

Medical Care Advisory Committee

Minutes of August 17, 2023

Participants

Committee Members (via phone)

Michael Hales (Chair), Jennifer Marchant, Rachel Craig, Carlos Flores, VACANT, Maritza Erickson for Dale Ownby, Brian Monsen, Lisa Heaton, Stephanie Burdick, Calleen Kenney, Dr. Jennifer Brinton, Kim Dansie, Gina Tuttle, Alan Ormsby, Cassidy Matthew, and Davis Moore

Committee Members Absent

Joey Hanna, Dr. Robert Baird, and Michael Jensen

DHHS Staff (via phone)

Jennifer Strohecker, Eric Grant, Brian Roach, Melissa Aitken, Allison Allred, Josip Ambrenac, Tracy Barkley Laura Belgique, Yoon Kim-Butterfield, Matt Lund, Jennifer Meyer-Smart, Samantha Moore, Libby Oseguera, Seyha Ros, Michelle Smith, James Stamos, Stacey Swilling, Jeremy Taylor, Greg Trollan, Jennifer Wiser, Kolbi Young, Sharon Steigerwalt, and Dorrie Reese

Guest (via phone)

Justin Allen, Ciric Alvarez, Alexis Athens (GOPB), Kevin Burt (DWS), Brook Carlisle, Emma Chacon, Jill Chang, Adam Cohen, Rylee Curtis, Thaiss Del Rio, Kevin Eastman, Jeannie Edens, Carole Eisner, Julie Ewing, Keir Farrimond, Marian Furst, Robert Gehrke, Erica Gradwell, Geoff Harding, Allison Heffernan, Jeremy Hirschi, Scott Horne, Alan Houston, Michelle Jenson, Kristeen Jones, Marsha Judkins, Rosemary Lesser, Jesse Liddell., Jenifer Lloyd, Thomas Merrill, Noah Miterko, Elise Napper, Joni Nebeker, Andrea Neilsen, Dale Ownby (DWS), Stuart Pappas, Anita Quedraogo, Jennifer Radcliffe, Adrew Riggle, Destiny Rockwood, Leigha Rodak, Shelley Rogne, Ken Schaecher, Randal Serr, Daniel Sloan, Stacy Stanford, Ron Sufficool (DGO), Bill Tibbits, Christopher Williams, Emily Willis, Todd Wood, Rebecca Yates, Sheila Young, Emily Zheutlin, and Melissa Zito

Welcome New MCAC member: Dr. Jennifer Brinton:

Michael Hales welcomed new MCAC Member Dr. Jennifer Brinton-Provider Representative for Utah Physicians

Approval of Minutes:

Kim Dansie made the motion to approve the July 20, 2023, MCAC minutes. Rachel Craig seconded that motion. The group unanimously agreed.

Review & Discussion of MCAC Letter:

Michael Hales discussed the MCAC letter.

The document link was presented is embedded in this document.

https://medicaid.utah.gov/MCAC_unwinding_letter.pdf

Questions:

Stephanie Burdick mentioned after reviewing I would like to include something about communication and outreach. Awareness is low among beneficiaries.

Michael Hales asked would the committee feel comfortable, if I add a sentence to the letter somewhere that says we would like to see some improved communication as well just in the summary paragraph. With the idea that we could add to the content of the letter and just move forward rather than a lot of additional back and forth.

Vote to Adopt MCAC Letter:

The committee members made a vote to adopt the MCAC letter.

MOTION

Brian Monson made the motion to approve the letter with addition to the communication piece. Dr. Jennifer Brinton seconded that motion. The group unanimously agreed.

<https://medicaid.utah.gov/Roll Call Vote 17AUG2023.xlsx>

Medicaid Eligibility Update:

Brian Roach gave an update.

<https://medicaid.utah.gov/MCAC Unwinding Report.pdf>

Questions:

Stephanie Burdick asked do you happen to know how many closure notices were sent out on July 21st compared to how many closed-on July 31st.

Brian Roach mentioned we do not have that data. One thing that has become apparent as we have done some data deep dive is that some closure we found represent individuals transferring to another program in our eligibility system. Medicaid has multiple programs that will be addressed later.

