

There were a few questions sent to me by council this week on the Sigma Wellness program. Those questions and answers are in this supplemental memo. The presentation slides for this meeting, which are similar to the work session discussion, are attached as well.

Some additional information that will be covered in the presentation are the CIRSA (Colorado Intergovernmental Risk Sharing Agency) which is similar to the Minnesota LMCIT (League of Insurance Trust) pays for 50% of program costs, and has since 2020, because it reduces risk and saves money.

There are many local departments, as well as departments around the nation and federal agencies using the Sigma program to reduce risk, and help improve the health of their officers.

## **Q&A**

- Has this been reviewed by the Council's personnel committee?

This request has not been reviewed by the Council Personnel Committee. As this was not viewed as a permanent benefit change and we were under some time constraints for scheduling local testing, it was not presented to them.

- How does the testing provided by Sigma Tactical Wellness compare with the testing that would be covered by existing health insurance coverage?

Sigma's testing is packaged to test using three separate screenings that have all been validated as predictors of heart disease and used in the general medical community. These screenings are generally not all used together through health insurance as standard protocol. An individual would have to request these from their doctor, who may or may not be familiar with each of them and their combined use in predicting risk.

- If existing health insurance offerings do not cover the testing provided by Sigma, why is that? Does the city need better health insurance?

Existing health insurance does cover these as standard testing. As was explained in the presentation, police officers have a higher risk of heart disease than the general population and these tests can help detect this risk. As a percentage of the general population, the number of police officers is low. I would assume health insurers would not make decision on wide spread testing for a small part of the population. I am not aware of any health insurance plan offering this combination of testing and support.

- Can Sigma provide any evidence-based support for their testing protocols (in particular the "biomarkers" and imaging) that is more recent, peer-reviewed, and would demonstrate that what they're offering is the standard of care for similar populations?

Article from March 2024 JOEM

Liposomal-Associated Phospholipase A2 Is More Effective in Predicting Cardiac Risk in Law Enforcement Than Framingham Risk Score and Coronary Artery Calcium Score Calculation

Sheinberg, Jonathan MD, FACC; Rajaram, Pranav BS; Callaway, Joshua MS

#### Author Information

Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine 66(3):p 263-271, March 2024. | DOI:  
10.1097/JOM.0000000000003035

[https://journals.lww.com/joem/fulltext/2024/03000/liposomal\\_associated\\_phospholipase\\_a2\\_is\\_more.12.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/joem/fulltext/2024/03000/liposomal_associated_phospholipase_a2_is_more.12.aspx)

Sigma has seen risk reduction in their population served.

- Has Sigma been in business long enough to be able to show improved outcomes for people enrolled in their program?

According to information available on their website, Sigma had tested over 6500 individuals as of May 2022, and Sigma Tactical Wellness has documented a 28% reduction in body fat percentage in overweight individuals, and a 29% reduction in body fat percentage in obese individuals. According to Sigma Co-founder Dr. Sheinberg. "What we found is the incidence of what we call pre-clinical, before any symptoms are present, heart disease was present in over 50% of the officers we tested. Early blockages were detected in otherwise fit-appearing men and women as early as age 30."

I have requested more information as to their specific results from client agencies they work with.

- What happens after year 3? Is this budget allocation indefinite?

Review of results will be ongoing. If there is value associated with the program it would continue to be a requested budget item annually within the normal budget process.

- What kinds of cardiovascular health related coaching and support are available under current offerings? What is different about what Sigma offers?

I could not find any of this on my own searching the BCBS website. HR has reached out to our benefits provider. We may be able to provide more information from them. From my understanding, current offerings are through health insurance and based on members requests, it may be covered if related to treatment, but diagnostic services and coaching and support are generally not covered unless they follow US Preventive Services Task Force guidelines.

What is different is Sigma packages the testing and support in one offering that is compact in testing design (two appointments on site) and has consultations built in to the price, encouraging follow up without added expense.