

## **MEETING AND ACTIVITIES OF THE COUNCIL OF UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA EMERITI ASSOCIATIONS (CUCEA)**

*(October 1, 1998)*

CUCEA held its first semi-annual meeting of the 1998-99 academic year on October 29, 1998 in the Alumni House on the UCSF campus. Representatives and/or alternates from all campuses were present as was the Chair of CUCRA, Adrian Harris. Judy Boyette, Associate Vice President-Human Resources and Benefits, and Michele French, Director, Health & Welfare Planning & Analysis, were also present as invited guests. Dorothy F. Bainton, Vice Chancellor, Academic Affairs, UCSF, welcomed attendees to the UCSF campus.

This report reviews some of the most important items on that meeting's agenda as well as subsequent activities and events in regard to them. Health care for retirees was at the top of the agenda. UCOP has determined that competitive bids for the majority of its medical plans could offer significant benefits in meeting goals for the program and address issues raised by plan members. All current health plans except for the Kaiser plans and Western Health Advantage are being put to competitive bids.

The bids will address issues of particular concern to plan members and UC administration. The following are among these issues: full participation of UC Medical Centers- more flexible access to certain types of specialty care by HMOs; specific lists of formularies, website posting of lists, and limitation on changes; detailed information on access to mental health care and levels of such care; services to improve member satisfaction and health status; etc.

A plan similar to the Prudential High Option Supplement to the Medicare Plan will be continued. Among the 20,000 retirees who are Medicare eligible over 8,500 subscribe to Pru-Hi. These premiums are expected to increase up to 10 percent a year, so a survey is being conducted of all subscribers to determine whether they would be willing to pay these premiums as they rise. If not, they are given the opportunity in this survey to indicate some benefits which they would be willing to modify to hold down premiums while retaining the essential nature of the plan.

The bids from various vendors arrived by the end of November and have been undergoing analysis ever since. The final selection of vendor(s) for each of three RFPs (requests for proposal) is scheduled for May, 1999. Open enrollment will be in November and the plans will be effective January 1, 2000.

An important health care initiative has resulted from efforts of CUCEA. A proposal to establish "patient advocates" on UC campuses had been drafted by several CUCEA members and submitted to a potential donor. At its Spring meeting last year Council members were informed that the proposal had been turned down. The CUCEA Chair reported to the University Committee on Faculty Welfare (UCFW) the Council's inability to obtain outside funding for patient assistance while the need for such help continues and is essential. During that UCFW meeting Judy Boyette suggested that money might be available

to select and train two persons to assist and counsel patients encountering problems with vendors or providers. UCFW supported the idea and subsequently the Academic Council approved it. In October, 1998 the proposal was approved in the Office of the President. Salary funding was provided to select and train two persons to serve as "Health Care Facilitators." Initially the program will be on the UCB and UCI campuses and Facilitators should begin work by mid-year. The services provided on those campuses will be carefully evaluated. If these Facilitators are found to provide useful services an effort will be made to extend the program to other campuses.

A similar program, the Health Rights Hotline, is now operating in Sacramento. It is funded with \$4 million over four years by three private foundations to help individual consumers in four counties (Yolo, Sacramento, El Dorado, and Placer) resolve problems encountered in the delivery of health care services. About 1.7 million people live in the four county area, of whom 1.5 million have health care coverage. Seven HRH counselors are now serving those people when they encounter problems with their health care programs. These counselors went through nine weeks of rigorous training to prepare them for their job.

In its first year the Hotline assisted over 2,400 individual health care consumers. Of the people with health care coverage thirteen percent have Medicare coverage, but twenty-six percent of the HRH clients were Medicare patients. Fifty-five percent of the cases took from thirty minutes to five hours; thirty-eight percent took less than thirty minutes, seven percent took more than five hours. However, fifty-two percent of the hours spent on cases were devoted to those taking more than five hours; forty-two percent of the hours spent on cases went to those taking between thirty minutes and five hours,- only six percent of the hours spent on cases went to those taking less than thirty minutes.

