MEDICAL CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MCAC) QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES
June 17, 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: 973 438 773#

This MCAC meeting was held on Friday, June 17, 2022, at 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

MCAC MEMBERS PRESENT
Gary Massey, MCAC Chair, Marilyn Pearson, MCAC Vice Chair, Kim Schwartz, MCAC Secretary, Thomas Johnson, Ivan Belov, Billy West, Jenny Hobbs, Benjamin Smith, Samuel Clark, Dave Tayloe, III, Kristy Preston, William (Trent) Cockerham, Ramon P. Llamas, Billy West, LaSonia Barnett, David Sumpter, Paula Cox Fishman.

MCAC INTERESTED PARTIES: Jeff Horton, Heather Burkhardt, Brian Perkins, Jason Schwartz, Sandhya Gopal, Pam Perry, Lee Dobson, Sarah Pfau, Tara Fields, and a host of others.

STAFF PRESENT
Dave Richard, Jay Ludlam, Shannon Dowler, Adam Levinson, Sandra Terrell, Melanie Bush, Sabrena Lea, Emma Sandoe, Patrick Piggott, Julia Lerche, Amanda Smith, John Thompson, Shazia Keller, Andrea Phillips, Darryl Frazier, Beverly Bell, Wayne Mohr, Joel Mercer, Dan Guy, Kathleen Batton, WRenia Bratts-Brown, Mark Casey, and a host of others.

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.

OPENING REMARKS:
Dave Richard, Deputy Secretary, NC Medicaid

- Provided legislative updates pertaining to the direct workforce one-time bonus, provider rate increases, behavioral health, and Medicaid Expansion.
- Acknowledged the importance of the Committee's letters of support on Medicaid Expansion and expressed gratitude. The Senate moved on House Bill 149, which included expansion. Dave complimented the MCAC, provider community, beneficiaries, and advocacy groups for helping to move Expansion forward. It has now become a talking point, Dave stated.
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for comments and questions.
- Kim Schwartz, MCAC Member, asked that the record reflect the following: Kim spoke with Representative Edward Goodwin (Republican District 1) regarding Medicaid Expansion and the increased monies for the State as a result of it. Rep. Goodwin expressed concern about there not being regulatory components related to the abuse/misuse of Medicaid funds. Kim stated, we know this is inaccurate information pertaining to how money is spent. Kim urged the Committee to provide clarity when talking to folks who are using this misinformation to let them know that CMS does audit the use of Medicaid and Medicare funds. Kim noted that Rep. Goodwin stated he is unsure how he will vote on Medicaid Expansion. Kim advised him that their Republican Senator in the area voted for Medicaid Expansion.
- In the scope of practice, Kim pointed out that serious advocacy around behavioral health and discussions with the licensure boards around reciprocity in this workforce crisis is essential.

MEDICAID MANAGED CARE UPDATE

Jay Ludlam, Assistant Secretary, NC Medicaid

- **Vision for Transformation**
  - Jay reminded the MCAC of North Carolina's vision to improve the health of North Carolinians through an equitable, innovative, whole person, centered and well-coordinated system of care that addresses both the medical and non-medical drivers of health.
  - Jay emphasized that NC Medicaid is a driver of innovations across the country and is being watched by other states for the work it is doing to transition to Managed Care (MC).
- **Behavioral Health I/DD Tailored Plan Update**
  - BH I/DD Tailored Plan will go live on December 1, 2022. Staff is working closely with our LME/MCO partners and the health plans to ensure readiness for oversight and management of the program from CMS' perspective. NC Medicaid & Division of Mental Health will begin site reviews for readiness in July 2022.
  - Provided an overview of the Tailored Plan member-focused timeline for marketing, clinical criteria review, auto-enrollment choice period and auto-assignment of primary care or tailored care management.
  - Jay encouraged providers who are interested to contract with the Tailored Plans to provide services and meet our network adequacy review.
- **Standard Plan Update**
  - Approximately 1.7 million individuals are enrolled in the Standard Plan, as of May 2022.
  - The Standard Plan enrollment dashboard as well as the claims payment and denial dashboard are available for review on the NC Medicaid website.
  - The Medicaid Tribal Option went live in July 2021 and has 4,200 individuals currently enrolled. NC Medicaid is the first to go live in the nation with an Indian Managed Care Entity (IMCE).
- **Healthy Opportunities**
  - Healthy Opportunities was implemented Spring 2022 in a phased approach beginning with food supports, followed by non-emergency transportation, social services access, and housing supports. Supports were also launched for Acute Childhood Experiences (ACES).
  - DHHS awarded three Network Lead contracts in May 2021.
  - Pilot regions cover 33 counties in North Carolina within predominately rural areas.
  - The Department is working with CMS to expand the Health Opportunities program.
- **End of Public Health Emergency (PHE) Preparation**
  - CMS has committed to giving the State a 60-day notice to begin unwinding the PHE flexibilities.
  - Approximately 265,000 beneficiaries have been extended due to the PHE non-termination requirements. Once the PHE ends, Medicaid will start terminating cases of beneficiaries who are no longer eligible.
  - Provider requirements will be reinstated and the Department will be sending notices.
  - Resources and tools are available on the NC Medicaid website for beneficiaries and providers to assist them with what they need to do.
  - Chairman Massey opened the floor for comments and questions which Jay Ludlam and Dave Richard answered.