Stephanie Burdick asked do we have information on how many closure notices were sent out on July 21st? because they're sending them out 10-days earlier.

Kevin Burt stated we are required to give a 10-day notice to individuals who are going to close. Some of that could be an individual has not provided any documentation, that will generate a notice that says your case is going to close, which does generate some action and the case is reopening.

Stephanie Burdick asked do we have any data on how many are in the middle of verification versus how many have not responded at all.

Kevin Burt stated that is going to be difficult to get because the closure reason is the same, it's an incomplete review. I think the only way to get that would be individually, looking at individual cases. What we do know is that over 30% of people that close do get recertified and reopened. Keep in mind that any individual that loses eligibility, has 90 days, post closure to complete their paperwork without the need to reapply, so about 30% are doing that.

Stephanie Burdick mentioned I think it's important to understand where people are getting stuck. Enrolling every eligible person is the success and understanding the failure is going to help us do better. So, understanding the problems is not an unreasonable request.

Kevin Burt stated Brian has mentioned that we did do some review, we can talk about in the next presentation to see if that provides some helpful context as well.

Stephanie Burdick asked do we know how many cases on emergency Medicaid have been closed.

Kevin Burt stated I don't think those cases have started to unwind at this time. I believe there are around 7,300 individuals on the program. Keep In mind these individuals do not meet the criteria for ongoing Medicaid, they have a medical need, so there is an ability to be able to get that emergency medical system for that emergency need.

Stephanie Burdick stated originally this group was going to be placed at the end of the unwinding plan. Are you saying that its going to start soon? Does that mean the plan has changed?

Kevin Burt stated yes, it does mean a plan has changed the Department of Workforce Services and the Department of Health and Human Services met with many members of legislative leadership. We're asked to unwind faster, some of the ways that we have been looking at, is an increased use of what we call rolling reviews is when the Medicaid Review is due later in the year, but we're currently processing a snap recertification. What we're doing is at the time, we review the snap certification. If we're able to use that data to simply recertify for Medicaid. At the same time, we're pulling that review in a little bit faster. Some of the requests were to unwind by the end of the year. One of the things that we tried to do is explain some processes that we could use to get to more cases sooner. But continue with the full 12-month, unwinding process.

Stephanie Burdick mentioned that when asked by Senator Andregg you said that you were not planning on making the unwinding go faster because some members of the legislature had encouraged you to, so I am confused.

Kevin Burt stated It Is still the full 12 months. The expectation was to get it done much faster although, not simply certain individuals. One of the ways that we think that we're able to continue to maintain that 12-month certification was, look at that and understand, keep in mind that the individuals that are on this benefit they're typically not eligible for the Medicaid program. When we looked at who is most likely eligible, This group fits in that category.

Rachel Craig mentioned she was also under the understanding the emergency Medicaid cases would be unwinding last. Rachel asked, "Have you seen an effect on mail delays in rural and frontier areas?"

Kevin Burt mentioned that he has not seen any delays in the mail.

Jennifer Strohecker stated I want to express to Stephanie's specifically your comment. But also, to the committee that we worked very closely with DWS on crafting a response and a strategy to maintain the 12 months review cycle. It was our concern that the member and the outcome was very important to how we approach this work and accelerating it did not achieve those goals. We were able to maintain a 12-month plan As Kevin laid out. There were some small shifts in ordering of things to accommodate that. Those have not been put in place yet. Those are still in the planning phases but that is the approach and I just wanted to let you know that we very much stood uniformly behind a 12-month timeframe.

Stephanie Burdick how many people lost coverage.

Jennifer Strohecker mentioned that we can highlight some data we have regarding some of the breakdown of the individuals by their category of aid.

Review of CMS Unwinding Flexibilities & Agencies' Response Document Review:

Jennifer Strohecker, Brian Roach, and Kevin Burt gave an update.

