

**Medicaid Advisory Board  
Meeting Minutes  
May 26, 2011**

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**PRESENT**

**Board:** Christina Colombe (Member), Laura Pelosi (VCHA), Hilde Hyde (Member), Kay Van Woert (VFN), Danielle Hibbard (BSPCA), Wendy Davis (VDH), Nathaniel Waite (VDH), Sharon Henault (Member), Michael Sirotkin (COVE), Peter Taylor (VSDS), Sheila Reed (VVC), Dale Hackett (Member) and Corey Armstrong (DHMC).  
**Other Interested Parties:** Camille George (DAIL), Sonia Tagliento (MAXIMUS) and Spring Shover (HP).

**Staff:** Susan Besio (DVHA), Lori Collins (DVHA), Nancy Hogue (DVHA), Stacey Baker (DVHA), Peter McNichol (DVHA), Robert Larkin (DVHA) and Clark Eaton (DVHA).

**HANDOUTS**

- Agenda
- April 28, 2011 Meeting Minutes
- 2011 Legislative Session Summary (5/26/11)
- SFY 2012 Emergency Coverage Changes
- Changes to VHAP-Limited and VHAP-Managed Care Procedures (AHS Bulletin No:11-03)

**CONVENE**

Kay Van Woert chaired the meeting.

**Approval of Meeting Minutes**

The April 28, 2011 meeting minutes were submitted for approval and were approved unanimously.

**Enhanced Hospice and Palliative Care Update – Betsy Forrest**

Betsy Forrest, the Health Care Affordability Director with the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA), provided a brief update on palliative care and enhanced hospice developments.

The DVHA submitted a waiver request for the children's palliative care initiative in early March, 2011. Although the initiative still isn't formally approved, there is a conference call scheduled with CMS for June 8, 2011 to cover details of the plan and discuss any questions that have surfaced. DVHA is also working on a job description for a new Nurse Case Manager position for this potential program; funding for this position has already been approved in this year's state legislative budget bill.

Legislation has also been passed (under H.201) that will incorporate an expansion of hospice care for adults (dual eligibles) who would be allowed to receive combined coverage for both palliative and curative care. This effort is based on a pending grant application for July 1, 2012.

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**Commissioner's Update – Susan Besio**

The Commissioner of DVHA, Susan Besio, announced that she would be retiring from state government effective July 1, 2011. Her replacement has not been selected yet.

Susan provided a handout that listed a summary from the 2011 Vermont legislative session of all activities/tasks that will be assigned to DVHA. Many of the items are from the large budget bill (H.441); collectively, this year's final result for Medicaid is much better than expected considering the state was looking at a \$150-\$170 million deficit to overcome. All Medicaid programs remain intact with no real alterations/reductions. Also, no new providers ended up being taxed.

A short overview of the budget bill highlights followed: 1) current DVHA Director positions will be upgraded to Deputy Commissioner positions and a Deputy Commissioner position has been added to cover the new Health Benefit Exchange, 2) a 30-day children's premium grace period has been added under the SCHIP and Medicaid programs, 3) eligibility has been expanded to cover legal immigrant children and pregnant women who have not met federal five year residency waiting periods, and 4) a family planning option has been added (for up to 200% FPL) for participants who otherwise wouldn't be eligible for Medicaid.

Susan briefly discussed the roles of the new five person Green Mountain Care Board (GMCB) and the soon-to-be-expanded Advisory Board, which will include the MAB membership. The GMCB will set higher level health care policy, much in the same way the Vermont Public Service Board operates today in a different arena. The new Advisory Board will be briefed to the MAB in detail at the June meeting. DVHA will forward the link/legislative language establishing the new board prior to the next meeting.

Considering that this might be her last meeting, members of the board thanked Susan for her consistent, strong support of the Medicaid program and dedicated service to the State of Vermont.

**Legislative Rule Changes – Greg Needle**

Greg Needle, Program Administrator with the DVHA Policy Unit, covered one rule change bulletin and one policy change initiative that are being implemented in response to the recent state legislative session.

