

Christian Church Healthcare Trust Concludes Last Open Enrollment Period

INDIANAPOLIS — At the Nov. 2018 Board meeting, the Christian Church Healthcare Benefit Trust (CCHCBT) Trustees voted to close the plan to new enrollees beginning Jan. 1, 2019. This recommendation was based on research from long-time healthcare consultants, LHD, and included a conversation with the Administrative Committee of the General Board at its October 2019 meeting. As a result, CCHCBT concluded its final open enrollment period on Dec. 31, 2018.

At the closure of the active employee healthcare plan in 2016, churchwide healthcare was almost \$2 million in debt. Pension Fund’s Board of Directors voted to use unrestricted funds from Ministerial Relief and Assistance (MRA) to pay off the debt, consistent with the intent of MRA and the Board’s agreement that it was unethical to pass the debt along to retirees in the form of higher premiums.

CCHCBT has not increased premiums for the supplemental plans for the last three years and the Trust remains solvent. However, without the active employee plan, new enrollments have declined dramatically. The Rev. Dr. Todd A. Adams stated, “Without the active plan and members wanting to maintain their current network of doctors and benefits, plan enrollments became almost non-existent, which eliminated the market demand for the trust to offer a Medicare supplemental program.”

Closing open enrollment of the Trust will preserve the plan for current members and help older members avoid the challenges of changing plans late in life. Rev. Teresa “Terri” Hord Owens reflected, “The entire Church is grateful for the stewardship of the Christian Church Healthcare Benefit Trust by Pension Fund over many years. Most importantly, Pension Fund has ensured that current members of the CCHCBT will continue to benefit from the Trust without disruption, providing them with a comforting assurance of care.”

“We wanted to make certain we could care for the long-time saints of the church who have been loyal to church-wide healthcare and do everything in our power to make certain that the longest living member of the current plan is cared for until their final breath,” added Adams.

The plan is expected to fully sunset by 2035. Additional information can be found at www.pensionfund.org/CCHCBT.

Pension Fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) provides pension and retirement savings accounts for clergy and lay employees of congregations, regions, general ministries and church-related colleges and seminaries of the Stone-Campbell (Restoration) Movement. Pension Fund manages over \$3 billion in net assets on behalf of those serving in the United States, Canada, Puerto Rico and related international ministries.