

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA  
Department of Health Care Finance



**D.C. MEDICAL CARE ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MCAC)**

Location: Virtual Meeting via WebEx

Wednesday, February 24, 2021

**MEETING MINUTES**

**ATTENDEES:**

**MEMBERS:**

Sharra Greer, Children's Law Center  
Suzanne Jackson, Health Rights Law Clinic  
Mark LeVota, DC Behavioral Health Assoc.  
Marie Morilus-Black, MBI Health Services  
Chioma Oruh, Chi Bornfree  
Justin Palmer, DC Hospital Association  
Ian Paregol, Coalition of Disability Service Providers  
Eric Scharf, Depression and Bipolar Support Alliance  
Veronica Sharpe, DCHCA  
Tamara Smith, DCPCA  
Joe Weissfeld, Families USA  
Amy Maisterra, DCPS  
Barbara Bazron, DBH  
Kirk Dobson, DDS  
Marsha Lillie-Blanton, DBH  
Melisa Byrd, DHCF

**GUESTS:**

Ahna Millat  
Alice Weiss, DHCF  
Alonda Jones, DHCF  
Alyssa Kahn  
Amelia Whitman, DHCF  
April Grady, DHCF  
Andrew Malcolm  
Belina Zhang  
Bill Hanna, DHCF  
Brion Elliot, DHCF  
Cavella Bishop, DHCF  
Christine Dagostino  
Charisse Vickerie  
Christine DeAngelis  
Claudia Schlosberg, Castle Hill Consulting  
Cleveland Woodson  
Colleen Sonosky, DHCF  
Craig Umstead  
Cyndy Snyder  
DaShawn Groves, DHCF  
DeJa Love, DHCF

Deniz Soyer, DHCF  
Drena Lopez Duran  
Dwight Mayes  
Eric Colchamiro  
Erin Holve, DHCF  
Elizabeth Garrison, DHCF  
Eugene Simms, DHCF  
Felecia Stovall, DHCF  
Fernando Casto Gomez  
Garlinda Bryant, DHS  
George Aloth  
Heather Stowe, DACL  
Jennifer Joyce  
Joyce Speaks  
Judith Levy, DC Coalition on Long Term Care  
Karen Finn  
Karyn Wills  
Katie Rines, DHCF  
Kelly-Ann Daniels, DHCF  
Kerda DeHaan, DHCF  
Kerri Kerr  
Lauren Jones, DHCF  
Lauren Ratner, DC Health  
Lawrence Williams, DHCF  
Leslie Lyles Smith, MedStar  
Lisa Truitt, DHCF  
Lorena Ortiz, DHCF  
Lucy Ohiosikha, DHCF  
Lynda Kelly, DHCF  
Lyndsay Niles  
Maria Alva, Georgetown University  
Marlaina Bowens, DHCF  
Mark Fracasso  
Mia Olsen  
Michelle Zancan  
Melanie Williamson, DHCF  
Monique Willard, DHCF  
Nathaniel Curry, DHCF  
Nikhil Holla, CareFirst  
Nina Jolani, DHCF

Onari Jackson  
Pam Riley, DHCF  
Patricia Quinn, DCPCA  
Rachel McLaughlin  
Raelynn Schafer  
Rita Torkzadeh, DHCF  
Rohnda Roberts  
Sharon Henry  
Sahar Takshi, AARP

Sherri Giorgio, Gilead  
Stephanie Hafiz  
Stephanie Taylor, HSACS  
Suzanne Jackson  
Thomye Cave  
Tina Petrus  
Travis Auth

**I. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 5:32 pm by Mr. LeVota, MCAC Chair. Mr. LeVota also took Chairman's privilege to call for a moment of silence in recognition of American citizens and District residents who died from COVID-19.

**II. Approval of the Minutes**

Mr. Palmer moved and Ms. Smith seconded approval of the December 16, 2021 minutes. The minutes were approved without objection.

