

WNCSource CEO Report

July 13, 2023

First Cohort of Early Childhood Education Apprentices

Blue Ridge Community College (BRCC) and WNCSource are partnering to provide paid apprenticeships for students going into early childhood education. Five apprentices are starting on WNCSource's payroll July 3rd. They will have an intensive summer of completing EDU 119 and orientation with WNCSource. All the apprentices in this cohort are recent high school graduates. We look forward to this being an important pipeline for teaching staff.





Brenda Blackburn, WNCSource Board member and Blue Ridge Community College Dean of Business and Service Careers, has worked with WNCSource Children's Services Staff and HR department to start this innovative program. On June 27th "Draft Day" was held at BRCC. Potential apprentices went through a series of interviews and group activities to show their readiness to participate in the program and become WNCSource employees. Five candidates were offered employment at WNCSource and all of them have accepted.

WNCSource Wellness Program

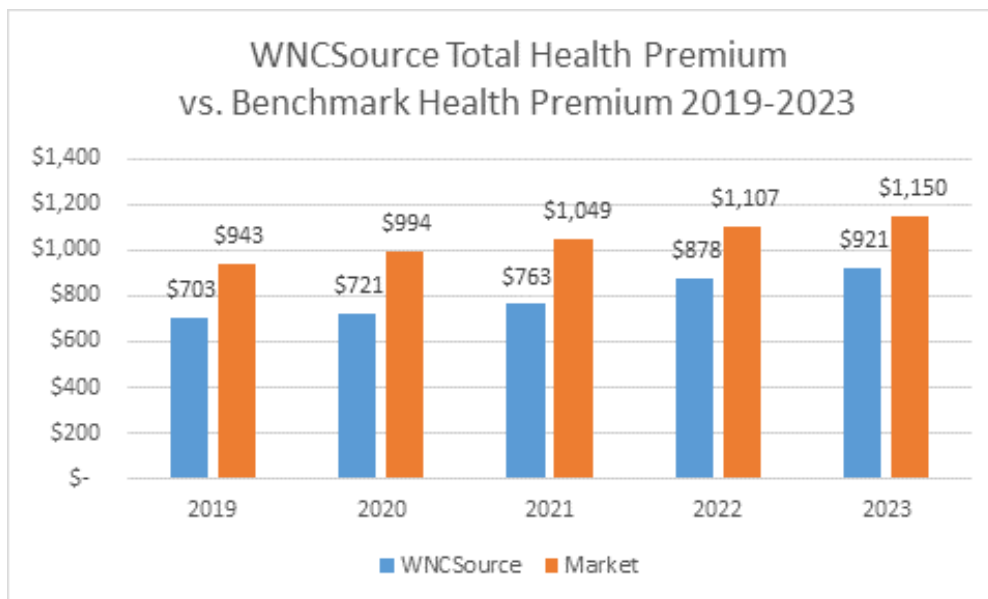
WNCSource became self-funded for medical insurance in 2003. Since that time we have worked closely with our third party administrators, and stop loss insurers to keep our medical insurance costs reasonable. In January 2021 WNCSource joined the Well Health Captive. This allows us to spread out our stop loss risks with approximately two hundred other organizations.

Another important strategy to contain health insurance expense is our wellness program. Around 2015 WNCSource had several good experience years with our self-funded plan. We looked at options for what to do with the surplus. The Board and staff decided the best idea was to invest in preventative measures to slow the growth of our medical insurance costs. Our partnership with UNC Pardee Health was an important step in this direction.

UNC Pardee provides a clinic for our employees that allows them to have sore throats, ear aches, and other minor ailments taken care of without a trip to their family doctor, or urgent care. UNC Pardee also supplies us with the My Pathways to Health phone app that allows us to track:

- Annual check ups
- Exercise
- Wellness education
- Pardee health screenings
- Weight loss contests
- Special events like local 5 K races, or volunteering for the Hunger Walk

By participating in the wellness program, and using My Pathways to Health app, employees accumulate points that can be used for Wellness PTO. We spend around \$38,000 on the wellness plan/ Pardee clinic annually. Total costs savings for last year were \$124,423.50. The graph below shows WNCSource monthly insurance costs per employee from 2019 – 2023. It also shows the average market rate for other employers. We are beating industry averages and much of the credit goes to the wellness program. Thank you Ibbey Whitten for the graph and other financial information.



Approximately sixty percent of agency employees actively participated in the latest round of the wellness program. The Mano-Y-Ola Teacher Retention Study also showed that the wellness program is very popular with WNCSource staff. Bobby Kimmons, and the rest of the Human Resources Department, put a lot of time and effort into the wellness program and the clinic. Their efforts are paying dividends.

Bargain Hendo Closed for Retaining Wall Repair

Bargain Hendo, WNCSource's thrift shop at the corner of 2nd Avenue and King Street in Hendersonville, suspended operations and lease payments on June 22nd. The owner of our building, and the property owner to the west, need to fix the retaining wall. In my judgement it is not worth the risk to WNCSource to have customers, employees, or volunteers on the property until the repairs are made.