

**GOVERNOR'S COUNCIL ON DISABILITIES  
AND SPECIAL EDUCATION**

**Medicaid Ad Hoc Committee Workgroup  
MINUTES**

**LOCATION**

**Governor's Council Conference Room  
3601 C Street, Anchorage, Alaska**

**Teleconference**

**Meeting Date**

**May 30, 2017**

**1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.**

**Attendees:**

Dean Gates – Chair  
Anthony Cravalho  
Jeanne Gerhardt-Cyrus  
Mallory Hamilton  
Lizette Stiehr  
Heidi Frost  
Mark Regan

**Guests:**

Duane Mayes  
Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich

**Staff:**

Kristin Vandagriff  
Anne Applegate  
Lanny Mommsen  
Ric Nelson  
Patrick Reinhart

Minutes Prepared by: Paula DiPaolo, Peninsula Reporting

**CALL TO ORDER – 1:30 p.m.**  
**ROLL CALL**

**WELCOME FROM THE CHAIR**

Dean Gates welcomed committee members to the meeting.

**DECLARATIONS OF CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

No conflicts of interest were declared.

**INTRODUCTIONS, ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS ITEMS**

No introductions, announcements, or news items were reported.

**APPROVAL OF AGENDA**

Mark Regan **MOVED** to approve the agenda, **SECONDED** by Lizette Stiehr. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

**APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

Lizette Stiehr **MOVED** to approve the May 11, 2017 meeting minutes as written, **SECONDED** by Mark Regan. Hearing no objections, the motion **PASSED**.

**CORRESPONDENCE**

There was no correspondence to report.

**REPORTS**

**DSDS Presentation**

Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich stated that over the past couple of years, she has been involved in a parents group that has been brainstorming ideas for cost savings for the Department as a measure to save cuts to Medicaid waiver services. She proposed the recommendations to Commissioner

Davidson, Deputy Commissioner Jon Sherwood, and finally then to Director Duane Mayes and his staff.

They were able to whittle down the recommendations to reduce them to cost-savings measures only, and they decided on two concepts. The first concept is providing an explanation of benefits to Medicaid waiver recipients. In practice, the parent/guardian or recipient has to sign that the services actually took place, and the provider can't submit a billing unless the parent/guardian or recipient signs it. An additional benefit of this system would be early detection of Medicaid fraud.

The second concept is implementing a voucher system similar to WIC so that people could purchase non-prescription Medicaid reimbursable items at a much-reduced cost.

Shelly Vendetti-Vuckovich stated that the feedback received from Duane Mayes and SDS was positive for both of the concepts, and possibilities of having pilot programs was discussed.

Duane Mayes then discussed the current budget crisis in that the legislature has still not passed an operating budget for this year. He also thanked the stakeholders and advisory boards for their advocacy related to home and community-based services. He shared some of the Division's successes in terms of fraud detection in the PCA program and highlighted that they will be doing a national presentation regarding fraud at a conference in September.

Some of the current initiatives being undertaken at SDS right now include:

- SB 74 – Medicaid Reform and 16 different initiatives
- 1915(k) – Community First Choice
- 1915(c) – Limited Supports Waiver
- interRAI assessment tool implementation.

Duane Mayes took a few minutes to correct a myth that the Division has cut services under the DD waiver. He stated that they have reduced the DD waiver yearly draw from 200 people down to 50 people, but there have been no cuts to the DD waiver. Any reductions in funding have been

realized through internal utilization controls and efficiencies, but the waiver itself continues to grow by \$20 million per year.

Duane Mayes further discussed the explanation of benefits (EOB) concept by stating that the EOB would allow recipients to review services and goods paid by Medicaid on their behalf, which can result in identification of billing or coding errors. It will also assist in identifying potentially fraudulent providers early enough that costs can be minimized. An EOB spreadsheet has been created to go along with the plan of care that lists out the services and the unit prices. He stated that according to Maureen Harwood, this spreadsheet prototype has helped families and care coordinators better understand the overall costs and what those breakdowns of costs are. Once the new internal computer system is up and certified, further progress can be made on the EOB concept.

In terms of the voucher system, Duane Mayes shared an e-mail from Margaret Brodie from Health Care Services that explained that as of right now, Medicaid is not set up to have vouchers printed. The Division of Public Assistance is the only agency that does this, and at this time it would require extensive changes to the MMIS, which would undermine any savings they are trying to achieve. There is a possibility in the future to have smart cards, such as a Quest card; however, the Division of Public Assistance is not set up to do that at this time.

Duane Mayes stated that he would volunteer to participate in the Medicaid Ad Hoc Committee meetings as they relate to issues specific to creating efficiencies within Medicaid. He could report out to the committee what other divisions are currently engaged in as well. Patrick Reinhart recommended inviting Duane Mayes to the Medicaid Ad Hoc Committee meetings quarterly to receive input related to Medicaid efficiencies. He also recommended the committee provide Duane with a list of questions or issues for him to prepare in advance. Duane Mayes also suggested that he could apprise this committee as to the progress of the reforms of the Inclusive Community Choices Council.

In terms of the regulations that are out specific to day habilitation, Duane Mayes stated that public comment closes on June 15<sup>th</sup>, and he appreciated some of the comments they have received so far that they did not consider.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **Review Comment Letter on Proposed Changes to Day Habilitation**

Anne Applegate stated that the proposed changes were reviewed and the appropriate changes were drafted. She noted that Mark Regan made comments that were forwarded to the committee this morning, and she will review those comments with staff and respond. Anne stated that any other comments should be made to her in writing.

Kristin Vandagriff stated that they thought it might be beneficial to add some cost savings concepts to this letter, and Patrick Reinhart stated that it can be something they do later.

Mark Regan made a couple of suggestions. Related to the soft cap, perhaps provide SDS with a range instead of a hard number. He also suggested providing comments regarding the exceptions process as an appendix or end notes to the comment letter. Committee members were in agreement to providing comments regarding the exceptions process in the endnotes.

Committee members discussed that the concept of companionship services was left out of the letter. Anne Applegate reminded committee members that it was a little bit controversial among some members of the committee. Lizette Stiehr commented that companion services from a provider prospective are a very complex, difficult issue.

Kristin Vandagriff will prepare a final copy for comment and asked committee members to review it quickly as the deadline is June 15<sup>th</sup>.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Discuss Proposed Changes to Person-Centered Practices and Settings**

Kristin Vandagriff referred members of the committee to the comment letter on the proposed changes regarding person-centered practices and

settings. She stated that overall everything was very positive and highlighted the following:

- Both in-person and electronic signature is a positive, particularly for rural Alaska
- Provider certification is positive
- Kudos to the Department for Employment First language
- Trainings or equivalent should be noticed as a requirement for conditions of participation
- Certificate in employment services training should also be a requirement.

Lizette Stiehr suggested adding some appreciation to the Department's changes regarding assessments and re-assessments when there have been no significant changes to someone's status.

Kristin Vandagriff will draft the changes to the letter and send it out to committee members for further comment. This letter is due by June 5<sup>th</sup>.

### **NEXT MEETING**

Committee members suggested holding the next meeting between June 19<sup>th</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup>. If this doesn't work for Duane Mayes, they will look to holding the next meeting after July 4<sup>th</sup>.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

Mark Regan **MOVED** to adjourn the meeting, **SECONDED** by Lizette Stiehr. Hearing no opposition, the motion **PASSED**, and the meeting adjourned at 3:06 p.m.