Welcome to The Choice Is Yours open enrollment podcast. I'm Wendy Harris, senior HR communications specialist. It's that time of year again folks, open enrollment season and the Division Of Human Resources is excited to bring to you our new podcast called The Choice Is Yours. As you know, open enrollment is your annual opportunity to make changes to your medical, dental, vision, life insurance, and flexible spending accounts. The purpose of this podcast is to give staff and faculty, information about the upcoming 2021/2022 plan year, so that you can make an informed decision about the benefits that are right for you and your family.

Open enrollment this year will be April 19th through May 7th. Now, that's three weeks, so please mark your calendars, because you don't want to miss this valuable opportunity. In the first episode of The Choice Is Yours, we will talk about the importance of open enrollment and the upcoming plan changes. We will also discuss the virtual benefits presentations being held this month and in May. And we're going to give you a preview of the virtual open enrollment benefits fair on April 20th and April 21st. So let's jump right in and get started by welcoming our first guest to The Choice Is Yours, Jack Heuer, vice president of the Division of Human Resources. Welcome to the program, Jack.

Thank you. It's good to be here.

Open enrollment season, as you know, is a very busy and important time at Penn. If you need to make changes to your benefits elections, you can. And this year faculty and staff have three weeks to do that, so it's a good amount of time. But even if you don't need to make changes, this period is still a valuable time for all of us. Why is open enrollment important for all faculty and staff, whether you need to make changes to your benefits elections or not?

Open enrollment is a good time each year to review your benefit choices. Just like you should have an annual health checkup, I think of this as a benefits checkup, where you make sure that the benefits selections you made in the past are still appropriate for you and your family. In addition to reviewing your medical, dental, vision and flexible spending accounts, it's a good time to review and/or update your beneficiaries for your life insurance.

This year, we have some exciting new features that we're making available to faculty and staff. Jack, what do you look forward to this open enrollment season?
We are always looking for new ways to reach our faculty and staff. This year, we are trying these podcasts and holding a virtual health fair. These are new ways to reach our faculty and staff, while many of us are still working remotely.

Wendy Harris:
Now during open enrollment, faculty and staff will receive a lot of important information and we want to make sure that we are getting the most out of the tools and resources that are available. Now, Jack, you have been through a few open enrollment seasons at Penn. So based on your experience, can you share a few do's and don'ts with faculty and staff to help us navigate open enrollment?

Jack Heuer:
I ask that faculty and staff, please read the materials and determine which plans are best for them. For example, we are adding an additional vision care plan. If you don't review the materials, you could miss that. Second, log into Workday, the screens will show the plans you are currently enrolled in and the rates. Finally, if you do make changes, make sure you save your confirmation statement, so you remember what you selected. Please don't wait till the last minute. Take action now, during the open enrollment time period.

Wendy Harris:
That's great advice, Jack. Thank you so much. Thank you Jack, for being on The Choice Is Yours and sharing your perspective.

Jack Heuer:
Wendy, thank you for this opportunity to communicate to our faculty and staff.

Wendy Harris:
What every faculty and staff member wants to know during open enrollment is this, what are the plan changes? We want to know if there are any new plan options, any new benefits added to specific health care plans? Are medical rates going to increase? There are a lot of questions that we have each open enrollment season. To discuss the upcoming 2021/2022 plan changes, I'd like to welcome to the show Tamika Graham, director of HR benefits operations. Welcome Tamika.

Tamika Graham:
Thank you Wendy, happy to be here.

Wendy Harris:
There are a good number of changes that we can expect in the new plan year and very good changes, mind you. I want to start by talking about a change to the Child Life MetLife insurance plan, because there is a call to action for faculty and staff who have enrolled in the dependent life insurance plan offered through MetLife. Remind us Tamika, of who the dependent life
insurance plan is available to and then tell us about this change in what those who are enrolled in this plan need to do.

Tamika Graham:
Right, so first this year, if you're enrolled in the Child Life, you will need to re-elect the coverage and list the names of your eligible dependents. If you do not go in and reelect the coverage this year, it will default to waive. As a reminder, dependent life is available to full-time faculty and staff, for your spouse and you're eligible children up to age 26.

Wendy Harris:
Due to some relaxed IRS regulations, flexible spending accounts are also experiencing some changes in the new plan year. Now, this is something that those of us who have a healthcare flexible spending account or a dependent care flexible spending account will want to pay close attention to. What changes can faculty and staff expect with the FSAs?

