

Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Committee Meeting: 4/25/2022

Committee Members Present

✓	Jessa Barnard		Yacouba Jacob Bogre		Kelly Dougherty
✓	Lisa Draper	✓	Mike Fisher	✓	Devon Green
✓	Dale Hackett	✓	Rebecca Heintz	✓	Sharon Henault
✓	Zachary Hozid		Gladys Konstantin	✓	Joan Lavoie
✓	Erin Maguire	✓	Mary Kate Mohlman	✓	Kirsten Murphy
✓	Jamie Rainville		John Schultz	✓	Sarah Teel
✓	Julie Tessler	✓	Jason Williams		

Other Attendees Present

✓	Zachary Goss	✓	Andrea De La Bruere	✓	Adaline Strumolo
✓	Jennifer Rotblatt	✓	Sandi Hoffman	✓	Ashley Berliner
✓	Katie Smith	✓	Molly Sweeney	✓	Bard Hill
✓	Karen Price	✓	Betty Morse	✓	Stefani Hartsfield
✓	Susan Aranoff	✓	Marty Baker	✓	Brendan Beaudoin

Agenda

- **Supporting Documents: Posted to <https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/medicaid-and-exchange-advisory-committee/agendas-and-materials>**
 MEAC 4_25_22 Agenda.pdf
 MEAC PPT 4_25_22.pdf
- **Convene**
 Co-chairs Devon Green and Erin Maguire chaired the meeting and called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM.
- **Roll Call, Approval of Minutes, and Quorum; DVHA Commissioner and Committee Member Introductions**
 Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA), completed the roll call. During the roll call, Members voted to approve the March 2022 meeting minutes. There was no further discussion, and the March 2022 meeting minutes were approved.
- **Committee Membership: Chair Positions**
 Devon Green and Erin Maguire, Co-Chairs
 Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA)

At the last meeting, a question was raised regarding small business membership and if a business entity

could be appointed or if it was limited to an individual. Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA) consulted DVHA's legal team who confirmed that it would be limited to an individual.

Co-chair Devon Green stated that two committee members have expressed interest in becoming a co-chair and that it would work in the proposed staggered term structure – one is a past chair who would serve for one year and the other would be a new chair serving for two years. The current co-chairs emphasized that they would also be available to support the incoming chairs and opened it up for further discussion or interest of which there was none.

Devon Green moved to appoint Dale Hackett and Mary Kate Mohlman as the next co-chairs and Sharon Henault seconded. There was no discussion and the motion was approved unanimously.

Discussion ensued on recruitment and filling the vacancies on the committee. The new cycle begins on July 1 so now is an important time to make new g appointments and reappointments. The application is on the website and members were asked to share it.

Commissioner De La Bruere brought up the timing of the meeting and if it is a limiting factor for members. A Committee Member mentioned that not only the timing, but the length of the meeting can be limiting. Another member stated that shifting the meeting to overlap the lunch hour may be easier on some people. Discussion on meeting time will continue at a future meeting.

- **Global Commitment Update**

Ashley Berliner, Director of Medicaid Policy (DVHA)

Ashley Berliner, Director of Medicaid Policy (DVHA) reminded members that an annual report to the committee is a requirement. The 1115 Waiver is in active negotiation and specifics cannot be disclosed; however, it is on track to be finalized and will go into effect July 1, 2022 for a 5.5 year period, ending December 31, 2027. Ashley committed to providing an update to the committee in July to go over the changes in the renewal.

Kirsten Murphy provided public comment on behalf of the Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council, and Karen Price, a public attendee, provided comment on behalf of Vermont Family Network, an organization of parent of adults who have developmental disabilities. She expressed concerns about availability for long-term stable housing and services for adults with developmental disabilities. Discussion ensued with a couple committee members sharing their professional and personal experience with this need.

The committee requested an update on the 1115 Waiver negotiation prior to July, if possible.

- **PHE Unwind Communication Plan and Committee Feedback**

Addie Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner (DVHA)

Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA)

Addie Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner (DVHA) stated that the Public Health Emergency (PHE) has been in place since March 2020 which put into place Extended Medicaid Coverage Periods and Non-Termination of Medicaid. The PHE was recently extended through July 2022. DVHA is preparing for when it isn't extended and planning the PHE Unwind. During the unwind period, which is expected to take around a year, Medicaid renewals will be put back into place monthly.

Zack Goss, Health Care Training and Communication Manager (DVHA), explained that eligibility notices are being revised to ensure that the information is communicated in plain language and clearly explains the appeals process which is also known as the Medicaid fair hearing review process. The format of mailed notices and envelopes are being modified to clearly indicate that the information is important and time sensitive. He noted that a lot of attention has been paid to try to make the envelopes look official and not like scam mail while also being accessible.

Zack explained that intensive outreach will be conducted and strategies include phone calls, postcards, townhall events and social media posts. A new outreach method that will be employed this year is text messaging which will enable eligibility reminders and requests for information to be quickly communicated to members. Additionally, DVHA is placing additional emphasis on communication to stakeholders, the assister program and schools .

DVHA's communications goals are for customers to update contact info, open the mail when it arrives, contact DVHA/assisters, expand knowledge of options, and understand timing to ensure continuous coverage.

Discussion ensued over members who will lose coverage due to not completing paperwork or not meeting standards. How will they be supported and not have gaps in coverage? There's no way to know how many are at risk of falling into this scenario; however, those that DVHA are aware of will have active outreach to direct them to the marketplace and transition to them to a better fitting plan. Outreach will be extensive and there is also a grace period to be reinstated without a break in coverage for those who miss the deadline.

Question was raised on if programs supporting people with assistance for rent, utilities, etc. would affect Medicaid eligibility. DVHA staff will look into this.

Discussion on the political message that is out there of "don't let them take away your Medicaid" which is pushing a certain type of activism without providing accurate information and make consumers more fearful of the changes.

Zack presented two postcard design options for members to provide feedback on. He explained that the postcards will be sent quarterly to upcoming renewing members so someone renewing in February would not receive the postcard in August. Committee members made suggestions on the content and format to try

to increase the likelihood that it would be read and not thrown away. Zack noted that DVHA cannot disclose who is a Medicaid member which makes communications more vague sometimes. It was clarified that Medicaid can be specified on public outreach documents that aren't sent to individuals.

Question on if parent pay for parents who act as caregivers for children with disabilities would be continued or would end with the end of PHE. DVHA staff will look into this.

Zack presented social media graphics for feedback. It was suggested to emphasize in all messaging that "we are here to help" and how to access that support.

Brief discussion on the virtual town hall outreach plan. The idea is a series of virtual town hall events to promote information, discuss option, and identify how to get help. In the past the best attended town halls were co-hosted with community organizations. Zack asked members to consider:

With what key organizations should we pursue partnership?

What are the most important town hall topics?

Discussion will continue at May's meeting.

Please view Advisory Committee PPT 4_25_2022.pdf slides 5-16 for more details.

- **Commissioner's Office Update**
Andrea De La Bruere, Commissioner (DVHA)
None.
- **Public Comment**
No public comment.
- **Final Committee Discussion: Next Meeting is May 23, 2022 from 10AM – 12PM.**
Devon Green and Erin Maguire, Co-Chairs
- **Adjournment**
The meeting was adjourned at 12:01pm.

Additional about the Department's response to the COVID-19 public health emergency may be located here: <https://dvha.vermont.gov/covid-19>