



## Connecticut Health Insurance Exchange Strategy Committee Special Meeting

### Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, November 9, 2021

Remote Meeting

**Members Present:** Steven Hernandez (Chair); Grant Ritter; Paul Lombardo; Cecelia Woods

**Access Health CT (AHCT):** James Michel; Caroline Lee Ruwet; Robert Blundo; John Carbone; Susan Rich-Bye; Daniel Maloney; Tammy Hendricks; Marcin Olechowski

#### A. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Steven Hernandez called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Roll call for attendance was taken.

#### B. Public Comment

No public comment.

#### C. Review and Approval of Minutes

Chair Steven Hernandez requested a motion to approve the October 14, 2021, Strategy Committee Draft Meeting Minutes. Motion was made by Grant Ritter and seconded by Cecelia Woods. Roll call was ordered. **Motion passed unanimously.**

#### D. Broker Academy Walkthrough

James Michel, Chief Executive Officer, provided a brief introduction on the recent developments in implementing the Broker Academy initiative. Mr. Michel added that the aim of this meeting is to provide the Committee with the initial actions undertaken to make the Broker Academy a reality.

Tammy Hendricks, Director of Health Equity and Outreach, stated that the Broker Academy will actively address both parts of the AHCT mission by reducing the number of uninsured individuals by increasing access to local trusted brokers and helping to address health disparities in underserved communities. Ms. Hendricks added that as a result of those efforts, AHCT will be more visible as a trusted and knowledgeable resource for brokers, community organizations and consumers. Ms. Hendricks added that it will also create career opportunities for brokers in those historically underserved communities.

John Carbone, Director of SHOP and Product Development, provided a preliminary timeline for the development of the Broker Academy. Mr. Carbone noted that this process will contain three major elements: recruitment, training and development as well as placement. Mr. Carbone noted that all three elements have various subsections with tentative start and completion timelines.

Mr. Carbone noted that currently the focus is on Bridgeport, New Haven and Hartford as the underserved communities that need better access to health insurance services. Mr. Carbone emphasized that the first class will start on June 1, 2022. Mr. Carbone provided summary of the intermediate steps between the initial phases of recruitment and the final phases of placement. Chair Steven Hernandez expressed his words of appreciation for the timeline presented.

Caroline Lee Ruwet, Director of Marketing, presented an overview of the recruitment process, which will be done with community-based organizations that will connect candidates to AHCT and the broker network. Ms. Lee Ruwet added that among those organizations will be nonprofits, navigators, faith-based organizations, agencies, staffing firms, educational institutions as well as brokers. Ms. Lee Ruwet went on to provide tentative dates and descriptions of the steps to be taken in the application process.

Mr. Michel pointed out that the Board of Directors will play one of the most important roles in advising AHCT about the most qualified candidates from local communities to complete the Broker Academy certification process. Mr. Michel added that the potential financial benefit for those brokers may be significant and at the same time, they would be a great resource for their communities.

Tammy Hendrick, Director of Health Equity and Outreach, presented the Broker Academy Training and Development information. Ms. Hendricks noted that current plans provide that they will be held in three cities: Bridgeport, Hartford and New Haven. Ms. Hendricks noted that these areas tend to have higher uninsured rates and increased health disparities. The program will allow the new brokers to assist the communities that are underserved.

Ms. Hendricks provided a timeline for the training and development process. Ms. Hendricks also described the testing and licensing portion. Mr. Hernandez inquired whether there may be an opportunity for cross-training with trusted members of the community, who may be engaged with the community in other ways. Mr. Michel noted that it is in the Broker Academy Development plans, and it could be done in the next phase. Mr. Michel stated that currently, AHCT wants to make sure that individuals who enroll in the Broker Academy are properly trained and involving others in the process can be done at a later phase.

Ms. Hendricks went on to provide information pertaining to placement, which includes apprenticeship and post-apprenticeship with the goal of brokers being ready to support Open Enrollment 10 starting in November of 2022. Mr. Michel stated that reaching out to the esteemed members of the community, such as religious leaders to help identify individuals who may be capable of being successful brokers is one of the initiatives that will be undertaken. Mr. Michel added that informational sessions may follow. Mr. Michel, answering Paul Lombardo's inquiry, stated that AHCT plans on partnering with local colleges and universities as well in the

recruitment process. Mr. Lombardo inquired about the possibility of working together with the Connecticut Department of Labor (CT DOL) to reach those individuals who may have been displaced from work. Mr. Michel confirmed that AHCT will be coordinating its efforts with the CT DOL in this area as well. Mr. Lombardo added that some veterans may also be interested in the program. Mr. Michel thanked Mr. Lombardo for this suggestion and added that they would be a great asset to the program.

#### **E. Adjournment**

Chair Steven Hernandez requested a motion to adjourn. Motion was made by Paul Lombardo and seconded by Grant Ritter. Roll call vote was ordered. **Motion passed unanimously.** Meeting adjourned at 1:51 p.m.