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

ATTENDEES:
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
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
Melissa 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.