AFICS ANNUAL ASSEMBLY

ASHI PRESENTATI0N

JAYANTILAL M. KARIA

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Good day to you all! I am Jayantilal Karia, Jay for short.

It has been a pleasure serving as your representative on the AFICS/NY Governing Board for the last eight years. Time Flies!

The AFICS/NY Health Insurance Committee, comprised of 7 Governing Board members, is co-chaired by Dr. Sudershan Narula and myself, 5 other members are, Ms. Nancy Hurtz-Soyka; Ms. Marianne Brzak-Metzler; Ms. Robin De La Rocca; Ms. Michelle Rockliffe and Ms. Vera Rajic. We usually meet once a month and determine how we can best support retirees on health insurance issues.

Let me mention three critical areas of our work this past year.

FIRST, the UN Health and Life Insurance Committee, HLIC for short.

We are full participants in the HLIC which determines the benefits and costs of health insurance for serving and retired staff.

AFICS/NY has historically had two Observer positions in the HLIC. Dr. Sudershan Narula and I are the current representatives, Ms. Marianne Brzak-Metzler and Ms. Nancy Hurtz-Soyka are alternate representatives. The HLIC has representatives of the Administration and the Staff Union and Observers from AFICS/NY, UNDP and UNICEF. We are continuing our efforts to secure full membership for AFICS/NY on the HLIC.

But even with Observer status in the HLIC, our input is always taken into full consideration and the HLIC makes its recommendations on a consensus basis.

We continued our active participation in the bi-monthly and at times weekly HLIC meetings. We reviewed the analysis of the yearly costs of current plans and the projections for renewals for the 2023/24 period. For some plans, the overall expenditures were showing increasing costs compared to the previous period as participants resumed postponed elective procedures as well as routine visits to health care providers.

Deliberations were unusually difficult for the Empire Blue Cross plan which showed an initial double digit projection increase in premium. We provided suggestions to adjust the projections based on the increasing number of retirees participating in Medicare Part B, which results in lower expenditures for the ASHI plans and also made some other suggestions without affecting the benefits.

The final conclusion on Empire Blue Cross Plan, while still high, is in single digit!! Mr. Genc Osmani will update on premiums for all plans.

Noting the large increase in one of the plans, an obvious question is how do we continue to keep future premium increases at a minimum?

Let me reiterate what I have said in the past regarding our collective responsibility to ensure that medical expenses are kept at a minimum as UN health plans are insured as SELF-FUNDED plans so premiums are based on both the level of expenditures as well as ensuring adequate reserves for each plan.

- We already see an increasing trend in the use of generic medicines, which is a very good sign, so let us all keep focused on continuing our efforts in this regard.
- Also, you should enroll in the mail order programme for routine maintenance medications, which is normally at lower costs than at a retail pharmacy.
- Emergency Room (ER) visits for non-Emergency medical treatments– are still quite high. For your information, each ER visit costs over

$2200 on average and participants also pay $75 as Co-pay. We still see some members repeatedly using ER facilities for routine medical treatment, which should be avoided. It is better to use Urgent Care Facilities, which are now available everywhere providing basic medical services at much lower costs and with much less wait time compared to waiting for hours in the ER.

- It appears that a number of participants are still using out-of-network providers with significantly higher costs. One example is many members using out of network providers for physical therapy at a cost which is over 4 times higher than in-network providers. We understand that some of the out-of- network providers may provide such services without charging the normal co-pay, however, they charge significantly higher amounts for their services as compared to in-network providers. So, in the end, this results in all of us paying higher premiums! Please use in-network providers for such services and ask the service providers to file their claims as in-network.

SECOND ISSUE, we have responded to members raising their individual issues including those affected by the changes to Medicare Part B. As you are aware Medicare Part B premiums paid by retirees are reimbursed by the UN Secretariat based on the claims filed by retirees with appropriate documentation submitted to the Insurance Section. Due to a change in Medicare premiums effective January 2023, while HLIS took proactive steps to ensure that reimbursements for retirees already in their data base were adjusted, it was necessary for some retirees to provide additional supplementary information especially if additional charges were imposed for any reason such as the Income Related Monthly Adjustment Amount (IRMAA). We suggest that retirees enrolled in any of the medical insurance plans as well as Medicare Part B, verify that they are being correctly reimbursed for Medicare premiums paid by them directly or through deductions from their social security payments. Anyone having problems with Medicare Part B premium reimbursement should inform the UN Insurance Section with appropriate documentation. Please pass on this information to fellow retirees.

THIRD ISSUE, we have recently issued End-of-Life guidance documents which have already been shared with you. It is important that you use these guidance documents to plan for the future and provide necessary information to your beneficiaries on what they have to do after we are gone. I take this opportunity to especially thank AFICS/NY Governing Board member and member of the AFICS/NY Health Insurance Committee, Ms. Vera Rajic, who worked for many hours to prepare these documents, held multiple consultations, and ensured inputs from many UN colleagues. The documents were reviewed and approved by the AFICS/NY Governing Board.

Lastly, the Joint Inspection Unit, (JIU) has recently invited active staff and retirees to provide feedback on the service quality of the health insurance schemes. We highly encourage you to complete this survey by the deadline of 31 May 2023. HLIS has sent emails to participants on this with link on how to complete the survey which is also posted on our website.

In closing, I want to assure you that AFICS/NY will continue to address issues related to Health and Life Insurance issues and to advocate for all retirees, and it will also continue to work closely with the UN Health and Life Insurance Section to help resolve any difficult problems or issues that retirees are facing.
I take this opportunity to thank the UN Insurance Section representatives, Mr. Genc Osmani, Ms. Elma Witherspoon, Ms. Julie Borre and their staff who continue to provide excellent service to all participants and address the concerns raised by us in a pro-active manner.

I hope this information is useful. We will be pleased to answer any questions.