**III. Senior Deputy Director/Medicaid Director Report**

**a. Pharmacy Benefit Changes**

Dr. Pamela Riley, DHCF Medical Director, presented on planned pharmacy benefit changes that will improve access to critical medications for District Medicaid beneficiaries. DHCF planning to eliminate the minimum fibrosis score requirement across the Medicaid program for Mavyret & Vosevi, effective Spring 2021. DHCF is considering removing additional restrictions in fiscal year 2022 (i.e. abstinence requirement, requirement that medication be prescribed/or in consultation with a specialist and eliminate prior authorization requirement). Finally, Dr. Riley discussed DHCF's plan to carve HIV prevention medications coverage out of managed care contracts and reimburse under fee-for-service for all District Medicaid beneficiaries. The planned change is scheduled to take effect in Spring 2021 (*The presentation is available on DHCF's Website on the MCAC webpage. The presentation is located under the February 2021 MCAC Meeting Agenda and Materials link.*)

**b. Behavioral Health Reform Update**

April Grady, Associate Director, Division of Analytics and Policy Research, presented on the District's efforts to reform its Medicaid behavioral health benefit. Ms. Grady discussed background on the District Section 1115 Behavioral Health Demonstration Program (demonstration program) and reviewed utilization data for the ten services the District is implementing under the demonstration program. Ms. Grady also provided additional context for the current utilization data (Managed care utilization not included; public health emergency has impacted utilization across the Medicaid benefit). Mr. Scharf asked a question about how the presented utilization data compared to expected utilization. Melisa Byrd, Medicaid Director, explained that utilization is likely lower than our planned projection due to the impact of the public health emergency. Mr. LeVota set forth a question from the Webex chat on whether authority for removal of the MAT \$1 co-pay would move under the State Plan. Alice Weiss, Director, Health Care Policy and Research Administration, clarified that it is a possibility, but would follow-up with confirmation. (*The presentation is available on DHCF's Website on the MCAC webpage. The presentation is located under the February 2021 MCAC Meeting Agenda and Materials link.*)

Amelia Whitman, Deputy Chief of Staff, provided an update on DHCF's ongoing behavioral health integration work. Ms. Whitman stated that DHCF has formed a stakeholder advisory group to provide input and counsel on the integration work. Ms. Whitman gave brief updates on the status of DHCF's ongoing work to transition authority for services implemented under the demonstration program to the Medicaid State Plan. Ms. Whitman also gave update on recent and upcoming publications related to behavioral health (Behavioral Health RFI Summary posted; JSI Provider Capacity Assessment to be posted; Behavioral Health Rate Study RPF to be posted). Ms. Whitman also highlighted upcoming Integrated Care Technical Assistance Events. Claudia Schlosberg asked whether the Stakeholder Advisory Group would be open to the public. Ms. Whitman clarified that the meeting would be open to the public. Ms. Byrd highlighted that DHCF is also conducting a beneficiary survey on their experience accessing services under the demonstration program.

*(The presentation is available on DHCF's Website on the MCAC webpage. The presentation is located under the February 2021 MCAC Meeting Agenda and Materials link.)*

**c. Managed Care Transition Update**

Melisa Byrd, Medicaid Director, presented on the managed care transition. Ms. Byrd gave additional background on the goals and purpose of the managed care transition. Ms. Byrd highlighted new managed care contract provisions that strengthen the managed care program and highlighted the expansion of care coordination and case management services made possible by the care transition. Ms. Byrd also reviewed some of DHCF's lessons learned during the past transition. Additionally, Ms. Byrd presented the fiscal year 2021 distribution of Medicaid beneficiaries across the contracted managed care organizations, which is more equitable compared to the distribution in fiscal year 2020. Finally, Ms. Byrd presented on DHCF's ongoing monitoring and oversight of the managed care program. Ms. Smith asked a question on how DHCF plans to expand Value-Based Purchasing (VBP) under the managed care program. Ms. Byrd clarified that DHCF will utilize new contract provisions requiring a fixed percentage of managed care spending be linked to alternative payment methods (APMs) to expand VBP. Mr. LeVota asked whether the agency is considering adoption of a specific framework to guide MCO adoption of APMs. Ms. Byrd confirmed that the District is engaging its MCOs around the goals set forth in the State Plan. Mr. Scharf asked how the managed care transition impacts staffing and costs for DHCF. Ms. Byrd stated that she does not anticipate a change in the total number of DHCF staff but stated that the agency may need to be restructured to align with the broader changes being made to the Medicaid program.

