Summary of Retiree Medical Plan Study Guiding Coalition Activity

By David Ganz

There was a one-hour conference call of the Retiree Medical Coalition on March 24. Participants received a summary of the 11 meetings scheduled around the State of Missouri intended to inform and gain feedback from attendees:

Attendance was less than anticipated, but overall, presenters felt the gatherings were valuable—would do it again even though some disappointment with attendance.

Scheduling of additional meetings can occur if warranted—one UMC academic department requested a presentation for the whole department (but they could have attended one of the Columbia meetings).

Recurring themes: There are currently two post-retirement programs in existence—one for pre 1990 retirees; and the current program for retirees after 1990. Pre 1990 retirees number about 1,000. That plan will probably be “grandfathered.”

Provider network plans would probably be expanded from which retirees would choose, but the network would be restricted rather than just throwing everyone into the open market.

There appears to be general satisfaction with the existing UM plan.

There appears to be sentiment in favor of having retirees’ share of premiums continue to be deducted from one’s pension payments.

Generally persons would rather cope with increased premiums rather than to see benefits markedly curtailed.

Most individuals would appreciate seeing the UM share of health benefit premiums remain consistent with that presently experienced.

Results of an email survey of approximately 2,500 currently employed individuals at least 60 years of age and with 10 years of UM service received about a 28% response rate (considered normal for e-mail surveys with no incentives). Responses were generally consistent with those of current retirees.

Interesting facts presented:

Of some 19,000 current UM employees (faculty and staff), about 4,000 are presently retirement eligible;


Retiree population demographics: in 48 of 50 states in the US and in 11 countries outside the US.

Next steps:

Survey results to be shared with consultants;
Focus groups will discuss—end of April and early May;
Consultants to formulate various solutions for various groups;
Recommended solutions to be solidified and then presented to the Board of Curators.