

Anne Gray – Report on CUCRA meeting held at UCLA 21-22 March 2007

The meeting began on 21 March with a committee of the whole discussing communication, especially communication from the Office of the President to retirees. OP does not perform well in this area but does not see a large role for campuses, although retirees tend to look to their campuses for help. The group agreed that OP should use campus Retiree Centers to disseminate information. Retiree centers do not receive routinely all the information that is sent to Human Resources offices, although much of it, especially in health benefits, affects retirees as well as active employees. Retiree Centers reporting to academic offices instead of human resources are often out of the loop. In a conversation at the following day's meeting, OP representatives spontaneously suggested better communication with retiree centers. We may see improvement in this area.

On 22 March, OP representatives described a new education program specifically designed for retirees who are participants in the UC investment programs (403 (b) plans, etc.) Seminars will begin later this year. Topics will include: basic information on the plans available; how to navigate the netbenefits website; income planning for longevity including MRDs; effect on benefits of a return to work; eldercare and health care; beneficiary designation. Information on the seminars will be provided through the emeriti and retiree associations and centers, the quarterly newsletter FOCUS and direct mailings. The presentations will also be available on the netbenefits web site.

Resumption of UCRP contributions from active employees may be deferred past 1 July 2007 if funds are not available in the State budget for the employer share of the contributions.

As reported after the last meeting, UC health benefits programs were put out to bid this year. RFPs went out on 5 February; proposals were received 19 March and are being reviewed. The University's strategic approach is to consider changes in the dynamic with vendors to improve quality and cost, to engage members in improving personal health practices through education, tools and incentives, explore specialty options such as carving out plans for prescription drugs and behavioural health, and reinforce the value of UC Medical Centers as key provider to our population. It is expected that the plans in Open Enrollment in November 2007 will include a Group HMO (Kaiser), High and Low Network HMOs, POP and/or PPO and Core program.

UCOP is testing a fitness/wellness program at LA, Berkeley and OP. CUCRA emphasized the importance of avoiding duplication with plans already on offer. Everyone is encouraged to take the Health Risk Assessment offered by the health plans.

Item of interest: UCLA has just signed an agreement with a private company to build a continuing care facility near UCLA. This is intended primarily for UCLA retirees but other UC retirees would be eligible.