From:	Office of the President
Subject:	Biometrics Exception to Health Risk Assessment
Date:	Tuesday, September 13, 2011 1:05:06 PM
Attachments:	Biometric Exception Form for 2011 Physican Statement FINAL.DOCX
Importance:	High

Dear Members of the Campus Community:

In recent days, several of you have asked about the opportunity to participate in the Wellness Incentive Program by providing a signed letter from your personal physician stating that 1) you had completed the biometric testing and 2) that you had been informed of the results and any recommendations.

Because providing a letter from your personal physician substantially accomplishes the goals of the Biometrics portion of the Health Risk Assessment (HRA), and in response to concerns some have expressed over privacy, I have consulted with members of the Health Care Plans Review Committee, Administrative Council and others and decided to approve this exception for this year.

Should you choose this alternative, please ask your physician for a letter that includes some version of this statement:

I have tested this patient for the following biometrics: Blood Screenings for Cholesterol panel (Total Cholesterol, HDL, LDL, Triglycerides) and fasting blood sugar; Body Mass Index (BMI); and blood pressure and heart rate. I have reviewed the results of these tests with this patient and recommended appropriate actions.

The letter should be signed, dated, and include your date of birth or M-Number. Please ask the physician's office to mail it to: Ms. Sheila Bowen Jones, Wellness Coordinator, Taylor Health and Wellness Center, 901 S. National, Springfield, MO 65897; fax it to (417) 836-4133; or you may hand-deliver the letter yourself.

Provided this letter is submitted by the 5 p.m., Friday, October 7, deadline, it will allow you to be exempt on the biometric portion of the wellness incentive and be eligible for the $20-per-month waiver on your health insurance premiums for 2012.

To receive the additional $10 per month waiver benefit for tobacco cessation, you should complete the online HRA tobacco statement by the November 11 deadline. When completing the HRA, those who have submitted a letter from their physician will simply skip the biometrics portion.

Let me use this opportunity to reiterate some important points about our health insurance plan.

Missouri State University is self-insured – since this is the case, the health insurance premiums we pay are related to our claims experience as a group. It is in our own self-interest to keep the claims as low as possible.

We want health insurance rates to remain as low as possible – we have worked very hard to keep the health insurance premiums for faculty and staff as low as possible. In the past 18

months, we have encouraged generic prescriptions and filling prescriptions through Taylor Health and Wellness Center, and we have renegotiated rates with St. John's, all in an effort to keep rates as low as possible. If and when the costs of our self-insured plan increase, we have five options: 1) ask the employees to begin paying more of the premiums; 2) modify the plan design to increase employee's share of the costs; 3) reduce the scope of the plan; 4) moderate claims through a comprehensive Wellness Program; and/or 5) increase the University subsidy of the program, which reduces the funding we have for other priorities, such as salary increases. Again, it is in our collective best interests to keep health care costs as low as possible.

Taylor Health and Wellness Center is a tremendous asset – this Center is a medical facility that gives Missouri State a competitive advantage over many other institutions. It is run like any other medical facility with the same accreditation standards, the same ethical responsibilities and the same HIPAA requirements. I agree that we should expect the highest standards when it comes to confidentiality of records, and I believe those standards at Taylor Health and Wellness Center are as high as at any hospital, clinic or other licensed medical facility.

The Wellness Incentive Program is a good one – already, nearly 1,000 employees have had their biometrics taken at Taylor Health and many more are scheduled through the October 7 deadline. I am one of the thousand who completed the biometrics. It is quick, efficient, and professionally done. The medical community agrees that these biometrics are key indicators of medical issues, and we are convinced that it is a service to our employees and to the institution to offer this service. As I have indicated before, this program makes sense for the health of our employees as well as the financial well-being of our self-insured plan. I am convinced the screenings will help many of us this year. Given this, I encourage you to complete the HRA screening so that you maximize its benefit for your long-term health.

Thank you for your participation in this program and for doing your part in helping keep our health insurance costs as low as possible.

Clif Smart
Interim President