[https://medicaid.utah.gov/Utah Unwinding Implementation and Course Corrections.pdf](https://medicaid.utah.gov/Utah%20Unwinding%20Implementation%20and%20Course%20Corrections.pdf)

Michael Hales stated in our meeting last month, we reviewed a document that went through itemizing all of CMS proposed flexibilities and what had been adopted. In many cases, the ones that did not adopt the explanation were the departments recommended, not pursuing this, and we asked the departments to come back and give us a little more detail and explanation as to why they hadn't chosen to select.

Questions:

Stephanie Burdick how many people (disability) lost coverage.

Jennifer Strohecker mentioned that we can highlight some data we have regarding some of the breakdown of the individuals by their category of aid, we can discuss that while we go through this presentation.

Stephanie Burdick mentioned you stated that the volume of calls went down, but wait, time and abandonment rate did not. What is the longest amount of hold time you are seeing? Is it accurate that it's two hours? That's what I've heard.

Kevin Burt stated it is my guess the average wait time we are not inflating the numbers we are reporting as the average wait time. Keep in mind that an individual does not need to wait that long; there is a callback feature that is offered upfront, an opportunity to hang up and be put in place on the worker's queue.

Dale Ownby mentioned they can run a report, but that is possible depending on the time of the month, the day after an issuance day for SNAP or after a Holiday.

Stephanie Burdick stated do you know any other government service where they require someone to wait that long?

Kevin Burt mentioned there is an option to call back and that is one of the suggestions of CMS to address. They don't need to wait that long; they can have the callback feature.

Kevin Burt mentioned that there is a lot of help that we have, but we can certainly increase the library and make sure that they help in the current situation as well.

Jennifer Strohecker stated it would be helpful to hear what videos might be helpful, Stephanie and I think would be open if there's some key areas for you to provide from your perspective, working with folks or maybe what you're hearing from individuals, what are some key areas where this would be helpful. I think we'd love to have that feedback to help guide us in this process. Additionally, I mean regarding the call, wait time and abandonment rates, this is an area that CMS did call out as an area focus for us to develop a plan around. I think we're looking at different options on ways to help address and navigate that, I think Kevin put several forth before you. We'd love to have your feedback if you have other ideas. I am sensitive to the fact that some individuals are working jobs and it is not easy for them to get a call back at a certain time or maybe their work schedule does not align. I want to think through what the options would be for that type of call and how we could service them in a way. I think you have a lot of good information that we'd love to hear of your ideas with regard, to the videos, with regard, to maybe some call, wait time ideas. And once we have more of this, put together will certainly present that and share that with you as well.

Rachel Craig mentioned she thinks the option to have some folks be able to schedule calls might be helpful.

Kevin Burt stated we do have our various employment centers across the state and we certainly have individuals that can support you. If anyone needs access to those, there's a map on our jobs.utah.gov website.

Last month Documents:

Utah Plan to Address Procedural Terminations:

[https://medicaid.utah.gov/Utah Plan Procedural Terminations.pdf](https://medicaid.utah.gov/Utah%20Plan%20Procedural%20Terminations.pdf)

State Strategies to Prevent Procedural Terminations:

<https://www.medicaid.gov/sites/default/files/2023-06/state-strategies-to-prevent-procedural-terminations.pdf>

Director's Report:

Brian Roach gave an update.

Upcoming Policy Changes:

- HB-290: Amending (8) Home & Community-Based Services Waiver programs (HCBS)
[https://medicaid.utah.gov/July 2023 HCBS Waiver Amendment Executive Summary.pdf](https://medicaid.utah.gov/July%202023%20HCBS%20Waiver%20Amendment%20Executive%20Summary.pdf)

SPA's Rules:

[https://medicaid.utah.gov/MCAC Rule Summary 08-17-23.pdf](https://medicaid.utah.gov/MCAC%20Rule%20Summary%2008-17-23.pdf)

[https://medicaid.utah.gov/MCAC SPA Summary 08-17-23.pdf](https://medicaid.utah.gov/MCAC%20SPA%20Summary%2008-17-23.pdf)

Adjourn

Meeting was adjourned at 4:00pm. The next meeting is scheduled for September 21, 2023 at 2:00-4:00 p.m.