

Faculty and Academic Personnel Committee (FAPC), Report to the Faculty, September 2006.

Thanks to the work of Marty Ligare, the Campus Benefits Advisory Group, and Human Resources, the FAPC was able to get benefits information earlier than usual this year. Thus, we are able to give the faculty an early look at what the benefits changes will be during the Open Enrollment period in October. (For those if you who are new to Bucknell, in October, faculty choose the benefit options they want for the next calendar year. You will be receiving more information about your benefits choices in the mail.)

The benefits information this year is somewhat better than expected. Healthcare costs for next year are expected to increase by an average of 10.5%, which is less than anticipated. The cost of the prescription drug plan will actually decline slightly, due to the fact that patents will be expiring on a number of major prescription drugs this coming year. With the decline in prescription costs, the average net increase in healthcare costs is 8.1%. At this time, it appears there will be no changes in plan design, copays and deductibles. There will, however, be increases in premiums to reflect higher costs. Moreover, the premiums on both Highmark plans will be increasing by about 15%, while the premiums for the Geisinger HMO plan will only increase by about 4%.

In other benefits news, Bucknell will be adding a new, voluntary vision plan for active members of the faculty and staff (paid for by subscribers). An initial review seems to indicate that the plan will be an excellent value. Employees may continue to use the Outlook discount card if they prefer. In addition, voluntary dental rates will not be changing.

Geoff Schneider  
Chair, FAPC