Emergency rule change bulletin 11-01 and 11-03 introduce changes to Medicaid and VPharm Rules as well as VHAP-Limited and VHAP-Managed Care Procedures. These changes are being implemented to DVHA pharmacy programs per Act 63 of the 2011-12 legislative session. These bulletins specifically address pharmacy coverage for Over-the-Counter (OTC) drugs and define a cost effective list of OTC drugs. DVHA will continue to work to ensure the program is safe, effective and medically appropriate. The Policy Unit is also taking steps to revise and streamline VHAP policy.

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Board members expressed a need to discuss, in general, the pharmacy access process in more depth at a later date, including a possible briefing on the role of the Drug Utilization Review (DUR) board.

**Modernization/Eligibility/Call Center – Richard Giddings**

Richard Giddings, on assignment in support of the Department for Children and Families (DCF), provided an update on Benefits Eligibility Processing and Customer Service within the Economic Services Division (ESD) for the most current weekly period ended 5/20/2011.

Timely processing of Health Care applications have improved dramatically throughout this calendar year and the backlog has essentially been eliminated. Of 39 improvement recommendations made within ESD last December, almost all have been successfully implemented. Corrective action plans have been very effective, including: 1) improved monitoring and monthly status reports, 2) planning for expanded business hours, 3) the creation of a single ombudsman office for the Agency of Human Services, and 4) the continuing commitment to have every district office open for walk-in service. Program applicants will have the option to either call in, apply on-line or actually go into the office to apply.

Richard also noted that the premium refund checks (previously briefed to the board in April) that are due to some beneficiaries will be cut/distributed on June 14, 2011.

**Medicaid Transportation – Bill Clark**

Bill Clark, Director of Provider/Member Relations at DVHA, provided a brief update on Medicaid Transportation, noting that there were no major changes since he briefed the board in late 2010 on the new draft manual for Medicaid Non-Emergency Medical Transportation (NEMT). DVHA is still working on systemic program improvements and on new contract development with the state's transportation brokers/providers. The transportation manual (provided to the MAB for review in late 2010) continues to be revised to reflect suggestions received from CMS to bring Vermont's program into full federal compliance.

Board members have noted some specific issues that have come up in dealing with regional transportation brokers. Bill noted that DVHA continues to take an education and outreach approach to clarify and communicate proper use of the Medicaid NEMT benefit. DVHA's staff continues to work regularly with regional transportation brokers, stressing a working communication model that promotes politeness, respect and professionalism, while still focusing on meeting appropriate transportation needs.

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**Board Discussion Items – MAB Membership**

The board cited key topic areas that will need some scheduled discussion in June or maybe over the summer. These topics include: 1) PCP continuity following a break in benefit, 2) EPSDT access issues, 3) more general discussion on Medicaid transportation issues, 4) changes in the pharmacy program and 5) general ðchurnö issues surrounding eligibility.

Members agreed to weigh in at the June meeting on the need to have additional formal MAB meetings over the summer and/or have specific work groups take on topic assignments over the summer.

**MAB Request Topics/Data**

- Update on Dual Eligible Study
- Update on Bridges Program
- Evaluation of Chronic Care Initiatives
- MMIS Update
- Information on PMPM net of premiums; Dr. Dynasaur and Pharmacy programs
- Blueprint Program & Data Update/Evaluation ó June Update
- ADA Compliance Process for AHS
- Policy Review ó Limitations on OT/PT for Chronic Conditions (seek legislative changes)
- Recruiting New Consumer Member for MAB
- Update on Medicaid Home Health Initiative
- Vermont's CHIP Participation; CHIPRA Update
- Evaluate 12 Month Continuous Eligibility for Children
- Vocational Rehab Topic ó DVHA report back in Aug. or Sept.
- Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Committee ó June Update
- Autism Bill Initiative ó June Update
- Loss of PCP/PCP continuity following break in benefit ó DVHA to report back
- Discussion of EPSDT access issues ó June workgroup/consumer meeting
- Data based discussion on ðchurnö
- Rx/DUR Board Interface
- DVHA needs to clarify to external client support organizations and advocates on who to contact/how to resolve Medicaid system glitches (e.g. with transportation, DME and supplies, eligibility/processing etc. beyond Health Care Ombudsman.

**Next Meeting**

**June 23, 2011**

**Time: 10:00AM – 12:00PM**

**Location: DVHA, Williston, VT**