**Tobacco Surcharge delayed until 2011**

The State Insurance Committee approved a plan to implement a monthly $50 tobacco surcharge and incentive program to employees, spouses, or retirees who are enrolled in a state medical plan. This surcharge has been postponed by the State of Tennessee until January 1, 2011. On June 16, 2009, the General Assembly passed a new law (SB0205/HB0280), which delays the Tobacco Surcharge until 2011. The project is currently planned to pick up during the Annual Enrollment Period in 2010. Insured employees will be notified regarding the process at that time.

This delay will not effect those currently using the “quit aids.” Employees who are using the quit aids will be able to continue purchasing the products for a $5 co-pay until December 31, 2009. Employees who wish to continue the journey to a smoke free lifestyle, please work with your physicians and available quit aids to assist you during this process.

**Secova, Inc. to verify dependent eligibility**

The State of Tennessee Benefits Administration has contracted with Secova, Inc to perform the daunting task of verifying dependents eligibility for State insurance coverage. This includes all UT employees with family health or dental coverage. Letters were mailed from Secova beginning July 6, 2009 to explain the process and deadline to return documentation. The easiest form to prove dependent eligibility would be your 2008 **1040 tax** form that shows all dependents and spouse. If you have trouble finding or providing any of the required documentation, contact Secova, at 1-877-793-3589 for assistance. Secova will suggest other documents you can provide in lieu of the options listed on the paperwork you received.

All employees must respond to Secova by September 4, 2009. After the deadline, the contract with Secova will end and the Benefits Administration will receive a listing of all employees who did not respond. Any employee who fails to respond or verify dependents will have dependents dropped on a date that will be determined by the Benefits Administration. There are FAQ’s on page 4 of the newsletter to help with some of your questions.
The Sick Leave Bank increases membership with 74 new members.

During the open enrollment for the Sick Leave Bank, 74 employees donated 24 hours of their sick leave to become members of the bank. The new members increase the number of members to 713. All new applicant memberships were effective July 1. If you have not joined the bank, you are encouraged to join during the next open enrollment April – June 2010. For more information about the bank, visit the HR website: http://www.utmem.edu/hr/Benefits/sick.htm

It’s Lichterman Award Nomination time again!

Nominations for the twenty-third annual Thomas Connell Lichterman Outstanding Employee Award are now being accepted on-line at http://www.utmem.edu/lichterman_award. The deadline for submission of nominations is August 14, 2009.

The award was established by friends and family of the late Tommy Lichterman, a UT Medical Group Inc. employee. Tommy refused to be limited by health problems and reached beyond the scope of his job duties to achieve excellence. By placing a nomination, you can give recognition to someone who deserves special accolades for a job well done and whose efforts have made the university a better institution.

Employees eligible must be non-exempt, full-time employees of UTHSC and UT Medical Group Inc., as well as family medicine employees of St. Francis, Jackson and Tipton sites. Nominees must have completed three years of service. Self nominations, anonymous nominations and previous winners are not eligible.

Between July 1st and August 14th UTHSC People Search can be used to nominate UTHSC employees for the Lichterman Award. To submit a nomination, enter the name of the person that you wish to nominate in the search box on the main page of the UTHSC website. A return search will display all persons with the name that you entered. Click on the appropriate person’s name. The next screen will provide detailed information on your proposed nominee. Click at the bottom of this page to proceed on the nomination. Next you will be asked to enter your NetID and NetID password. Next you will press the "Submit Nomination" button. The next screen confirms your nomination.

Please call Linda Risby (901-448-8211) or the Office of Equity and Diversity (901-448-2112) for more information.
Welcome to our new hires and those promoted to full-time positions!

May
Colby Butzon
Jack Drake
Denise Fort
Leslie Gray
Yue Huang
Ellen Hubbard
Jill Nault
Joshua Waggoner

June
Kanwaljeet Anand
Netasha Bowers
Eddie Brunson
Emmanuel Chapp-Jumbo
Leslie Murphy
Alturi Vignathi
Yu Zhao

UPCOMING TRAINING/EVENTS FROM THE BENEFITS OFFICE

Workers Compensation: 7/30/09 2pm
FMLA/Sick Leave Bank Update Class: 8/6/09 10am
TIAA/CREF Representative one on one meetings: 8/4; 8/5 (by appointment only)

To register and for locations, visit: http://www.utmem.edu/hrtraining/

July
Swathi Ahuja
Jeffrey Allen
Shirley Brown
Sylvester Brown
Carolyn Clark
Sandra Cohen
Anthony Davis
Dwight Dishmon
Nabeel Farooqui
Joaquin Santolaya-Forgas
Frank Gaparata
Ravpreet Gill
Steven Goldberg
Salil Goorha
Shannon Guyot
Jon Ver Halen
Ashok Jayashankar
Salil Joshi
Ravi Kudumula
Christopher Ledbetter
Fang Lei
Michael Miles
Kolawole Oyelese
Xavier Packianathan
Thang Piang
Myra Rogers
Andreas Schwingshackl
Sridhar Shankar
Jacqueline Sharp
Rosilee Smart
James Stamps
Somchan Vuthipadadon
Kevin Wheatley
General Information

Q. Why has the state hired Secova to do this dependent eligibility verification project?
   A. Increased health insurance costs are a problem for employers and employees nationwide and the state group insurance program is no exception. Other states and private sector companies that have conducted verification projects have found that, either through a misunderstanding of or misrepresentation of eligibility requirements, their plans were paying insurance claims for ineligible people. By law, our plans can only cover eligible members. While most members are eligible, some dependents in the plans may no longer meet the eligibility rules. So, we need to check the eligibility of all dependents in the plans to make sure the plan is not paying claims for ineligible people. This will help us to keep our premiums affordable.

Q. Who is Secova?
   A. Secova is a privately held company headquartered in Newport Beach, California with additional offices in New Jersey and India. Secova is a highly respected benefits administration services provider specializing in dependent eligibility verification. They have more than 20 years’ experience and provide benefits administration and call center services to more than 60 employer groups.

Q. Who should I send my Verification Form and Required Documents to?
   A. Mail to: Secova Eastern Service Center Phone: 1-877-793-3589 (toll free)
      P.O. Box 7701 Fax: 1-866-621-2160 (toll free)
      Brick, NJ 08723-9906 URL: https://Verify.secova.com/TN

Q. Will my personal information be safe with Secova?
   A. Yes, when Secova receives your paper documents (do not send originals), they are scanned to an electronic image. This image will be stored on a secure system with password-protected access. After the verification is complete, Secova will destroy their copies.

Q. Will I receive confirmation once my verification is complete?
   A. Yes

Q. What happens if I do not return my Verification Form and required documentation before the deadline?
   A. If you do not return the Verification Form and required documents by September 4, 2009, your dependent will be terminated from your policy.

Q. What do I need to do if one or more of my enrolled dependents no longer meet one of the eligibility requirements?
   A. You must check the “No” box on the Verification Form and return it to Secova. Secova will remove your ineligible dependent from your policy.