

Medical Care Advisory Committee (MCAC)

April 8, 2022 · 1:00 PM

Woolfolk Building – Conference Room 145

501 North West Street, Jackson, MS 39201

I. Call to Order

- Dr. David Reeves called the meeting to order.

II. Roll Call

- Dr. David Reeves called roll and confirmed a quorum was present for voting purposes.
- **Voting members in attendance: Dr. David Reeves** (Long Beach), **Dr. James Rish** (Tupelo), **Mr. Benny Hubbard** (Magee), **Dr. Charles O'Mara** (Ridgeland), **Ms. Phaedre Cole (attending virtual)** (Greenwood), **Dr. Justin Brewer** (Tupelo), **Dr. Thomas Dobbs (attending virtual)** (Jackson), **Mr. Kent Nicaud** (Pass Christian), **Mr. Lee Bond (attending virtual)** (Ocean Springs), **Jasmin Chapman, DDS (attending virtually)** (Terry)
- **Voting members not in attendance: Dr. Billy Long** (Madison),
- **Legislators in Attendance:** none

III. Approval of meeting minutes from February 4, 2022

- *Motion: Mr. Nicaud*
- *Second: Dr. O'Mara*
- *Meeting minutes were approved unanimously*

IV. Old Business:

- Hospital Observation Policy Subcommittee
 - Dr. Rish offered an update from the subcommittee along with a proposal of changes the sub-committee felt would be helpful and explained the proposal is a default payment system based on length of stay. He then offered to take any questions or comments. Hearing none, he recommended the MCAC adopt the proposed amendments and refer to the Division of Medicaid for further consideration.
Motion to consider: Mr. Nicaud
Second: Dr. O'Mara
 - Dr. Reeves called for a vote of all in favor of adopting the Outpatient Observation Policy Amendment.
 - *Motion to adopt was approved by unanimous vote*
 - Dr. Rish offered his appreciation to the members of the subcommittee.
- Legislative Session Update
 - Director Snyder offered information on the Session and discussed several pieces of legislation that impact Medicaid. He explained HB657 had 11 distinct actions including the removal of the rate freeze language. There was also language adding requirements for Medicaid to notify the Legislature of any proposed changes to be made to rates including increases and decreases. He shared that when the Division makes any rate changes, those must be submitted to the Chairman of both the House and

Senate Medicaid Committees. Director Snyder also explained the actions and timelines those Committees could take in the consideration of the changes. The Division may then accept, ignore, or modify the proposed rate changes. He went on to explain that these legislative notices will apply to rates changes and State Plan Amendments as well. He included that while this is still being reviewed by the governor, the Division has decided to go ahead and notice the Legislature of any pending rate changes. Snyder also overviewed other legislation, including appropriations from the session related to and impacting Medicaid operations, rates and services that may be forthcoming.

V. **New Business:**

- Smoking Cessation Opportunities
 - Dr. Dobbs presented information explaining how tobacco use is both increasing and is responsible for increased health cost to the state due to tobacco related diseases and deaths.
 - Dr Dobbs offered recommendations on specific populations and clinicians should both inquire about tobacco use along with the recommendation that covered cessation therapies should include both behavioral and pharmacotherapies. Dr. Dobbs also discussed current Medicaid coverage limits and other impediments to accessing these therapies.
 - Dr. Reeves reviewed some of the information on a letter recently received from the Cancer Action Network, American Heart Association, American Lung Association and The Partnership for a Healthy Mississippi addressed to MCAC requesting consideration of comprehensive tobacco cessation coverage for all Medicaid enrollees. Dr. Reeves asked what therapies are currently covered by Medicaid. Wil Ervin explained that currently tobacco cessation medications are covered for all Medicaid members and cessation counseling is covered for individuals who are pregnant.
 - Dr. Rish asked if the medication for tobacco cessation would count toward a person's monthly six prescription drug limit. Mr. Ervin said he would need to take that back and would confirm whether that is the case. Dr. Rish suggested this may be an opportunity to carve out medications prescribed for cessation so they would not count against the monthly six prescription limit. Mr. Ervin offered to share actual counseling numbers covered and explained that utilization of those services has been very low.
 - Dr. Dobbs asked if it would be a costly addition to add physician provider counseling as a reimbursed Medicaid service? Would it be expensive or costly?
 - Dr. Thomas Joiner with Molina offered information about utilization and coverage of counseling services through Managed Care and Molina. Dr. Rish added that counseling services are important because medications alone are not as effective as they could be and greatly enhanced with concurrent counseling.

- Dr. Reeves asked if all Managed Care companies could reach out to their members and cover these services.
 - Dr. Dana Carbo-Bryant with United Healthcare added that she agreed with what has been said already and that United Healthcare managers do refer their members who are smokers or using tobacco to receive these medications. She stated that tobacco cessation is important and needs to be brought back at the forefront.
 - Dr. Jeremy Erwin with Magnolia confirmed that Magnolia also covers these medications and there is no prior authorization required, and they cover two types of counseling as well. He added that utilization and success is low and not what they would like to see.
 - Dr. Reeves asked about the process of referral for these services and if he would need to do a special referral?
 - Dr. Joiner offered that a care manager would assist with enrolling the person once referred.
 - Dr. Erwin suggested a statewide campaign including MCAC assistance to address smoking cessation.
 - Dr. Dobbs requested that for the next meeting the MCOs bring their numbers to show what kind of utilization and impacts they are seeing and then plan to move forward with consideration of physician and provider counseling. He also asked to see what the cost might be as well.
 - Dr. Erwin also shared that when preferred brands of smoking cessation medication are prescribed those do not count against prescription limits.
 - Dr. Reeves asked the Division for a cost analysis of what it would be to implement counseling coverage along with what the counseling service reimbursement might be.
- Dr. Reeves congratulated Dr. Dobbs on the magnificent job he has done under difficult circumstances as the State Health Officer including through the pandemic and wished him well in future endeavors.

VI. Next Meeting – The next meeting is planned for Friday, August 19, 2022, at 1:00pm.

VII. Adjournment

Motion to adjourn- Dr. Dobbs

Second- Dr. Chapman

Motion to adjourn was unanimous