



## **NEWS RELEASE**

**For immediate release**

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### **Seeking best health coverage at best price, Beaufort to review health care coverage options**

With the goal of bringing employees the best health insurance at the best price by local doctors and dentists, and with an emphasis on preventative care and good customer service, Beaufort City officials are giving their health care plan a major check-up.

The review, which starts this month, comes after 21 months of claims experience under the current health insurance provider, SCLGAG/MedCost.

“We hope this open process of review will help everyone gain a better understanding of health care and the health care dilemma we face, including the municipality’s perspective in managing the health care program and the employees’ viewpoint in trying to afford coverage for their families,” said Dr. Kimberly Foxworth, director of human resources for the City of Beaufort.

The City administration engaged an independent health and benefits consulting firm to guide the health insurance review. Kelly Benefits Group, Inc. works with companies to evaluate health care delivery systems and assists with selecting appropriate health care organizations to deliver employee benefits.

“The key objective of this process is for all of us, as employees of the City, to participate in the review of qualified organizations in the marketplace that can provide the same or better level of service including competitive premiums,” said Scott Dadson, Beaufort city manager.

“We are trying to take care of our most important asset, our people here who work for the City of Beaufort,” he said. “Health care is an important benefit, but it’s also a major cost with

complex formulas. We want to be sure we provide the best health care plan to our employees, with participation by our local doctors and dentists. That's the goal of this process.”

The health care check-up is scheduled to start Sept. 21-23 with meetings to review the current health plan and other providers, and discussion about the larger issue of national health care. Meetings will include City department heads, City Council members, employees and spouses, as well as the handful of retirees on the City's health and dental plan.

A Request for Proposals for health care coverage could go out as early as December, with the goal of bringing a recommendation for health care coverage to the Beaufort City Council in February, Foxworth said.

**Elements of the health care insurance plan review include:**

Step I – Review of the current health care plan

- A review of the City's current plan design, enrollment, claims experience, utilization experience and current contribution strategy and benchmark against national survey data
- Discuss benchmark data on the risks within the covered population based on the compiled results from the City's wellness screenings
- Discuss information on the overall health trends as well as the impact the national health reform will have on employers.

Step II – Kelly Benefits Group will gather information from the initial meetings and:

- Agree on vendors which may include Blue Cross/Blue Shield of SC, Blue Choice, TCC of SC, United Health Care and Cigna, and will be based on local physician participation
- Draft and finalize a project plan for the City of Beaufort after input from initial meetings with City Manager, department heads, employees/spouses and retirees on the plan
- Prepare and distribute Requests for Proposals for health care coverage.

Step III – Report findings

- Summarize a written report to the City of Beaufort including recommendations
- Meet with City Manager, department heads, City Council, all employees and retirees on the plan to discuss the Request for Proposal information

Step IV-- Decision-making

- Decide how Beaufort will proceed with health plan coverage based on the cumulative information received from this process.

**END**