Problem issues were categorized as follows: denial of care, sixteen percent; customer service, thirteen percent; inappropriate care, thirteen percent; payment disputes, twelve percent; access to coverage, eleven percent; delays, nine percent; and other, twenty-six percent. These statistics suggest the kinds of cases and how time may have to be allocated to resolve them when Health Care Facilitators begin serving UC patients.

The staff in the Office of the President working on the Health Care Facilitator program are in touch with HRH and are reviewing the report of their findings in their first year of work. They are also exploring HRH's 9-week training course and their data base. Emeriti/ae interested in learning more about HRH may call their toll-free number: 888-345-4474. Those living in the four counties served might use the Hotline services until a Facilitator is located on the UC Davis campus. In addition, there is a statewide bill (AB 138) sponsored by Assemblyman Marlin Gallegos that would provide assistance to consumers concerning their health care, possibly modeled after the Health Rights Hotline.

At its October meeting CUCEA was informed that UCOP, in response to a request from CUCEA, will send monthly reports of retirees deaths to CUCEA Campus Representatives. These persons will be asked to pass them on to the appropriate office or person on their campus. The complete lists will also be sent to the Chair, Secretary, and Archivist of CUCEA.

CUCEA continues to press for an amendment of Academic Senate Bylaw 55. Regental Standing Order 1051 (a) states: "Membership in the Senate shall not lapse by virtue of transference to emeritus status." Also, Bylaw 45.D states: "Academic Senate members who have retired and transferred to emeritus/a status retain departmental membership." SBL 55 formerly stated, "all the departmental members of the Academic Senate must be afforded an opportunity to make their opinions known to the voters before a vote is taken. Emeriti complained that they were not being notified of pending personnel actions and were being denied access to relevant files, so they could not form or express opinions. The University Committee on Rules and Jurisdiction (UCRJ) rejected their complaint, ruling that the right to make their opinions known did not imply any right to notification of pending decisions or access to materials necessary to form an opinion and that reference to "all members of the Academic Senate" in SBL 55.B was not meant to include emeritae/i members. UCRJ submitted an amendment to that effect which was approved by the Assembly of the Academic Senate in May, 1994.

As a result present Bylaw 55 creates an anomaly. Emeriti/ae may serve on and express their opinions in the University Committee on Academic Personnel (UCAP) and in academic personnel committees in divisions, schools, and colleges. They also serve on and express their opinions in ad hoc committees which review departmental personnel recommendations. The CUCEA proposed amendment provides that emeriti/ae, as Academic Senate members, should have the same right as other Academic Senate members to have notice of meetings, the right of access to materials relevant to those meetings, the privilege of the floor at those meetings, and the right to make their opinions known to the voting members. This right would include personnel actions. This amendment would not change the existing requirement in SBL 55 that a two-thirds vote of active Academic Senate members is required to extend to emeriti/ae the right to vote on personnel matters and a majority vote of these members to extend to emeritae/i the right to vote on non-personnel matters.

This amendment was approved by the University Committee on Faculty Welfare on December 4, 1998 by a vote of eight in favor, two opposed, and one abstention. On January 29, 1999 the Academic Council adopted the proposed change by a vote of seven in favor, five opposed, and three abstentions. Revision of SBL 55 will require a two-thirds vote by the Assembly of the Academic Senate to be approved. Because of the closely divided vote at the Council and the concern of the UCFW Chair that the amendment be approved, his motion to reconsider was approved as was his motion to table the measure. The UCFW Chair will return the amendment to the next UCFW to seek a compromise or middle ground that would increase the likelihood of its adoption by the Council and Academic Assembly.

Fred Spiess, UCSD, was elected to serve as Chair Elect of CUCEA. Soon after his election he was appointed to a job which would consume much of his time during the next three years, so he resigned. Marjorie Caserio, UCSD, was then nominated for the position, and CUCEA members elected her as Chair Elect.

The Spring meeting of CUCEA will be held at UCSB on April 29, 1999.