
Medicaid Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2008

Page 1

PRESENT

Board: Christina Colombe (Member), Kristi Kistler (DHMC), Kay Van Woert (Vermont Family Network), Edna Fairbanks-Williams (Member), Larry Goetschius (VAHHA), Peter Taylor (VSDS), Garry Schaedel (VDH), Michael Sirotkin (COVE), Dale Hackett (Member), Sarah LittleFeather (Member), Sheila Reed (VVC), Jackie Majoros (VLA-LTCO), Lila Richardson (HCO), Julie Tessler (VCDMHS), Sharon Henault (Member) and Lisa Bushey (Member).

Other Interested Parties: Valerie Lewis (VMS), Michelle Scanlon (BSPCA), Anita Hoy (COVE), Brendan Hogan (DAIL), Cherie Bergeron (EDS), Jackie Levine (DCF), and Jen Fredette (Maximus).

Staff: Susan Besio (OVHA), Lori Collins (OVHA), Clark Eaton (OVHA), Robert Larkin (OVHA), Kim Harnois (OVHA), Lorraine Siciliano (OVHA) and Stacey Baker (OVHA).

HANDOUTS

- Agenda
- November 20, 2008 Meeting Minutes
- VT FY '09 Rescission Plan #2 Summary 12/15/08
- VT FY '09 Rescission Plan #2 Impact Narrative 12/15/08
- VT FY '09 Rescission Plan #2 Cover Letter 12/15/08

CONVENE

Kay Van Woert chaired the meeting.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The November 20, 2008 meeting minutes were submitted for approval. The minutes were approved unanimously by the board.

Director's Report – Susan Besio

Susan Besio, Director of the Office of Vermont Health Access (OVHA), introduced herself and provided a brief summary regarding future events and budget related topics. Based on the most current rescission plan #2 (12/15/08), Chiropractic coverage has been eliminated from the budget and current deficit trends are looking grimmer. Former Director Joshua Slen provided this trend data at the previous month's meeting. Data will continue to be provided as more information becomes available and more economic trends develop.

Beyond the 12/15/08 Rescission Plan, any reductions after Friday, December 19th, will be a part of the legislative process. OVHA has reduced 19 positions over the past 6 months. The money and positions are no longer available. Currently, OVHA has 3-5 vacant positions still included in its budget. Statewide budget decisions in January will be difficult, first concerning necessary budget adjustments for SFY '09 and then further reductions relating to the SFY '10 budget process due to reduced revenue projections.

Medicaid Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2008

Page 2

MAB members expressed a number of concerns. Dale Hackett stated that the elimination of chiropractic might increase costs and wondered if there had been any analysis of impact. Edna Fairbanks Williams felt that with the economic downturn, layoffs would lead to increases in the population relying on state programs like Medicaid and Catamount. Lila Richardson asked about the budget adjustment process and how information would be disseminated to the MAB. Peter Taylor asked about the impact of state hiring freezes on OVHA.

Michael Sirotkin recommended that there be state "maintenance of effort" if there is an increase in federal FMAP: i.e. that the state should invest any added federal Medicaid revenue into the Medicaid program to avoid budget cuts. Jackie Majoros seconded this motion. The Medicaid Advisory Board voted to note this recommendation in the minutes, and to ask Susan Besio to convey to the Administration the MAB's recommendation and to bring back a response to the MAB.

Department for Children and Families Budget Discussion – Steve Dale

Steve Dale, Commissioner of The Department for Children and Families (DCF), gave a brief synopsis of his department's budgetary concerns. The financial picture for FY 10 is very dismal; the first set of proposed cuts likely will happen. On the list for reductions will be the Substitute Care Budget, Child Care Subsidiary (reducing a projected increase), a reduction in support services related to Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), the Building Bright Futures program and a possible capping of the Child Care Program.

Department of Mental Health Budget Discussion – Michael Hartman

Michael Hartman, Commissioner of The Department of Mental Health (DMH) provided information regarding his department's list of proposed cuts. The department may see a 5-15% reduction of the overall budget. Efforts will be made to protect the State Hospital. The areas of impact will be spread broadly across the department. With the pending rescissions and further cuts likely in SFY 2010, DMH may be looking at a 3-5 year recovery period.

Better DMH budget numbers will be available later in January, 2009. Adjustments will be made during the upcoming state legislative session.

Department of Health Budget Discussion – Wendy Davis

Wendy Davis, Commissioner of The Vermont Department of Health (VDH), gave a brief introduction and outlined her background. Ms. Davis has been the department's Commissioner since July, 2008. VDH's budget reductions will also be spread broadly over the department's many programs. Reduction considerations include: 1) a delay on further Tele-Medicine development, 2) a reduction in Children's Mental Health Services in cooperation with DMH, 3) a cut in funding for Immunization Program for Adults,

**Medicaid Advisory Board
Meeting Minutes
December 18, 2008**

Page 3

specifically in the area of HPV vaccination, 4) a reduced Student Assistance Program, affecting some participating schools, 5) cuts to Outpatient Substance Abuse Treatment and 6) a modest reduction through the delay of Publication and IT contracts for the Blueprint for Health initiative.

The Board agreed that the best plan will be to follow up with all Commissioners once budgets are more solidified based on near-term economic developments and state legislative action.

MAB Request Topics

- DAIL Budget Update for January meeting
- Invite new AHS Secretary to attend future MAB meeting

Next Meeting

January 22, 2009

Time: 10:00AM – 12:00PM

Location: Capitol Plaza Hotel, Montpelier, VT