
Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014

Page 1

Board Members Present: Bram Kleppner, Trinka Kerr, Christina Colombe (phone), Tim Ford, Clifton Long, Randy Cook, Larry Goetschius, Sheila Reed (phone), Shannon Wilson, Madeleine Mongan, Joan Lavoie, Julie Lineberger (phone), Sharon Henault (phone) and Dale Hackett.

Board Members Absent: Peter Espenshade, Donna Sutton Fay, Vaughn Collins, Kay Van Woert, Catherine Hamilton, Cathy Davis, Ellen Gurshun, Gladys Mooney, Paul Bakeman, Julie Tessler, Sharon Winn, Lisa Maynes, Harry Chen and Laura Pelosi.

Other Interested Parties Present: Nathaniel Waite, Ruth Greene, Betty Morse, Matthew McMahon, Kelly Barnier, Susan Gretkowski, Lucy Guerin (phone), Jai Persico, Lesha Rasco, Ann Slattery, Claudia Pringles and Kristen Bigelow-Talbot.

Staff Present: DVHA: Devon Ayers, Carrie Germaine, Dylan Frazer and Clark Eaton.

HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board (MEAB) June 9, 2014 Meeting Minutes
- 2014 VHC Rate Review Process (7/14/14)
- Health Insurance Rate Review: How the Public Can Participate (7/14/14)
- Vermont Health Connect Update (7/14/14)
- Vermont Prescription Monitoring System (VPMS) Update (7/14/14)

*all are posted to the VHC website

CONVENE

Bram Kleppner chaired the meeting.

Welcome and Introductions

Board Business

Following introductions, the meeting minutes for June 9, 2014 were reviewed and adopted.

Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) Rate Review Process – Al Gobeille

AL Gobeille, Chair of the Green Mountain Care Board, discussed the board's process for reviewing (in 2014) Vermont Health Connect's rate proposal for rates that go into effect on January 1, 2015. Because it's an open case right now, discussion was limited to the overall process itself and not actual specifics of the case. Vermont Health Connect (VHC) submitted the proposed rates (including rates from both Blue Cross Blue Shield VT and MVP) on June 2, 2014. Once submitted, the GMCB has 90 days to act on the proposal (approval, modification or denial). Over the first 60 days, there is actuarial analysis, after which opinions will be posted on August 2nd. This will be followed shortly by two days of rate case public hearings, scheduled for August 12th and 13th, 2014. The GMCB must rule on the case by September 2, 2014. The GMCB has the bulk of the review, but the Department of Financial Regulation will weigh in on the solvency of the insurers. The GMCB will focus on affordability, solvency and quality considerations. Al went on to describe the variables that need to be considered, including factors introduced by the Affordable Care Act. Larry Goetschius described how Home Care providers are highly dependent on Medicaid/Medicare rates and need to depend on donation campaigns to make ends meet. Dale

Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014

Page 2

Hackett also expressed concern that affordability issues might make many Vermonters elect to opt out of paying for insurance and pay the penalty amount instead. Again, the public will have the chance to weigh in on the rate proposals during the two days of public hearings scheduled for mid-August.

MEAB Co-Chair Position Vacancy – Board Members

Bram Kleppner led a discussion on filling the vacant MEAB co-chair position. The co-chair job description was distributed at the June meeting and the board was asked to consider potential candidates. Trinka Kerr nominated Donna Sutton Fay to fill the vacant MEAB co-chair position and described her strengths, varied experience and expertise that would make her an ideal candidate to fill the role. There was not a required voting quorum present at the meeting; therefore, voting on the co-chair position was postponed until the August meeting.

DVHA Topics/Discussion – Mark Larson

MEAB Budget Discussion Plan for August – DVHA has just completed closing out the SFY '14 budget and ended the year slightly “to the good”. As a result, DVHA is starting SFY '15 with no significant prior year issues that need to be addressed. The MEAB wants to be proactive for the development of the SFY '16 budget and DVHA wants the board's thoughts on important budget concerns early on to help with setting budget priorities. DVHA and other departments do their initial budget development in the August and September timeframe, so it would be best to get MEAB input in August on necessary budget attention items, unmet needs, and even cost savings areas. Mark asked that the board be thinking of these concerns for discussion as an agenda item at the August meeting. Randy Cook suggested that, going into the August meeting, Mark might provide a brief summary of last year's budget goals and priorities, and how we ended up. Also a brief summary of what is already being considered for the SFY '16 budget would be helpful.

