Important Changes to Your Benefits Starting January 1, 2021

As you may have read in previous communications, we have had to make some difficult decisions to help manage the University System of New Hampshire’s (USNH) operating costs during these very challenging financial times.

As a reminder, even before the COVID-19 pandemic, USNH was experiencing significant financial challenges, including increasing competition for students, rapidly changing education and curriculum needs, and pressure to control tuition increases. And then came the pandemic—resulting in room and board refunds of $42 million in total across USNH.

In short, the increasing employee benefits costs are not sustainable in this environment; they have forced USNH to make changes to our generous benefits package. Although these changes require you to assume a greater share of the cost of your benefits, the intention is to maintain a strong benefits package that ensures competitive retention and recruitment of employees relative to our higher education peers and private employers in New Hampshire.

What You Need to Know

- There will still be three medical plan options in 2021.
- Biweekly payroll deductions for the medical/prescription drug, dental, and vision plans will increase.
- Your share of medical and prescription drug costs will increase. Annual deductibles, out-of-pocket maximums, and most copays will be higher for 2021.*
- You will not receive a cash incentive if you waive medical and/or dental coverage.*

For a full view of what’s new and changing in 2021, please review your Enrollment Guide and the Medical Plan Comparison and Cost Summary.

What You Need to Do

During the Benefits Open Enrollment period (November 2–20), be sure to:

- Select medical coverage for yourself (and your dependents, if applicable), which will be effective January 1, 2021. This is an active Open Enrollment—to remain covered, you must choose a plan.
- Consider contributing to the Health Savings Account (HSA) if you’re enrolled in the Open Access Plus HSA Plan. (If you’re eligible, USNH will automatically contribute to your HSA, even if you choose not to contribute.)
- Consider contributing to the Healthcare and/or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts (FSAs).
- Confirm or change your benefit elections and the dependents you covered in 2020.

*Not applicable for all collectively bargained employees.

Visit MyBenefits.USNH.edu for up-to-date information on 2021 changes and coverage.