



**Medicaid and Exchange Advisory Committee (MEAC)
Meeting Minutes for October 23, 2023**

Board Members Present:

✓	Neil Allen	✓	Jessa Barnard	✓	Kelly Dougherty
✓	Lisa Draper	✓	Mike Fisher	✓	Devon Green
✓	Dale Hackett	✓	Rebecca Heintz	✓	Sharon Henault
✓	Jessica Jacobs		Joan Lavoie	✓	Mary Kate Mohlman
	Kirsten Murphy	✓	Wendy Rogers		Laurel Sanborn
✓	Stacy Weinberger	✓	Jason Williams		

DVHA Staff Present:

✓	Zachary Goss	✓	Andrea De La Bruere	✓	Adaline Strumolo
	Sandi Hoffman	✓	Jennifer Rotblatt		Max Croneberger
✓	Sven Lindholm	✓	Dan Fay	✓	Stacy DeSisto
	Jennifer Mace	✓	Bethany Ledoux		

SOV/Other Attendees:

✓	Megan Tierney-Ward	✓	Betty Morse		Monica Ogelby
	Tom Perkins	✓	Emma Zavez	✓	Erika Wolffing
✓	Susan Aranoff		Marty Baker		Brendan Beaudoin
	Michael Miller		Rebecca Copans	✓	Scott Cerreta
✓	Vicki Jessup		Tim Walker		

Topic & Presenter	Discussion	Action
Meeting Materials	Posted to https://dvha.vermont.gov/advisory-boards/medicaid-and-exchange-advisory-committee/agendas-	

	and-materials MEAC_10.23.23_Agenda.pdf MEAC_PPT_10.23.23.pdf	
1. Call to Order Mary Kate Mohlman & Sharon Henault, Co-Chairs	Meeting was convened at 10:03 AM.	
2. Roll Call Establish Quorum Approve Minutes Zack Goss, Director of Customer Communication	Motion: Approve the September 25, 2023 meeting minutes as presented. Minutes approved. Jason Williams noted that this will be his last meeting as a committee member.	Minutes Approval motion: Lisa Draper Second: Devon Green Abstain: Rebecca Heintz, Stacy Weinberger Approved
3. FY25 Budget Letter Subcommittee Mary Kate Mohlman & Sharon Henault, Co-Chairs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mary Kate explained that the subcommittee met and created a draft letter which she presented. She explained that the goal was to keep the recommendations at a high level. The letter was discussed and suggestions made by members for revisions and clarifications. 	Budget Letter Subcommittee members: Sharon, Kirsten, Dale, Mike, Jessa, Neil, and Mary Kate
4. Medicaid Renewal Status Update Adaline Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> DVHA had set a target for Nov 1 for reinstatements; the notices have gone out and the work is nearly finished. Effective January 1, there is a continuous enrollment for kids which has been mandated federally. Review of renewal dashboards which are completed monthly. Discussion on mail delivery delays that have been affecting the state. Discussion on wait times for member services which can be high, but there are other mechanisms for members such as an option to leave a message for a call back or use the online portal. Feedback from committee members that members who are hearing impaired or mobility impaired may not reach the phone when they receive the call back and need to be able to call them back once they see the call had come in or receive a text to call instead. 	Medicaid and the End of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency webpage: https://dvha.vermont.gov/unwinding Medicaid Renewal Dashboard https://dvha.vermont.gov/unwinding/renewal-dashboard

<p>5. Open Enrollment</p> <p>Dan Fay, Interim Healthcare Eligibility & Enrollment Director Zack Goss, Director of Customer Communication</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dan Fay presented the 2024 open enrollment and renewal period timeline which begins mid-August and ends in January. • Zack explained that DVHA runs a communication piece at the same time as the behind-the-scenes items on the timeline Dan presented. • A town hall is taking place on the first day of open enrollment that is open to the public and online. • Zack presented the open enrollment communication plan which includes direct, partner, and indirect communications. 	
<p>6. Assister Program</p> <p>Stacy DeSisto, Administrative Services Manager</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacy explained that Assisters bridge the gap between Vermonters and the complex world of health insurance. Assisters can provide services ranging from consultative support to completing applications on behalf of Vermonters. • She noted that assisters come from a variety of backgrounds and they hold many roles in their communities. • Core principles for the assister program are health equity, accessibility, accountability/integrity. • In the past year, assisters supported 12,485 households, the highest service levels since the inception of the program in 2015. • Stacy stated that in the midst of open enrollment and the unwind, assisters play a critical role across the state. • A recruitment initiative is starting and the goals are to invigorate the roster, improve connections with leaders of pertinent organizations, and increase the number of non-clinical organizations on the roster. • Stacy asked members to provide thoughts and input on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Targeted outreach: what areas, organizations, or populations do you feel it would be meaningful to focus on? Why? ➤ Challenges faced: How can we help strained organizations make room for this critical service? Thoughts or strategies. • Grants are available annually and this year's grant was awarded to two organizations who split the 40K grant. • Concern brought up about not having interpreters available for 	<p>Any feedback or suggestions for the assister program can be sent to Stacy at Stacy.DeSisto@vermont.gov.</p>

	<p>those who are deaf as well as assisters struggling to communicate in plain language. Stacy noted that they have increased training to support assisters in being able to present the information in an accessible way.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stacy stated that she would like to go talk to organizations that are serving their communities and asked members to share any that come to mind or local organizations that are connected to their respective communities. • Discussion ensued. • Stacy shared that she would appreciate connections and introductions with people as well as being invited to present or table at events where potential partner organizations will be. 	
<p>7. MSP (Medicaid Savings Program) Eligibility</p> <p>Mike Fisher, Chief Health Care Advocate, Vermont Legal Aid Emma Zavez, Consumer Research & Health Policy Analyst, VT Legal Aid</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mike explained that the problem that many low-income Vermonters on Medicare can't afford the health care services they need. • He gave an overview of the Medicare costs in 2024. • Mike explained that a lot of effort has been put into service those under 65; however, access to affordable coverage drops for those over 65 and/or are disabled. • He noted that some states have eligibility expansions. • Vermont Legal Aid put forward two bills in legislature that were introduced last year – H.118/S.61. • It was noted by a MEAC member that two issues are that people can no longer earn an income and be eligible for Medicaid after age 65. • Goal is not to change the coverage, but that the state funds full coverage of those benefits. • Mike proposed a motion of support for increasing the eligibility threshold for the MSPs and asked that the committee have an opportunity to vote on it next month. 	
<p>8. Commissioner's Office Update</p> <p>Andrea De La Bruere, Commissioner</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In the next couple of weeks a comprehensive pain pilot program will launch with University of Vermont Medical Centers connected to pain management which will initially enroll a few hundred members. 	

<p>9. Public Comment</p> <p>Mary Kate Mohlman & Sharon Henault, Co-Chairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None. 	
<p>10. Final Committee Discussion</p> <p>Mary Kate Mohlman & Sharon Henault, Co-Chairs</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued discussion on the MSP eligibility presentation and proposed motion. • Follow-up from member on DME question – can a member who is waiting on an item from a DME with a long turnaround order it online and be reimbursed. 	
<p>11. Adjourn</p> <p>Mary Kate Mohlman & Sharon Henault, Co-Chairs</p>	<p>Meeting adjourned at 11:57 AM.</p>	