MEDICAID ENROLLMENT AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Adam Levinson, Chief Financial Officer, NC Medicaid

- Medicaid enrollment grew due to the non-redetermination requirement during the PHE. Parents and older adults are driving enrollment. Costs doubled since the beginning of the pandemic; however, the federal match increase has helped to offset expenses.
- NC Medicaid actuals versus budget through April 2022 indicates NC Medicaid has expended a higher % of total budget than at the same point last year. The Department believes we can manage the projected small budget shortfall with the federal match increase for enrollment, use of the approved HCBS plan funds to offset the COVID rate increases, and existing resources within DHHS.
- Presented an outlook for SFY 2023
- Adam and Dave Richard responded to comments from the floor.

MEDICAID CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER UPDATE

Shannon Dowler, Chief Medical Officer

- Presented a high-level overview of the SFY 2021 NC Medicaid and NC Health Choice Annual Report.
- Medicaid has resources to address the baby formula issue and is engaging everyone that it can to use its leverage.
- Medicaid MC Tailored Plan 101 Webinar Series started in June and will take place on the 3rd Thursday of each month. The webinars are dedicated to providing information and guidance to providers as we prepare for the launch of Tailored Plans.
- The Department is in the process of sunsetting temporary COVID-19 flexibilities tied to the Public Health Emergency. Some flexibilities will end on June 30, 2022. A clinical coverage request process is available to continue evidence-based/medically necessary temporary flexibilities.
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for comments and questions; there were none.

DIRECT CARE WORKFORCE (DCW) CRISIS UPDATE

Heather Burkhart, North Carolina Coalition on Aging

- Expressed appreciation for the invitation to present and for Dave's comments about the General Assembly and the Governor's budget in support of the direct care workforce. The work continues for increased reimbursement rates across all settings whether it is in adult care homes, nursing homes, or home care.
- North Carolina Coalition on Aging partnered with PHI and the National Direct Care Workforce Group to have a coalition of cross stakeholders in NC working on an advocacy road map so we can see reforms in NC around DCW compensation, innovation, and data. A convening was held in March 2022 across the State to continue to work collaboratively.
- Excited that the Department, through the Money Follows the Person (MFP) program, has decided to invest the rebalancing funds into supporting home and community-based services barriers.
- Duke University's Sanford School of Public Policy was awarded a 4-year grant at $150,000 each by UNC Cares and MFP, and will be looking at modernizing North Carolina's direct care training and credentialing system to increase those pipeline of direct care workers, to build pathways to elevate skills and recognitions.
- Partners in addition to Duke will be the Coalition on Aging, the National Domestic Workers Alliance, PHI and Appalachian State to work collaboratively over a long period of time to see collective impact about designing training.
- Chairman Massey opened the floor for public comments.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

- Jeff Horton, North Carolina Senior Living Association, commented that the cost analysis for the Personal Care Services (PCS) rates is probably at least six years old. Jeff recommended, going forward, that Medicaid do a rate methodology for Medicaid PCS to provide an idea of what it actually costs to provide the services.
- Lee Dobson, Bayada Home Healthcare, recognized the Department for its strong and constant support for home and community-based services. Commented that the temporary rates have been helpful but does not get us where we need to be. Lee further stated that Bayada has been advocating to the General Assembly to invest further so providers can provide care like they should. Home care rate needs to be closer to $25.00/hr. Bayada Home Health Care looks forward to working with Medicaid on any kind of rate study both now and in the future, Lee stated.

CLOSING REMARKS

- Chairman Massey thanked everyone for their time and presentations and encouraged the Committee members to take heart Dave's request to contact members of the House regarding Medicaid Expansion.
- Next MCAC Meeting will be held virtually on September 16, 2022.

MEETING ADJOURNED