



THE DIOCESE OF WEST TENNESSEE

The Right Reverend Don E. Johnson

Clergy, Wardens, Treasurers, and Parish Administrators

October 20, 2015

Re: Denominational Health Plan.

On October 15, Bishop and Council of the Diocese adopted a Denomination Health Plan Policy (DHP).

As many of you know the DHP process officially began in 2009 as an action of General Convention. Church Medical Trust (CMT) was directed to model a plan that would apply to all employees and clergy of The Episcopal Church. The plan the CMT developed is intended to insure that all Dioceses of The Episcopal Church provide affordable health insurance plans to the Church as a whole. DHP was not a response to the Affordable Care Act adopted by the United States Congress but is in compliance with ACA provisions.

The DHP was to go into effect on January 1, 2013 and did with the exception of a provision in the plan that would provide parity between the coverage provided to lay employees and clergy. In other words, whatever was provided to the clergy in any parish must be offered to any laity who qualified for that level of coverage. General Convention delayed the parity portion of the plan until January 1, 2016.

Therefore, each diocese must adopt a policy that fully implements the Denomination Health Plan, on or before January 1, 2016; thus the adoption of the DHP policy by Bishop and Council of the Diocese.

Attached is a copy of the DHP policy.

Most of our parishes are already providing the health insurance coverage to all lay employees and coverage required by the DHP. The only provision left for compliance will be the parity provision that takes effect on January 1. The new policy adopted by B&C "grandfathers" all current clergy Letters of Agreement so the parity provision will only apply to any parish that calls a new member of the clergy on or after January 1, 2016. Also, there must be parity among lay employees as well.

We in the Diocesan Office will be happy to advise parishes as they implement the DHP policy. A workshop will be held at Annual Convention on the Denominational Health Plan and we will schedule meetings as necessary to answer any questions that may arise.

May God continue to richly bless our ministry as The Episcopal Church in West Tennessee!

In Christ

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Don E. Johnson". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above the printed name.

The Rt. Rev. Don E. Johnson

Attachment