



MEDICAL CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MCAC) HYBRID QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES DECEMBER 9, 2022 (10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

(Hybrid Meeting w/Microsoft Teams Access)

Participant Call-in (by audio only): +1 984-204-1487, Access Code: 460470248#

This hybrid MCAC meeting was held on December 9, 2022 (10:30 am – 12:30 pm)

MCAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Gary Massey, MCAC Chair, Marilyn Pearson, MCAC Vice Chair, Kim Schwartz, Samuel Clark, David Tayloe, Benjamin Smith, Trent Cockerham, Steven Small, Ivan Below, Billy West, Casey Cooper, Ted Goins, David Sumpter, Paula Cox-Fishman, Heather Burkhardt and a host of MCAC Interested Parties participating in person and via Teams.

STAFF PRESENT

Dave Richard, Jay Ludlam, Adam Levinson, Sandra Terrell, Erika Johnson, Julia Lerche, Betty Staton, Cecil Williams, Pamela Beatty and a host of other staff members participating via Teams.

CALL TO ORDER

Gary Massey, MCAC Chair

- Chairman Massey called the MCAC meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and reminded participants to review the Clinical Policy Written Reports and Proposed State Plan Amendments included in the meeting materials. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared by Pamela Beatty. The September 16, 2022, MCAC meeting minutes were approved by the Committee.

OPENING REMARKS:

Dave Richard, Deputy Secretary, NC Medicaid

- Thanked the members and all in attendance for their continued commitment to the MCAC.
Dave touched on the following concerns that are on the minds of many people:
 - Rates for long-term care, nursing homes, and personal care services -- *The Department issued a bulletin recently stating we have the ability to continue those rates through the end of March 2023. Continuance of rates long term will be a conversation with the General Assembly.*
 - Samantha lawsuit filed in May 2017 which challenged the lack of adequate home and community-based services for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities (“I/DD”) – *Significant proposals are in place to address this issue.*
 - The Department was sued two days ago by Disability Rights North Carolina (DRNC) and several other organizations regarding conditions for individuals in foster care who are also in PRTFs. – *This matter is still under review by the Department. Our position is that we agree there is a serious issue around services and supports for people in foster care. This is a nationwide issue and the State will have continued conversations on how we implement and move forward as these are critical issues.*

NC MEDICAID MANAGED CARE UPDATE

Jay Ludlam, Assistant Secretary, NC Medicaid

- Emphasized the following goals of the Department and its LME-MCO partners as it transitions to Tailored Plans:
 - The Department has decided to delay Tailored Plans. The new date is April 1, 2023.
 - Mitigate disruptions as we make administrative changes from one system to another. We want to guarantee that we are taking care of the members who need care the most.
 - Ensure there is a robust network of providers contracted with the LME-MCOs as Tailored Plans.
 - Prevent provider payment disruptions – this is a part of the Department’s commitment to support our providers through these transitions.

- Tailored Care Management which is a cornerstone of the Tailored Plan program went live on December 1, 2022.
- System testing to include user acceptance testing, system integration testing, and end-to-end testing.
- Provider portals and how providers get in? Will they be able to submit claims? Robust approach to claims testing taking place. It is critical that providers receive the support they need.
- Course reviewed provider training and documentation is available to assist providers in understanding policies and procedures that Tailored Plans use. Claims payment is a requirement and the Department has imposed that expectation on the Tailored Plans.
- In summary, the Department wants to maintain access, continuity of care, and relationships that members and providers have established over the years as they have operated in the current system. This also extends to non-emergency transportation. Tailored Plan members are projected to be high utilizers of non-emergency transportation.
- Jay encouraged providers who have not contracted with Tailored Plans to do so as it is incredibly important for our members to maintain their relationship with them.
- Announced the Division has created an online fee schedule that is more intuitive and searchable. It includes rates, effective dates of codes, and services covered by NC Medicaid.
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for questions. Jay responded to questions from Dave Tayloe, MCAC Vice Chair, Marilyn Pearson, and MCAC members, Dave Tayloe, Billy West, and Paula Cox-Fishman.

MEDICAID ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Adam Levinson, Chief Financial Officer, NC Medicaid

- Reported on the monthly Medicaid enrollment by category and change since start of Public Health Emergency (PHE): 693,000 (32%) total growth. Parents and other adults up 132% and Medicaid and Health Choice Children up 21%.
- The enhanced FMAP will continue through March 2023 and provides significant funds to cover the increased enrollment.
- PHE is expected to be extended 90 days into April 2023. Enrollment is anticipated to be lower after the PHE ends.
- Enhanced rates for skilled nursing homes and personal care services are being extended.
- Through October 2022, NC Medicaid has spent approximately 1/3 of its operating budget for the fiscal year and is tracking as forecasted.
- Adam noted the key factors below as the Department looks ahead to next biennium (SFY 2024)
 - Decreases in FMAP percentage
 - PHE unwinding
 - First full year of Tailored Plans implementation
 - New high-cost pharmaceuticals
 - Addressing direct care workforce
 - Medicaid Expansion
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for questions and comments from the Committee. Dave Richard responded to comments from Billy West, MCAC member.

DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE (DCW) UPDATE

Heather Burkhart, North Carolina Coalition on Aging

- Heather expressed excitement about the work that the Department, AHEC, and The North Carolina Institute of Medicine (NCIOM) are doing to prioritize solutions for direct care workforce and health care. The foundation of providing quality long-term services and supports is having a sufficient and stable supply of qualified workers.
- Thanked Dave, Emma Sandoe, and Sabrena Lea for the article written in the NCIOM journal also showcasing the Department's commitment to the workforce issue, in addition to the leadership shown in meetings.
- A national announcement was made in October 2022, about a forthcoming federal resource center, funded by the US Administration for Community Living, to support the direct care workforce. They will provide support to states and providers around technical assistance to support recruitment and retention.

- Heather stated that direct care workforce positions such as CNAs, personal care aides, and direct support professionals are all consistently the top occupations that have the longest vacancies across all settings. Thanked the Department for the extension of temporary rates which is not enough, but a start.
- North Carolina's State Demographer, Dr. Michael Cline, attended our recent NC Coalition on Aging meeting and analyzed some of the latest census data as well as focused on the ratio of people entering into the workforce.
- Announced that Trish Farnham has joined the Coalition on Aging as their Direct Care Workforce Project Director leading this project and working across so many different sectors.
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for comments.
- Dave Richard extended kudos to Sandra Terrell and her team for the incredible work they are doing around long-term care. Additionally, he gave credit to Emma Sandoe and Sabrena Lea for their article published in the NCIOM Journal. Dave also highlighted MCAC member, Jenny Hobbs' participation on a panel at the National Association of Medicaid Director's conference along with others who serve on committees in other states representing members of the Medicaid program. Dave asked Jenny to share a few words with the Committee. Jenny shared one of the biggest impacts on her was the discussion on how to engage with families and considering them as partners. Jenny stated that she hates going to meetings where she is just being talked to; she wants to have a conversation, share her thoughts and opinions. Jenny stated as members of the MCAC, we are here to give advice, we are on the ground and want to give advice to help with decision making on the front end to get it right. It saves time and money when you get it right the first time. As a Conference Chair, Jenny shared that she learned some states have started using the term "member" as opposed to "beneficiary" when referring to individuals receiving Medicaid services. Additionally, Jenny stated she never liked the term "beneficiary" as it makes you feel like someone is talking down on you. She prefers that we use the term "member" as it is more respectful to families.

FEEDBACK SESSION

- Dave emphasized during the MCAC meetings that Medicaid staff shares presentations, which is important for the Agency to do so, but it is equally important for the Department to spend time receiving advice and counsel from its MCAC members and others that you may want to bring in. As time allows, we will have Feedback Sessions on future agendas as it is important to hear from you, Dave said.
- Chairman Massey asked MCAC members to chime in with ideas or speakers to explore during future meetings.
- Marilyn Pearson, MCAC Vice Chair, suggested as we talk about Tailored plans, we need to take some of the issues we are having with the Standard Plans and learn from them. Also, allow each member of this diverse MCAC to provide input on issues from their respective groups/agencies as a way of obtaining input from us.
- Ivan Belov stated that because the Medicaid program depends on the state legislators, it would be a great idea to bring in legislators especially with the election cycles, and encourage participation from our Medicaid members.
- Billy West suggested committee members send a report to the MCAC Chair on any concerns they may have prior to the meetings to give Medicaid management a chance to review and incorporate a response within the presenter's updates. This requires the accountability of the members, Billy stated.
- Paula Cox-Fishman recommended as the Agency advocates for Medicaid Expansion to ensure that some of the funds be allocated to increase new waiver slots for IDD individuals who have been on the Innovations Waiver waitlist or register for unmet needs for years.
- Jenny Hobbs recommended receiving written reports from other committees within Medicaid.
- Dave thanked the Committee for their recommendations/ideas and said the Division will give lots of thought to how they can be implemented while not increasing Pamela Beatty's workload as there is no staff to assist her.
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Jean Anderson seconded Jenny Hobbs' input about receiving from other existing advisory councils and committees and encouraged that input to the MCAC. Jean thinks that would be quite helpful since the membership on the MCAC itself is limited and input from the community consumers families caregivers is also limited.
- Mary Short commented that Medicaid and the LME-MCOs listen to the members and family members through feedback committees. The consumers Family Advisory Committee is hampered by the fact that LME-MCOs serving on feedback committees never rotate off. There are people who have been on the on the LME-MCO

feedback committees for 10 years since 2012 when the LME MCO were born. So, if you are really interested in hearing from actual members and family members, somebody needs to fix that. Thank you for your time.

CLOSING REMARKS

- Chairman Massey acknowledged the MCAC members who are rotating off the MCAC and thanked them for their continued support while the Agency seeks other members to fill their shoes. Dave chimed in as well and thanked the members for their remarkable participation.
- Next MCAC Meeting will be a virtual meeting on Friday, March 17, 2023.

MEETING ADJOURNED