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Brackbill, Robert

From: Ronita Giles [gilesr@rmu.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, March 06, 2012 8:49 AM
To: Brackbill, Robert
Cc: Dell'Omo, Gregory
Subject: Re:Endorsement - WPAHS/Highmark
Attachments: Affiliation Agreement - WPAHS & Highmark.pdf

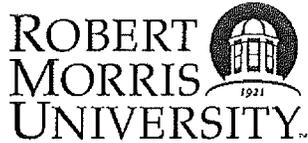
Mr. Brackbill,

Please find attached, a letter of endorsement by Dr. Gregory G. Dell'Omo, President, Robert Morris University to the Pennsylvania Insurance Department in support of Highmark's affiliation with West Penn Allegheny. A hard copy will follow via US mail.

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Roni Giles
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Robert Morris University
6001 University Boulevard
Moon Township, PA 15108
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March 5, 2012

Robert Brackbill
Chief, Company Licensing Division
Pennsylvania Insurance Department
1345 Strawberry Square
Harrisburg, PA 17120

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Dear Mr. Brackbill:

I am writing on behalf of Robert Morris University to express our strong support for the affiliation agreement between the West Penn Allegheny Health System (WPAHS) and Highmark, which currently provides health insurance for RMU's 584 employees. Like all employers, we are tremendously concerned by the cost of health care and want to ensure that consumers can continue to choose among competing providers, which lower costs for all.

The affiliation between Highmark and WPAHS will not only safeguard consumer choice but also ensure that physicians continue to have a choice as to where and how they practice medicine. Without these alternatives, we will see physicians potentially leave the region to practice elsewhere, exacerbating an existing shortage of general practice physicians in the Pittsburgh region. That will also serve to increase the costs of medical treatment in western Pennsylvania

The affiliation would protect thousands of jobs in the Pittsburgh region, something that is of great concern to RMU as a university that has always taken great pride in its contributions to the local workforce. RMU educates nurses, nuclear medicine technologists, health care administrators, actuaries, and other professionals who work in the health care industry, which is now the region's largest employer – not to mention the hundreds of business that provide good and services to WPAHS.

Therefore, the timely approval of the affiliation between the West Penn Allegheny Health System is critical not only for the survival of WPAHS and health care choice in western Pennsylvania, but also for the continued vitality of the Pittsburgh economy.

Sincerely,

Gregory G. Dell'Omo, Ph.D.
President

05