



MEDICAL CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MCAC) 1ST QUARTER MEETING MINUTES March 17, 2023 (10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.)

(Virtual Meeting w/Microsoft Teams Access)

Participant Call-in (by audio only): +1 984-204-1487, Access Code: 967 544 764#

MCAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Gary Massey, MCAC Chair, Marilyn Pearson, MCAC Vice Chair, Kim Schwartz, Samuel Clark, David Tayloe, Benjamin Smith, Ivan Belov, Casey Cooper, Ted Goins, Thomas Johnson, Jenny Hobbs, Sonia Barnett

MCAC INTERESTED PARTIES

Trish Farnham, Presenter - NC Coalition on Aging, Tally Wells, Joni Lyon and Cheri Rose, Unity Healing Center Representatives, and others participating via Microsoft Teams.

STAFF PRESENT

Jay Ludlam, Shannon Dowler, Adam Levinson, Sarah Gregosky, Melanie Bush, Sandra Terrell, Ericka Johnson, Pamela Beatty, and other participating staff via Microsoft Teams.

CALL TO ORDER

Gary Massey, MCAC Chair

- Chairman Massey called the MCAC meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. on Friday, March 17, 2023, and reminded participants to review the Clinical Policy Written Reports and Proposed State Plan Amendments (SPAs) in the meeting materials. Roll call was taken and a quorum declared by Pamela Beatty. The December 9, 2022, MCAC meeting minutes were approved by the Committee.

OPENING REMARKS:

Jay Ludlam Deputy Secretary, NC Medicaid

- Jay opened with a brief introduction of himself and highlighted his tenure with Medicaid.
- Provided a legislative update to include the Senate's passage of an amended version of Medicaid Expansion earlier this week, which will need subsequent steps such as having a budget the Governor can sign. Jay thanked the Committee for their consistent support of Medicaid Expansion.
- NC Health Choice and NC Medicaid programs will merge on April 1, 2023.
- Continuous Medicaid coverage unwinding begins on April 1, 2023. Disenrollment will take place in late June or July 2023.
- Jay responded to questions from the Committee regarding 1) the authorities needed to move forward with Medicaid Expansion, 2) the continuity of care for beneficiaries in the FQHC world, and 3) community health workers and health departments' engagement to educate Medicaid beneficiaries about the forthcoming changes.
- Shannon Dowler announced that the Division has a Community Health Worker paper posted for public comment pertaining to Medicaid's strategy for community health workers in the future. The end date was March 16, 2023, but stated we are still accepting comments for a few more days – link posted in chat.

NC MEDICAID CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER (CMO) UPDATE

Shannon Dowler, Chief Medical Officer, NC Medicaid

- Provided high-level updates on the following items:
 - Accomplishments of the Sickle Cell Disease Work Group, led by Dr. Janelle White, Associate Medical Director for Children's Health. This workgroup is working together across the state to use Medicaid as a lever to drive change and is partnered with Belinda Pettiford and Public Health, who helps run the Governor's Committee on sickle cell disease.
 - Men's health and optimizing preconception health via Medicaid Family Planning benefit.
 - NC Medicaid's partnership with providers and the Division of Public Health to prevent the outbreak of congenital syphilis infections. The Department is also working with the CDC on an initiative around this infection.
 - Overview of post-partum extension continuous coverage data -- baseline is now closer to 75%.
 - NC Medicaid's Collaborative Care Model made national news twice in the last couple months.
 - NC Medicaid Integrated Care Dashboard is in development and will be posted to the Medicaid website.
 - Encouraged participants to review the Quality, Population Health, and Evaluation amazing dashboards on the NC Medicaid website.
 - Highlighted value added benefits and resources available to Medicaid beneficiary.
- Shannon Dowler ended by asking the Committee the following questions:
 - 1) What do you want to hear from the clinical population, health, quality space?
 - 2) What would you like to hear at these meetings? Do you want deep dives? Do you like a high level overview?
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for feedback from the Committee
- Jenny Hobbs liked the broad overview and hearing the improvements that NC Medicaid is focused on making. Jenny also inquired about the low percentage of providers wanting to sign up with tailored plans that led to the delay of the launch. What is the plan to recruit more providers for better network adequacy? Dr. Dowler and Sarah Gregosky addressed Jenny's question.
- Sonia Barnett stated she would like to see a deeper dive into what providers and beneficiaries are finding as problem areas and how Medicaid is able to hash out their concerns.

