



Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange
SHOP Advisory Committee
Special Meeting

Remote Meeting

Tuesday, February 2, 2021
Draft Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Grant Ritter (Chair); Pamela Russek; Kevin Galvin; Ellen Skinner; Shelly Sweatt; Paul Lombardo; Christopher McKiernan

Other Participants:

Access Health CT (AHCT) Staff: James Michel; John Carbone; Susan Rich-Bye; Jerome Chisolm; Marlude Pierre-Louis; Marcin Olechowski
Business Partner: Amanda Garner (Mintz + Hoke)

The Meeting of the SHOP Advisory Committee was called to order at 4:00 p.m.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair Grant Ritter called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. Roll call for attendance was taken.

II. Public Comment

No public comment

III. Review and Approval of Minutes

Chair Grant Ritter requested a motion to approve the October 27, 2020 SHOP Advisory Committee Special Meeting Minutes. Motion was made by Kevin Galvin and seconded by Pamela Russek. Roll call vote was taken. Ellen Skinner and Shelly Sweatt abstained. **Motion passed.**

IV. Overview of 2020 Metrics

John Carbone, Director of SHOP and Product Development, provided the Overview 2020 Membership Metrics. Mr. Carbone provided comparisons in enrollment for groups, subscribers, and members over the last three years. Mr. Carbone noted that on January 1, 2019, SHOP had 247 groups; this number increased to 314 the following year. Mr. Carbone stressed that due to the pandemic which resulted in the uncertainty in the marketplace, this number went down in April of 2020 to 278 and added that a similar situation was experienced in terms of the number of subscribers and members. Mr. Carbone stressed that SHOP began promoting its services more aggressively during the pandemic. As a result, after losing 15 months of gains due to the coronavirus as of April 2020, SHOP recovered the losses over the summer and pushed to a new high in membership as of the beginning of this year.

Mr. Carbone emphasized that SHOP has become an important resource for small businesses in obtaining accurate information about various assistance programs aimed at helping them during the pandemic and added that because of those efforts, the SHOP program has gained more trust. Mr. Carbone outlined the work that is undertaken by the SHOP staff and added that SHOP uses various methods of communication, including an enhanced effort on social media platforms. Mr. Carbone provided additional information on the enrollment by carrier over the last three years and described the Stand Alone Dental Plans' membership over the same period of time, emphasizing that the latter's increase in membership between January of 2019 and January of 2021 amounted to 83 percent.

Kevin Galvin inquired whether SHOP would be considering adding additional products to its offerings. Mr. Carbone noted that AHCT and SHOP are exploring various options to add to its portfolio of insurance products. James Michel, Chief Executive Officer, added that AHCT is looking at other services that can complement its current array of products, especially for small businesses. Mr. Michel added that AHCT restarted meetings of its Strategy Committee where issues such as this one are discussed. Mr. Michel pointed out that ideally, AHCT would have a platform that would offer a one-stop-shopping experience for its customers and added that AHCT is looking for a comprehensive approach for small businesses. Shelly Sweatt indicated that disability insurance is one of the most overlooked products but is extremely important for many people and encouraged possible inclusion of that service into future offerings of SHOP.

V. Key Observations

Amanda Garner from business partner Mintz & Hoke provided key observations. Ms. Garner noted that the launch of the new Access Health CT Small Business website brought a significant level of traffic and new users. Ms. Garner noted that the site saw more than a 200 percent increase in overall sessions compared to this month prior demonstrating the impact of paid and earned media efforts driving to valuable content. Ms. Garner noted that through a diverse paid media mix, the campaign had a total reach of over 1.5 million overall impressions. Ms. Garner stated through various forms of relevant and engaging content, SHOP continues to gain credibility and deepen the relationship with both new prospects, existing leads, and Connecticut brokers. Ms. Garner provided details on the earned media efforts which includes ongoing relationship building with the media community. Ms. Garner emphasized that webinars and information sessions are also part of the approach. Ms.

Garner added that they also included chamber chats, pre-recorded webinars to use during Open Enrollment (OE), virtual broker meet-and-greets as well as WFSB Facebook Live and CT Style Interview. Ms. Garner provided additional information on the way the digital ads are specifically targeted and SHOP's promotions on broadcast television in Connecticut as well as detailed information on the website views along with paid advertising. Ms. Garner detailed the Public Relations undertaking which included media coverage, press releases and community events.

Mr. Michel acknowledged Paul Lombardo's recognition in receiving the prestigious Robert Dineen Award, the highest award in the insurance industry in the United States. Mr. Michel congratulated Mr. Lombardo on this great accomplishment. Mr. Michel also stressed that Mr. Lombardo has provided invaluable service to Access Health CT over the last eight years. Chair Grant Ritter emphasized that Mr. Lombardo has been instrumental in his expertise on the Health Plan Benefits and Qualifications Advisory Committee as well.

VI. Adjournment

Chair Grant Ritter requested a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Kevin Galvin and seconded by Shelly Sweatt. Roll call vote was taken. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 4:45 p.m.