Ware finds savings - Where? with Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Moving retirees to Medex saves town tax dollars

BOSTON – March 16, 2017 – "Positive, positive, positive," that's how Amy Przypek, Assistant Accountant for the Town of Ware describes the experience of more effectively using Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts' Medex program for providing affordable health care coverage to employees and retirees. An initiative that saved both the individuals involved and the town money and earned Ware a 2017 Municipal Innovation Award. The award includes a $5,000 wellness grant.

"Because of the rising cost of health care, we were looking at double digit premium increases to maintain our current health care coverage," said Przypek. "Working with Blue Cross and our Insurance Advisory Committee, we learned that by changing our eligibility requirements, more of our retired employees could participate in Medex, reducing our claims and premium expense, while the employee would get the great benefits of Medicare with little or no increase in their premiums."

Town officials took great pains while transitioning eligible employees, many who had been on the town's health plan for years. They explained how the change would continue to provide strong coverage, at an affordable price, while answering any specific questions they may have had about their benefits.

"Blue Cross is proud to work with our cities and towns, like Ware, to come up with creative solutions to control their costs while ensuring employees and retirees continue to receive the health care coverage they need at an affordable premium," said Mark Meunier, Director of Government Programs at Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts. "As the plan of choice for 75% of the Commonwealth's municipal entities we understand the challenges our cities and towns face when it comes to meeting the needs of their employees."

The Municipal Innovation Award, presented annually by Blue Cross, recognizes cities and towns for developing new and creative health care plan design that improve employee health, prevent disease, and save the employer and its taxpayers money.

Ware plans to use the $5,000 wellness grant on programs that will improve the well-being of current town employees. "Ware continues to find ways to offer town workers quality programs that have a positive effect on health and wellbeing," said Senator Anne Gobi (D—Spencer). "This grant will provide additional resources to improve and enhance programs."

About Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts

Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts (www.bluecrossma.com) is a community-focused, tax-paying, not-for-profit health plan headquartered in Boston. We are the trusted health plan for more than 31,500 Massachusetts employers and are committed to working with others in a spirit of shared responsibility to make quality health care affordable. Consistent with our corporate promise to always put our 2.8 million members first, we are rated among the nation's best health plans for member satisfaction and quality. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and LinkedIn.