MEDICAID ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Adam Levinson, Chief Financial Officer, NC Medicaid

- Medicaid enrollment is at an all-time high. Total growth is at 765,000 (35%) and is projected to remain at an elevated level compared to March 2020 following the continuous coverage unwinding.
- NC Medicaid spending is on track for the current year. Through January 2023, we have spent approximately 57% of our operating budget for the fiscal year and is expected to finish the year within budget.
- Highlighted key factors of the NC Medicaid Budget for the current year and SFY 2024.
- Adam responded to questions from Chairman Massey regarding the percentage rate of the Federal match due to the public health emergency.

NC MEDICAID TAILORED PLAN UPDATE

Sarah Gregosky, Chief of Managed Care, NC Medicaid

- Tailored plans will launch on October 1, 2023. The delayed start will allow Tailored Plans more time to contract with additional providers to support member choices. A notice regarding the delay will be mailed to eligible beneficiaries by the end of March 2023. A new choice period has not been set.
- On April 1st, NC Health Choice children (0-3 years old) and legal immigrant populations will be moved into coverage by the LME-MCOs for behavioral health and I/DD services.
- DHHS is working with the LME-MCOs and providers to support the successful implementation of the Tailored Care Management (TCM) which launched on December 1, 2022.

- The Division continues its commitment to rolling out the (i) services and is still working with CMS on the exact roll-out date. No member will lose services. The LME-MCOs will keep providing the same services they are today that includes b3 services.
- Sarah responded to questions from David Tayloe, MCAC member, regarding the age group of children eligible for behavioral health coverage through LME-MCOs. Sarah will follow up with David on the type of assistance that is available for providers who are having trouble getting in touch with Tailored Plan care managers.
- Deb Goda, Associate Director, Behavioral Health and IDD, followed up on Sarah's mention of the (i) services being delayed due to the Tailored Plan launch delay. NC Medicaid submitted technical amendments to our Innovations waiver, TBI waiver, and our 1915(b) Managed Care waiver for Tailored Plan launch, and to add in the (i) services. Everything that was going to be done at once will now be done in three parts.
- Our April 1st amendment to the Innovations waiver is only dealing with the addition of slots into the Innovations waiver for the (b)(3) Medicaid services folks who are getting the Innovations waiver look alike services. Our 1915(b) waiver is being amended to include those folks that are coming in from Health Choice into Medicaid as well as the 0-3 population, legal immigrants into the LME-MCO, and the TBI waiver to extend to the counties of Orange and Mecklenburg for the pilot and to remove the (b)(3) Innovations waiver look alike services. The changes to add in Tailored Care Management and (i) services will be in a July 1, 2023 amendment and the launch of the Tailored Plans will be in an October 1, 2023 amendment.
- Sabrena Lea, LTSS Deputy Director, NC Medicaid, announced the Department received approval for our CAP/C renewal and is very happy to begin its implementation.

DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE (DCW) UPDATE

Trish Farnham, North Carolina Coalition on Aging

- Trish shared data released by PHI through the National Workforce Index. PHI is the national thought leader on the direct care workforce (DCW) experience in various states. Trish flagged PHI's five pillars of job quality: 1) quality training, 2) fair compensation, 3) quality supervision and support, 4) respect and recognition, and 5) real opportunity. Trish noted that Medicaid is the essential backbone funding for many of the DCW dynamics that people experience, and thanked Medicaid staff.
- Tally Wells, Council on Developmental Disabilities, stated they are trying to improve systems across the State for people with I/DD and the direct support professional (DSP) workforce shortage. The Council partnered with the Providers Association and the Developmental Facilities Association to justify a financial increase in intermediate care facilities and is grateful for NC Medicaid's support. It was a universal agreement that at least \$18/hour for DSPs is needed and the Council is very pleased that \$18 is in the Governor's budget.
- Trish provided statistics and trends on NC's in-home HCBS workforce. In closing, Trish thanked the Medicaid team and the MCAC for their supportive efforts of the DCW. Trish stated there is a lot of activity in this space and Medicaid is at so many tables. Trish asked NC Medicaid to use its considerable influence.
- Jay Ludlam thanked Trish and stated Medicaid is happy to work with her and Tally Wells to achieve their goals.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Tally Wells commented on the attention that MCAC and NC Medicaid is bringing to DCW, along with the commitment to Olmstead, and asked for continual support. Tally acknowledged Annette Smith, Anna Cunningham, and John D'Angelo who are grassroots organizers and have really put their blood, sweat, and tears into the DCW efforts.

CLOSING REMARKS

- Chairman Massey stated the next MCAC meeting will be in person on June 16, 2023, at the McKimmon Center.
- Chairman Massey reminded the Committee of Shannon Dowler's discussion on customizing MCAC meetings to dive deeper into information/receive feedback and asked them to share their ideas with Pamela Beatty.

MEETING ADJOURNED