Medicaid Shared Savings Program/ACO Update – The next major milestone is underway. Accountable Care Organizations (ACOs) are proceeding to send out beneficiary notifications of their providers' participation in the program. DVHA is working with the ACOs to ensure notifications are readable and understandable. The Health Care Advocate's office also has had input to the notifications.

Pregnant Women: Presumptive Eligibility (Hospitals) – Vermont will be submitting to CMS to allow for retroactive, presumptive eligibility for pregnant women in Vermont. All prenatal services and a full range of services would be covered.

MEAB Work Group Updates – Work Group Chairs

Small Employer Work Group – The Work Group has not met recently, but the group has forwarded a candidate to be considered as a new small business representative to serve on the board and fill a vacant board position.

Improving Access Work Group – Work Group Chair, Trinka Kerr reported that the group will not meet in July; the next meeting will be on August 4th at DVHA in Williston.

EPSDT Work Group – Work Group Chair, Nathaniel Waite, reported that the Early, Periodic, Screening, Diagnosis & Treatment (EPSDT) Work Group has updated its current issues matrix and will be meeting again over the summer. The meeting date is being selected.

New VHC Individuals and families Work Group – This new stakeholder Work Group will deal with issues that come up relating to the implementation and operation of VHC as it relates to individuals and families; it will work in parallel with the Small Employer Work Group, also

Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014

Page 3

linked to VHC. Donna Sutton Fay will chair the Work Group beginning in September; Trinka Kerr will convene the group in late July and start the process of identifying issues and outlining the scope of work.

Care Giver Reimbursement Work Group – A short term Work Group will also be convened to look at the issue of caregiver reimbursement in the state. Clark will connect with interested participants and convene an initial meeting later in the summer.

Public Participation in Rate Reviews – Trinka Terr

Trinka Kerr, Chief Health Care Advocate, provided a brief presentation on how the public can participate in Vermont's health insurance rate review process. Trinka first described how individuals can sign up online to receive notices of insurance filings (when new rate requests are introduced). Public rate hearings are also held for many filings, but not all. The schedule for public hearings on rate reviews can be viewed at <http://ratereview.vermont.gov/>. The GMCB also accepts written comments on all filings; these comments will be reviewed by the board when it makes its decision to approve, modify or deny a rate request. There are four ways to submit comments: 1) online, 2) by mail, 3) by phone, and 4) in person, if a public hearing is held. Trinka also discussed in detail how the public could comment on the current VHC proposed 2015 rates. Public hearings are scheduled for August 12 and 13, 2014, in Room 11 of the Vermont Statehouse. There are also avenues to apply for status as an "Interested Party" or as a "Friend of the Court". The GMCB will determine if these application statuses are met.

The presentation, with all detailed information, is available online with other MEAB meeting materials; it is also available on the Health Care Advocate (HCA) website at: <http://www.vtlawhelp.org/health>.

Vermont Health Connect Topics/Discussions – Lindsey Tucker, Carriers

Dashboard/Key Indicators Discussion – Lindsey Tucker, Deputy Commissioner, Vermont Health Connect (VHC), reviewed the most current version of the MEAB dashboard. Dashboard pages for the Call Center and Qualified Health Plan Enrollments were reviewed, showing month to month trends. Year to date information will be added. A dashboard page highlighting Medicaid Enrollment has also been developed. Board members made further suggestions on how to better present data. More feedback is still encouraged.

New Vendor (Optum) Update – Since early June, the IT company OPTUM has been assisting Vermont and VHC in four specific areas: 1) providing an operational assessment of our back-log and ways to improve/streamline operational efficiency, 2) assisting in reducing the specific back-log on change-of-circumstance requests, 3) assessing the effectiveness of our IT programs and systems, and 4) providing additional help around VHC project management and project management support. Lindsey reported on Optum's successful effort in ramping up and making calls to reduce the backlog on change of circumstance requests. Optum started with more than 2500 requests and will have completed this first stage of requests by June 14, 2014. More complicated requests will be worked throughout July and August. Lindsey stressed that work is continuing to help solve the functionality of the change of circumstance options in the system.

Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014

Page 4

Proposed Process Revision – VHC is proposing to make adjustments to the invoice due date for individuals and families. By moving the invoice due date from the last day of the month to the 25th of the month, there are positive benefits, which include: 1) reducing the number of customers receiving late payment notices, 2) allowing the carriers additional time to complete the dunning process before the next month's invoice, 3) reducing rework for both carriers and VHC staff for reinstatements, and 4) complying with the 21 day requirement between the invoice and due date.

