

**Summary Minutes: Medical Care Advisory Committee
December 10, 2010
by teleconference**

Members/Medicaid Program officials present: Deborah Kiley, DNP, Chair; John Bringhurst; Tracy Charles-Smith; Amber Doyle; Catriona Lowe; Michael Moriarty, DDS; Karen Sidell; Kimberli Poppe-Smart, HCS Director; Renee Stoll, RPh; Bill Streur, Commissioner; Lorilyn Swanson; Elizabeth Turgeon, MD; and Mark Walker. HCS staff present: Nancy Cornwell and Jon Sherwood.

Minutes of August 27 and 28, 2010. Adopted as presented.

Announcements. Bill Streur has been appointed Acting Commissioner. Amber Doyle was appointed for another 3-year term.

Update on National Health Reform including Medicaid activities. Jon Sherwood explained that an intradepartmental implementation group has been formed. Some early items in the Patient Protection and Accountable Care Act (PPACA) have already been implemented, many of which are not controversial and/or reauthorize existing programs. Alaska has joined a lawsuit with 20 other states challenging the individual insurance mandate. The department continues to work closely with the Governor on the legislation and response.

Medicaid Task Force. Commissioner Streur reviewed the purpose of and appointments to the task force. He encouraged MCAC members to review documents posted on the task force webpage. The Governor's budget has not been released but Commissioner Streur told members to anticipate about a \$180 M increase in the General Fund request. He explained the enhanced FMAP from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and the PPACA for FFYs 2010 and 2011 is not expected in FFY 2012. Enrollment is up as well.

The commissioner noted that an option being considered is privatizing Denali KidCare. Doing so would enable the department to offer a more limited benefit package. Jon Sherwood explained that the department does not currently have the statutory authority to operate a separate (non-Medicaid expansion) Childrens Health Insurance Program, either as a private or as a separate program managed by the department.

Options being considered by the Medicaid Task Force include: enhanced prior authorization for radiology, improved purchasing for Durable Medical Equipment/Supplies, PACE (Program of All Inclusive Care for the Elderly), patient-centered medical homes, care management, increased cost sharing, and fraud and abuse opportunities. Texas is considering pulling out of the Medicaid program. Arizona has restricted transplant services--an optional benefit under federal Medicaid rules. Some states are implementing more pharmacy controls. Pharmacy is also an optional benefit. Others are reducing and/or limiting Medicaid home and community-based (HCB) and personal care attendant (PCA) services, although if limited, many of these recipients may end up in more expensive nursing homes. Dental services are also an optional benefit under federal Medicaid rules. Kim Poppe-Smart explained that between the HCB waivers and the PCA programs, there are about 4,500 individuals who have been assessed as needing nursing home level-of-care. There are about 708 nursing home beds in Alaska and they are nearly full. If HCB and PCA services were not available, there are insufficient nursing home beds in Alaska and eligible individuals may have to leave the state for services.

Commissioner Streur noted the Medicaid Task Force was told the following Medicaid services are optional: mental health rehabilitation and stabilization; diagnostic/screening/preventive services; occupational, physical, and speech language therapies; inpatient psychiatry under age 21; personal care; dental services; other home

health services; other licensed practitioner services; transportation; and, targeted case management. The Commissioner reminded the committee that these options are under consideration and no decisions have been made. He also reported that some states are looking at provider taxes, an option he does not support. He explained that he needs legislative support to move forward with the significant budget and policy issues facing the department. He asked the MCAC for their support as well.

Public Comments. Becky Thompson explained she has a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and that TBIs are not always diagnosed in the emergency department. This was Becky's experience and it was very stressful for her family. Becky explained the injured person's family is responsible for the care and need information on available resources. Becky had to leave Alaska to receive services.

Loss of Coverage for Foster Care Children. Elizabeth Turgeon, MD, a MCAC member, voiced concern about the loss of important services when foster care children reach age 21. Kim Poppe-Smart responded that Senior and Disabilities Services (SDS) is aware of these kinds of problems and is hoping that some of them will be resolved through the HCB waiver renewal (this year). She encouraged Elizabeth to contact the new SDS director Duane Mayes. Elizabeth also noted she has several patients with Seckel dwarf syndrome. Kim encouraged Elizabeth to call her following the meeting.

Work Plan, Report from Education Committee. Tracy Charles-Smith made a brief report including an example of inappropriate use of emergency department services. The decision was made to convene the education committee for a teleconference meeting to discuss this and other education needs. (Committee members include Tracy, Deb, Karen, Catriona, and Lorilyn.)

Deb Kiley asked each member to review the MCAC work plan and comment back to the entire committee via email. Nancy was asked to send the work plan to committee members.

Update : Senior and Disabilities Services. Kim Poppe-Smart explained she is transitioning away from SDS and will continue in her role as director of Health Care Services. Kim provided a brief update on SDS improvements (since the Corrective Action Plan was developed) including that the assessment backlog has been turned around. SDS has improved internal processes and engaged advisory groups and other agencies. They are redesigning the waivers, developing an application for "Money Follows the Person" (a demonstration opportunity from PPACA), and considering a 1915(k) State Plan Amendment for personal care. There has been tremendous growth in populations and utilization in the HCB programs.

Date/time of next meeting. The committee discussed having one teleconference meeting on February 4, 9:00 – 11:00 AM, and 3 face-to-face meetings in CY 2011, one in the Municipality of Anchorage, one in MatSu region, and one in a rural community. Members agreed to share their ideas on a location for the rural meeting.