,<br>Auditorium, 1704 Market Street,<br>Wheeling, WV                          |
| Tuesday, November 10, 2015  | <b>Civic Center, Little Theater</b> , 200 Civic<br>Center Drive, Charleston, West Virginia                         |
| Thursday, November 12, 2015 | <b>Tamarack Ballroom A</b> , One Tamarack<br>Park, Beckley, WV   |
| Tuesday, November 17, 2015  | <b>Marshall University Medical School</b> ,<br>Harless Auditorium,<br>1600 Medical Center Drive,<br>Huntington, WV |

## **PEIA Funding Action Plan**

### **Issue: Funding**

- Legislative Contribution
- Retirees
- Addition of Personnel to Plan w/o Additional Funding
- Employer Contribution

### **Objectives:**

- Mandated Funding
- Mandate Comparable Retiree Benefits
- Per member/per month Funding
- Adequate allocations based on number of plan participants

### **Actions:**

#### **Educate** All Stakeholders and general public through:

- Legislative round-tables
- Media (e-mail, calls, social media etc)
- Action alerts
- Building Rep. Training
- SWAG
- PEIA training sessions
- Word of mouth
- Incorporate into lesson plans
- Higher Ed. Orientations (faculty)
- Impact Analysis

### **Physical Action:**

- Attend PEIA Hearings
- Officially invite (written) legislators to PEIA hearings
- Letters/Op Ed to all newspapers
- Radio/TV interviews
- Phone Banking/trees
- Members visit Capital
- Pull in law enforcement, firefighters, etc.

**Resources Needed:**

- Transportation
- Calendar/timeline
- Technical assistance
- Flyers/SWAG
- Themed t-shirts
- Food
- Theatrics
- Impact analysis
- Signs/banners, etc.
- Video/media