Tamika Graham:
Yes, recent legislation will allow colleagues enrolled in either the healthcare or dependent care, flexible spending account to roll over their entire unused balance from the current 2021 plan year to the upcoming 2022 plan year. Important things to remember, is the current plan year runs from July 1st 2020 to June 30th, 2021. And all claims must be incurred during that timeframe for both plans. This year dependent care spending account participants will not have a grace period to incur claims. The grace period is being replaced by the rollover. All claims must be incurred by June 30th, 2021, and submitted by September 30th, 2021. All rollover funds will be available in November.

Wendy Harris:
Okay, great. So these are some important dates that we really need to be mindful of. So thank you for sharing those. There is a new hearing aid benefit being added to all the healthcare plans with a slight variation in the benefit, depending upon which plan you have. Tell us about the hearing aid benefit.

Tamika Graham:
Sure, Wendy. We have added a hearing aid benefit for both children and adults to all of our plans. The benefit is up to $4,000 per participant every three years as medically necessary. For those participants enrolled in the Aetna high deductible plan, the deductible must be met first and then the participant pays 10%. For a part-time in ACA eligible participants, they pay 30% after their deductible has been met.

Wendy Harris:
Now, for those of us who wear glasses or contact lenses, this next change we're going to talk about is a welcome difference. Faculty and staff will have access to an additional vision plan
under the current VSP vision plan. So we know we have the Davis vision plan and we have the VSP vision plan. This new plan is called VSP choice plan. What will this new plan offer, Tamika?

Tamika Graham:
Yes, this is a great addition for our colleagues who wear glasses like myself. The new plan, as you mentioned, is called VSP choice and offers an enhanced reimbursement for contacts and glasses. There will be an additional cost for the enhanced plan, but all other rates remain the same.

Wendy Harris:
Lastly, we can't talk about plan changes without talking about medical rates. So for the new plan year, what can we expect regarding medical rates?

Tamika Graham:
Yeah, Wendy, we've been fortunate to keep rates flat for some time. This year, there will be a slight increase to the medical rates for the first time since 2017, but dental and vision rates will remain the same unless you're looking to enroll in the new vision plan that's being offered.

Wendy Harris:
Okay. So just a slight bump, nothing major. As you've said, we've enjoyed flat rates for the past three years, which was unprecedented. So a slight increase is not too bad. We should also note that all changes are effective, July 1st, 2021. If you need to make changes to your benefits coverage, you can do so 24 hours a day, seven days a week, in Workday, during the open enrollment period. Now, I know we all know how to access Workday, but just a quick reminder, just go to Workday.upenn.edu. Find the Workday at Penn log-in at the top of the screen and enter your pin key and password.

Wendy Harris:
Now, before we let you go Tamika, we should also mention a Workday at Penn upgrade that was made recently, because that upgrade has changed the look of the benefits screens. I understand that there's a tip sheet that faculty and staff can refer to, to learn how to navigate the new screens. Now, I'm going to go ahead and give the name of the tip sheet, it's called self-service, manage view and change your benefits 2021, that's self-service, manage view and change your benefits 2021. Now, I know that's a mouthful, so to access the tip sheet, all you need to do is go on the open enrollment website, scroll down to Workday at Penn upgrade section and click on the link. Do I have that correct Tamika?

Tamika Graham:
That is correct, Wendy.

Wendy Harris:
Okay, great. So again, self-service, manage view and change your benefits 2021 tip sheet, and you can access it at www.hr.upenn.edu/openenrollment. I want to thank you Tamika, for discussing the upcoming plan changes. All useful information, all valuable information that we're going to all need to navigate this open enrollment season. So thank you for joining us.

Tamika Graham:
Again, thank you for having me, Wendy.

Wendy Harris:
Now, I want to bring in two more members of the benefits team to talk about the virtual open enrollment benefits fair and the virtual benefits presentations, which are being held this month and one date in May. I'd like to introduce Katrina Terell, senior benefits specialist and Jennifer Salwach, benefits administrative assistant. Welcome to the program, ladies.

Jennifer:
Thank you for having me.

Katrina:
Thanks, Wendy.

Wendy Harris:
And so let's begin by talking about the virtual open enrollment benefits fair. This is something new this year. We're taking the benefits fair online, because we are all still navigating work and life during the pandemic. We want to be able to offer this information to faculty and staff. So the fair is being held for two days, April 20th and April 21st. So before we get to how the virtual fair will look and feel and how you can attend, Katrina, let's remind faculty and staff about the purpose of the fair. What is the overall purpose of the benefits fair?

Katrina:
The purpose of the benefits fair, is to educate everyone on the many benefits that are available here at the university. Although we are known for having great benefits, most employees are not aware of all that we offer. This is where the benefits fair comes in, we invite all staff and faculty to attend and discuss with our vendors, how to best take advantage of them. When we were on campus, many people for various reasons were unable to attend the event, this virtual fair is reachable by all.

