

## Clergy Health and Well-being Resources (continued from DS message)

For this Clergy Appreciation Month, I reached out to John Fuller, the Executive Director of Virginia United Methodist Pensions, Inc. (VUMPI), who along with his wonderful staff, care for the caretakers of our congregations and communities. I asked him to elucidate the resources our Conference offers in regard to the mental health of our clergy and their families, and he shared with me the remarkable resources that are available through the auspices of VUMPI. The primary resources that VUMPI makes available to our clergy and their families are the Employee Assistance Program (EAP) administered by Anthem and the programs offered by Health Advocate. The EAP services are available to all clergy and their families, whether they are enrolled in the Conference-sponsored health plans or not. The Health Advocate services are available to clergy and dependents who are enrolled in the Conference health plans.

The Anthem EAP provides four free and confidential face to face or virtual counseling visits per incident per year. These visits can be with therapists and psychologists. Virginia Conference clergy and family members can access these services at <https://www.anthemeap.com/>, and entering "VAUMC" as the company name. EAP personnel can also be accessed via telephone at 800-346-5484.

Crisis consultants are available via telephone 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The EAP also offers several enhanced services including legal assistance, with a free 30 minute consultation with an attorney, and free financial consultations.

Health Advocate is a vendor that VUMPI has engaged to provide a range of health-related services to our health plan members. Clergy and their family members who are enrolled in the Conference health plans can access these services at Health Advocate: Home, or by calling 866-799-2731. A login name and password must be created, after which members may access a wide range of services including mental wellness-related supports. Members can participate in online wellness-related workshops, such as learning healthy habits for managing stress. Clergy and their family members who are enrolled in either the PPO Core or PPO Buy-up health plan are able to access mental health care in a provider's office at no cost. The Conference-sponsored PPO plans have zero member cost sharing for these services, which is intended to remove any financial barrier that may otherwise discourage someone from seeking needed care. We are, however, not able to have the same cost structure in the Health Savings Account health plan, due to IRS regulations.

Links to more:

- Health Advocate Information <https://valleyridgeumc.org/docs/HealthWellnessResources1.pdf>
- Health Advocate Step by Step instructions <https://valleyridgeumc.org/docs/HealthWellnessResources2.pdf>
- Anthem Blue Cross Resources <https://valleyridgeumc.org/docs/HealthWellnessResources3.pdf>