

Bybee, Cressinda

From:

Chronister, Ronald [ronald.chronister@bipc.com]

Sent:

Thursday, March 15, 2012 2:15 PM

To:

Bybee, Cressinda pbarron@wpahs.org

Cc: Subject:

Response to Public Comment from the Physician Leaders at West Penn Allegheny Health

System

Attachments:

Response to Comment from WPAHS Physicians,pdf.pdf

Ms. Bybee: I am attaching a response from UPE to the comment received by the Insurance Department from the physician leaders at West Penn Allegheny Health System. I am also copying the physician leaders with the response by email at the address in the email transmitting their comment letter to the Insurance Department

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0259

BEFORE THE INSURANCE DEPARTMENT OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA

Statement Regarding the Acquisition of Control of or Merger with Domestic Insurers:

Highmark Inc.; First Priority Life Insurance Company, Inc.;
Gateway Health Plan, Inc.; Highmark Casualty Insurance Company;
Highmark Senior Resources Inc.; HM Casualty Insurance Company;
HM Health Insurance Company, d/b/a Highmark Health Insurance Company;
HM Life Insurance Company; HMO of Northeastern Pennsylvania, Inc.,
d/b/a First Priority Health; Inter-County Health Plan, Inc.;
Inter-County Hospitalization Plan, Inc.; Keystone Health Plan West, Inc.;
United Concordia Companies, Inc.; United Concordia Dental Plans of Pennsylvania, Inc.;
United Concordia Life and Health Insurance Company

By UPE, a Pennsylvania nonprofit corporation

Response of UPE to Comment of the Physicians of West Penn Allegheny Health System Dated February 24, 2012

UPE is responding to the comment from the Physician Chairs of the West Penn Allegheny Health System ("WPAHS") received by the Pennsylvania Insurance Department March 6, 2012. The comment is numbered as Document 0211 on the Highmark/ West Penn Cumulative Log page of the Pennsylvania Insurance Department website.

The physician leaders of WPAHS have stated their resounding support for the proposed affiliation of Highmark Inc. ("Highmark") and WPAHS. The doctors are deeply concerned that without the affiliation, the financially struggling WPAHS may not be able to survive. Without a competing health system in the region, not only do patients lose choice as to which providers they can access, physicians lose the ability to choose where they will practice their profession. Without this continued choice, the WPAHS physician leaders fear that physicians in the region may choose to practice medicine elsewhere leaving patients without the care they need. Additionally, this comment letter notes that WPAHS is a nationally acclaimed health system boasting some of the highest quality ratings and best patient outcome statistics in the Commonwealth which is yet another reason why it is so crucial that WPAHS not be left to fail.

UPE strongly agrees with the comments of the physician leaders of WPAHS and believes that the proposed affiliation between Highmark and WPAHS is essential to

providing patients with the ability to choose their provider and physicians with the ability to choose where they work. UPE also finds the preservation of these highly valued and nationally acclaimed institutions to be critical for the people of Western Pennsylvania.

UPE would like to thank the physician leaders for their comments and support.

UPE

120 Fifth Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15222

DATE: March 15, 2012

cc:

Dr. Tony Farah

Dr. Thomas Campbell

Dr. Patrick Demeo

Dr. Robery Guthrie

Dr. Hae-Dong Jho

Dr. William Johnjulio

Dr. Paul Kiproff

Dr. Susan Manzi

Dr. George Magovern, Jr.

Dr. Allan Klapper

Dr. Jan Silverman

Dr. P. Van Nickell

Dr. James Valeriano

Dr. Jack Wilberger

Dr. Joseph Young