*(The presentation is available on DHCF's Website on the MCAC webpage. The presentation is located under the February 2021 MCAC Meeting Agenda and Materials link.)*

**d. Enrollment Snapshot**

April Grady, Associate Director, Division of Analytics and Policy Research, provided an update on enrollment. *(Enrollment reports are available on the DHCF Website on the MCAC webpage.)*

**IV. Subcommittee Reports**

**a. Long Term Services and Supports**

Veronica Sharpe provided the update. Next meeting in March.

**b. Eligibility & Enrollment**

Eric Scharf provided the update. The committee met in January.

**c. Access**

Mark LeVota provided an update on behalf of Mr. Robert Hay. The subcommittee is looking for a new meeting date and requested discussion topics.

**d. Health Care Re-Design**

Tamara Smith provided the update. Next meeting in March.

**V. New Business**

Dr. Pamela Riley, DHCF Medical Director, represents DHCF on the DC Health Scientific Advisory Committee. Dr. Riley reported on behalf of the committee. Dr. Riley provided an update on the vaccine distribution effort to date. Dr. Riley highlighted that over 105,000 first doses have already been administered in the District. Dr. Riley also highlighted that the District is receiving additional allocations of vaccine from the federal government. Dr. Riley also reviewed the vaccine eligibility tiers in the District. Dr. Riley also presented on DC Health and DHCF ongoing efforts to outreach to high risk Medicaid beneficiaries. Mr. Scharf asked what percentage of residents were eligible for the vaccine in Phase 1C Tier 1. Dr. Riley stated she does not currently have that information. Veronica Sharpe provided insight into the experience of certain long-term care providers in their effort to get staff vaccinated. *(The presentation is available on DHCF's Website on the MCAC webpage. The presentation is located under the February 2021 MCAC Meeting Agenda and Materials link.)*

Mark LeVota led the MCAC Member Round Table discussion asking members/their organizations ongoing efforts to communicate the safety and effectiveness of the COVID-19 vaccine. Mr. LeVota also led discussion on the strategies that members/their organizations have found effective to counter misinformation and to promote confidence among high risk populations. Amy Maisterra reported that DCPS is working to ensure their educators have access to the vaccine and reported the results of their latest vaccination clinic at Dunbar High School. Ms. Maisterra stated that communication/outreach included phone calls, assisting individuals who needed help registering, working with union representatives. Melisa Byrd reported on DHCF's ongoing efforts to outreach to beneficiaries and providers. Eric Scharf provided commentary on the ongoing confusion about the access point to register for vaccines and community frustration with the inability to register for limited slots. Dr. Barbara Bazron, Director, DBH provided an update on DBH's ongoing efforts to outreach to consumers and providers. Dr. Bazron emphasized messaging on the safety of the vaccine highlighting that having trusted leaders share their vaccination story can help address fear/uncertainty with the vaccine. Tamara Smith reaffirmed the critical role providers play in helping to overcome hesitancy. Justin Palmer echoed statements shared by Ms. Smith. Mr. Palmer offered that the hospitals are hiring community health workers to help overcome vaccine hesitancy with their patients. Ms. Byrd commented on DHCF's ongoing efforts to ensure transportation to appointments for individuals who are getting the vaccine.

**VI. Opportunity for Public Comment**

There was a question with regard to the date managed care contracts would be awarded following the Contract Appeals Board ruling. Ms. Byrd replied that MCO contracts are effective throughout fiscal year 2021, would provide additional information once it is available with regard to the ongoing procurement effort.

Second question on the date DHCF responses to Council budget questions would be available to the public. Ms. Byrd replied that the agency would follow-up with additional information.

DRDC asked a question about DBH and DCHF's effort to monitor the effectiveness of provider outreach to beneficiaries on the COVID-19 vaccine. Ms. Byrd replied that DHCF is monitoring outreach provided by MCOs. Dr. Bazron replied that DBH is not currently monitoring the effectiveness of provider outreach but would provide an update in future.

**VII. Announcements**

Mr. LeVota made the following announcements:

- a.* Special Meeting: DHCF Budget Presentation – April 7, 2021
- b.* MCAC Chairperson and Vice Chairperson elections will be held at the June 23, 2021 meeting. Call for nominations at the April 28, 2021 meeting.
- c.* DHCF Oversight Hearing – March 4, 2021
- d.* DHCF Budget Hearing – April 9, 2021

**VIII. Adjournment**

Mr. LeVota adjourned the meeting at 7:14 pm.