FAST FACTS

- Conducted during February and March of 2016
- Eighteen focus group sessions comprised of employees who were largely selected at random (some proactively volunteered) and one session comprised of individuals from Human Resources
- 126 participants of 999 invitees (12.6% engagement)
- Sessions ranged in size from three to 12 participants
- Each session generally lasted between 60 and 70 minutes, with no session extending beyond 75 minutes
- All sessions got through all session components (survey, exercise, questions)
- Each session was conducted in Zilber Hall, Room 370 and was comprised of a diverse mix of employees
The health insurance plan received high marks with respect to the value it provides employees and their families.
Health insurance is the most valued component of total compensation.
Participants indicated interest in cost reduction measures by placing a sticker on the associated sheet. Each participant received 10 stickers to allocate.

- Wellness Incentives/Disincentives: 31%
- Contribution Increases: 8%
- Virtual Visits: 22%
- Spousal Surcharge/Carve-Out: 8%
- Dependent Eligibility Audit: 18%
- Deductible/Out-of-Pocket Increases: 4%
- Value Networks: 9%
The subsequent slides use “word clouds” to highlight keywords from the responses given to the questions asked. The bigger in size the word(s), the more often the word(s) was/were used.
While employees would certainly weigh the details if/when provided in order to make a definitive decision, more employees responded that they would prefer a job with lower pay but better benefits. In fact and not surprisingly, that’s why many individuals come to and stay at Marquette.
The three “C’s” came through again – choice/flexibility (of benefits, plans, providers), comprehensiveness/broadness and consistency/stability, but another “C” wasn’t far behind – cost. Out-of-pocket costs are becoming a concern, especially with the medical/pharmacy integration, and are giving employees pause when deciding whether or not to seek care. Simplicity, transparency and advocacy are also important.
While it was pretty mixed, more employees than not would rather pay more to keep the coverage they have than to face increased out-of-pocket exposure, for a number of reasons: contributions are taken pre-tax (and there is a high threshold of out-of-pocket expenses needed before you can claim the itemized deduction), expenses (at time of service) are more predictable, making employees less likely to deter care and easier to plan/budget, provides employees with more peace of mind, etc. Again, the underlying details would ultimately be weighed in order to make a definitive decision.
While some of the employees cited some of the cost reduction strategies/tactics from the interest activity (virtual visits, spousal surcharge, dependent eligibility audit), the two big takeaways were wellness and on-campus resources. Employees are definitely on board the wellness train and are looking for more – more programming, more resources, more incentives, etc. They also value, desire increased awareness of and would like to see more on-campus resources, such as on-site flu shots, screenings, wellness and (nurse practitioner/doctor/alternative medicine) clinics.
While incentives was certainly a popular theme, there were two things that consistently stuck out: flexibility with respect to work schedules, work/life balance and manager support, and classes with respect to cost and time barriers, and both of those are inter-related. Work schedules (workloads) and work/life balance also played into a desire for expanded mental health resources/initiatives. Wellness communication/promotion and all different forms of discounted gym memberships were also important.
There was a lot of variety here: incentives, cultural support, ergonomics, gym membership discounts, healthier food options and classes, challenges and devices (FitBits).
Most employees were very complimentary of the current benefits/wellness communication and so ideas really tended to be more far-reaching and diverse. Many employees commented on the format change of the News Briefs, and how it was much more difficult to find things (because only the first five or so items are highlighted/bulleted). Because of the variety of ideas, it’s clear that no one method will be effective; many forms of communication should be used (e-mail is obviously still the most popular form). Total compensation statements (or hidden paychecks) did come up in a number of sessions.