Insurance Carriers --Rate Process/Proposals for 2015 Plans – The insurance carriers filed their proposed rates with the GMCB for the 2015 coverage year on June 2, 2014. Ruth Greene of BCBSVT described the efforts/actuarial process used to arrive at the most affordable VHC rates possible for 2015. BCBSVT requested a 9.8% average annual rate increase. Similarly, Susan Gretkowski of MVP Health Care described their process/factors considered when projecting new rates for the next year. MVP requested a 15.4% average annual increase. Courtney Morin of Northeast Dental described adjustments that are being proposed for their dental coverage plan. There is no proposed benefit change and no proposed cost increase for adults, who make up 87% of total enrollment. There is a change in out of pocket expenses for children and the single child rate would increase by 10.3%.

Current VHC information and activities can always be viewed at www.vermonthealthconnect.gov

Vermont Prescription Monitoring System (VPMS) – Meika DiPietro

Meika DiPietro, VPMS Program Manager at the Vermont Department of Health, provided a program overview of Vermont's VPMS. The VPMS is a free, web-based, clinical tool that Vermont licensed providers can use when prescribing Schedule II-IV controlled substances to their patients. Information from the database is available to pharmacists and prescribers to use in the active treatment of a patient; it is collected/updated from all Vermont licensed pharmacies at least every 7 days. Sharon Henault expressed concern that nursing homes are exempt from the monitoring system. There is room for abuse in these settings, and prescription monitoring should be reconsidered. Meika noted that quarterly reports are run on patients who have frequented a certain number of prescribers and/or pharmacies in a given quarter. Providers prescribing to that patient would be notified with a "threshold letter" with patient information. This is an opportunity for providers to verify if everything is in order and take key steps to ensure prescription activity is appropriate. Findings should be discussed with the patient and further help offered as necessary. Meika described the relative stability on the number of prescriptions by therapeutic class over the four year SFY periods 2010-13. The VPMS is part of state law; forty nine states have similar programs within the United States.

MEAB Discussion – Board Members

Bram Kleppner asked board members to consider and review potential agenda items (listed below) for the August 11 MEAB meeting. For future planning, the October MEAB monthly meeting in Winooski has been rescheduled from October 13th to October 20th.

Public Comment

Claudia Pringles addressed the board, indicating that autism services that need to be accessible through Medicaid are not available. There is recent guidance from CMS on autism services.

Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014

Page 5

Trinka Kerr suggested that someone from DVHA be scheduled to brief on autism at the next meeting.

Topics for Regular Update:

- Vermont Health Connect Topics/Discussion
- Commissioner Updates (Current Topics Discussion)
- Duals/VHIP/SIM Update/Discussion
- GC Waiver (as Necessary)
- Medicaid Shared Savings Program
- MEAB Work Group Meeting Reports
- Quarterly Advocate Report (Legal Aid)

Draft Topics for August 11 Meeting:

- Budget Advice from MEAB to DVHA/other Departments
- Autism Services Update
- Adult Measures Grant Update
- MEAB Co-Chair Election

Future Meeting Topics:

- Health Care Reform - single payer models
- Reinvestment in Community Based Services
- Affordability and reinvestment pertaining to provider rates
- Minimizing administrative complexity for businesses that offer insurance

Data Request(s) for Future Meeting:

Termination Data from Carriers

Total Medicaid Budget – what portion is entitlement/what is not?

Issue Tracker List:

- Inventory of Perverse Incentives
- Diapers
- Medicaid transportation
- Out-of-State travel
- Specialist or preferred providers
- Mental Health fee schedule changes
- Prior Authorization concerns
- Coordination of Benefits between Medicare and Medicaid

Ongoing Small Group Works

- EPSDT Work Group
- Improving Access Work Group
- Small Employer Work Group
- Individuals and Families Work Group
- Caregiver Reimbursement Work Group

Medicaid & Exchange Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
July 14, 2014

Page 6

Next Meeting
August 11, 2014
Time: 11:00AM – 3:00PM
Site: VSAC Bldg, Winooski, VT

Please visit the Advisory Board website for up-to-date information:
http://info.healthconnect.vermont.gov/advisory_board/meeting_materials

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