

CT Health Care Reform Advisory Board

Minutes of November 17, 2009 Meeting

Members Present: Deputy Commissioner Cristine Vogel (Chair), Department of Public Health (DPH); Cathy Bartell; Mark Bertolini, Aetna; James Cox-Chapman, MD, ProHealth Physicians, MSO, Inc.; Christopher Dadlez; Saint Francis Hospital and Medical Center; Robert Dakers, Office of Policy and Management (OPM); Carole Noujaim; Commissioner Thomas Sullivan, State Insurance Department (SID); Mark Schaefer, Department of Social Services (DSS); Rick Willard, Leadership Council of the National Federation of Independent Businesses; Lenny Winkler, RN; Tom Woodruff, Office of the State Comptroller.

Members Absent: Commissioner Robert Galvin, DPH

Opening Remarks and Introductions

Deputy Commissioner Vogel called the meeting to order at 9:10 am and welcomed the members to the first meeting of the CT Health Care Reform Advisory Board on behalf of Governor Rell. A review followed of the composition of the Board as described in Executive Order #30. Minutes will be taken for every meeting and posted on the Office of Health Care Access website at <http://www.ct.gov/ohca>. Board members were requested to provide e-mail addresses, as communication about meetings and meeting materials will be sent via e-mail.

Board members each introduced themselves, providing background on their positions and interests in health care reform.

Advisory Board Charge and Timeline

Cristine Vogel reviewed Executive Order #30.

- The charge to the Advisory Board is to prepare a set of proposed health care policies in response to federal health care reforms.
- Even without any action on the federal level, the Advisory Board can consider state based policies.
- Slowing the growth of health care spending should be a component of every issue the group discusses and cost containment should be addressed in every recommendation.
- Final recommendations must address issues of funding and sustainability.
- The work of other groups addressing health care reform issues in Connecticut should be leveraged (e.g. health information technology, medical homes).

Cristine Vogel noted that there have been questions about the differences between this Advisory Board and the legislatively mandated Sustinet Board of Directors. The Sustinet Board is mandated to address the development of the Sustinet Plan. A good summary of

their charge and committee structure can be viewed online at http://www.universalhealthct.org/admin/uploads/9109384904a673ea1cd2005.71708628.pdf or at <http://www.ct.gov/sustinet> .

An interim report from the Advisory Board is due to the Governor and the General Assembly by February 1, 2010. To accomplish this work, meetings of the Advisory Board have been scheduled for December 3, December 17, January 7 and January 21. The expectation is that in order to accomplish its work, the Advisory Board will be working through the holidays.

A final report is due January 1, 2011. To meet this deadline, a report with final recommendations must be completed before Christmas 2010. Once the policy recommendations are submitted, the Advisory Board is disbanded.

The suggested strategy for the reports is to develop fewer but more in depth recommendations: those that are achievable in the short term and those that address the long term.

Issues raised by the group:

- Need to focus on the supply of primary care providers.
- The reference in Executive Order #30 to assuring health care coverage for all children entering primary and secondary school should be considered a floor and not a ceiling.
- A request was made to look at how many primary care physicians are in Connecticut and how many have signed contracts with Medicaid to serve as a benchmark when considering health care reform. Mark Schaefer offered to work with DPH to get the number of licensed physicians and to see what is available regarding participation in Medicaid for the next meeting.
- Considering the schedule expected with regard to passage of federal health care reform and the work of Sustinet, it was suggested that the Advisory Board consider picking up the pace of its work and try to deliver recommendations mid-year.
- It was suggested that the group start with the work that has already been done in Connecticut and evaluate that.
- It was suggested that the group look at the scope of practice for health care professions study currently being conducted by the Legislative Program Review and Investigation Committee. They are examining Connecticut's process for developing and modifying scopes of practice for health care professions licensed by the Department of Public Health and for reconciling differences when scope of practice issues arise among health care professions.
- There are extensive actuarial analyses by different groups that have already been done that would be helpful to the Advisory Board. Mark Bertolini agreed to make a presentation for the next meeting.
- The suggestion was made to apply to the Universal Health Care Foundation for funding. Christine Vogel agreed that it would be a good idea once the Advisory Board is more directed with recommendations.
- A request was made to assure that recommendations are acceptable to consumers, physicians and medical practice administrators.

Subcommittees

There was general consensus among Advisory Board members to establish working subcommittees. The immediate task would be to start drafting interim recommendations for the February report. Within each area of focus, each subcommittee is responsible for addressing issues of affordability, sustainability and access. Cristine Vogel will help set subcommittee roles and responsibilities and will send out information so that Advisory Board member can assess their interest in serving. Committees should be flexible and fluid, last as long as the purpose allows and then disband.

1. Business Subcommittee – Chair: Rick Willard
2. Cost Containment Subcommittee (includes payment reform, health information technology and tort reform)
3. Impact of Federal Legislation – Chair: Commissioner Sullivan

Federal Health Care Reform Legislation

Commissioner Sullivan briefed the group on in the status of federal health care legislation. He handed out a side-by-side comparison of the Senate and House bills and two summaries of H.R. 3962: Affordable Health Care for America Act. As additional information is made available, Commissioner Sullivan will share it with the Advisory Board.

Next Steps

- Advisory Board members were invited to suggest speakers for future meetings.
- Mark Schaefer will explore what data he can gather about the number of licensed physicians in the state and the number participating in Medicaid.
- Mark Bertolini and Carole Noujaim will provide a presentation on existing actuarial studies relevant to health care reform in Connecticut at the December 3 meeting.
- Electronic copies of the HealthFirst Authority Report and the Primary Care Authority reports will be sent out to the Advisory Board in advance of the December 3 meeting.

Future Meetings

From 9:00 to 11:00 am in the Legislative Office Building, room 1A

- Thursday, December 3, 2009
- Thursday, December 17, 2009
- Thursday, January 7, 2010
- Thursday, January 21, 2010

The meeting was adjourned at 10:55 am.