Wendy Harris:
So Jennifer, what do faculty and staff have to do in order to attend the virtual fair? And what can they expect in terms of presentations and participating vendors and any other tools or resources that might be available?

Jennifer:
So to attend the fair, you just have to visit our website and follow the links to get there. It'll be super easy, we'll make sure if you're having any issues finding the link or find the correct website, that we'll be available to help you. However, even though that the fair is virtual this year, we still are doing door prizes. So in order to be entered in the drawing to win a door prize, you will need to register beforehand. And again, that will be something that we'll make very easily available to you, and you'll be able to find no problem. And what you can expect in terms of presentations and participating vendors, we're going to have the same vendors we've always had, so Aetna, MetLife, Penn Dental, all of those vendors are going to be there.

Jennifer:
And the way they will be presenting will either be a live presentation, so it will be either through Zoom or WebEx or some other platform, or they will be recorded presentations, where they're going to give you the information through a video. And then if you have any questions, comments, concerns, there will be an email that you can reach them by. And what I'm excited about is, that VSP will be there, so they will be able to explain this new benefit to you. And if you have any questions regarding that, you can ask them in that time and same with Virgin Pulse, which is our new platform for being in the know and same with them, there'll be available to answer any questions or concerns you can have. So this is honestly just the same type of fair, just virtual.

Wendy Harris:
So as I understand it, there's going to be a dedicated website that the benefits team has developed, that faculty and staff can access and all the information will be there. You'll be able to click on the links, as you've said, for the presentations, whether it's live or recorded, and you'll be able to read different information about each vendor.

Jennifer:
Exactly, exactly. We're going to try and make it as streamlined and simple as possible for everybody. We do know that this is a difficult and rough time for everyone, especially when it comes to learning about the benefits that they're going to be enrolling in. And the fact that nothing is in person, definitely makes it a little bit more stressful. So we really want to alleviate some of that stress and do this for you and make it so simple.

Wendy Harris:
Awesome. That's great. So to get to the virtual benefits fair website, we just want to let faculty and staff know you can access that website from the open enrollment website, just go to www.hr.upenn.edu/openenrollment. And there will be a section there that you can click on the link to take you to the website and all the information you need will be available there. So that's a great addition this year. Now, let's talk about the virtual benefits presentations, because that's also something that we had in person pre-pandemic and now we're taking that online as well. Those presentations are being held this month and one day in May. As a matter of fact, we've already held two presentations, one on April 7th, one on April 13th. The other dates for the presentations are April 19th, April 28th and May 4th. So a couple of things we
want to know Katrina, first of all, how can faculty and staff attend the presentations? And second, what content can they expect to be discussed?

Katrina:
Staff can follow the link found on our website to log in. The time will be used to discuss upcoming plan changes, new plans and/or requirements that might go along with it. And also, things to think about when deciding what is the best plan for their needs. We will also have a Q and A at the end of each session.

Wendy Harris:
Now, each of you have been through a few open enrollment seasons at Penn. So I'm curious to know, what are you looking forward to this open enrollment season?

Jennifer:
I guess, I am most looking forward to the fair. The fair has always been one of my favorite times. I mean, leading up to it can be a little bit stressful, but the day of, is really just awesome to see everybody come together and it's great that we're able to provide this to faculty and staff. So any issues or questions they're having, they can get answered on the spot. So, I mean, it's a little nerve wracking that this year is going to be completely different, but at the same time, I'm super excited for it to actually happen and still be able to provide this for the faculty and staff, I think that's what I'm most excited for, just to see this all come together.

Katrina:
I agree. I'm looking forward to that as well. And now that I think about it, the benefit session, normally when we're on campus, we may see anywhere between 10 to 50 people per session. Now that these are virtual and online, I'm hoping that these numbers go up exponentially and we can reach a lot more of our faculty and staff and let them know about all of the benefits that we have, what's changing and what they need to do to take advantage of them.

Wendy Harris:
Thank you, Katrina and Jennifer, for sharing details about the benefits fair and presentations, we look forward to both. It's all great information that faculty and staff will be able to use to navigate this open enrollment season. So thank you for joining The Choice Is Yours.

Katrina:
You're welcome.

Jennifer:
Thanks again for having us, Wendy.

Wendy Harris:
I would like to thank all of my guests today, Jack Heuer Tamika Graham, Katrina Terell and Jennifer Salwach for being on the very first episode of The Choice Is Yours. Make sure you listen to episode two, where we will answer faculty and staff questions about open enrollment and other health plan related topics. You can also visit the open enrollment website for other useful tools and resources. Go to www.hr.upenn.edu/openenrollment. And remember open enrollment is April 19th through May 7th. Thank you for listening to The Choice Is Yours. I'm Wendy Harris, have a great day.