

Healthcare Benchmark Initiative Steering Committee

Meeting Date	Meeting Time	Location
July 25, 2022	3:00 pm – 5:00 pm	Zoom Meeting Recording https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84111237738?pwd=a1dnWnAydW1CZkZVLys3cURKOEfMUT09

Participant Name and Attendance Steering Committee Members and Invited Guests					
Ben Alvarez	R	Jonathan Gonzalez-Cruz (<i>guest</i>)	R	Karen Moran	R
Stephanye Clarke	R	Paul Grady	R	Cassandra Murphy	R
Tiffany Donelson	X	Claudio Gualtieri	R	Chris O'Connor	X
Ted Doolittle	R	Angela Harris (<i>guest</i>)	X	Fiona Scott Morton	X
Judy Dowd	R	Ken Lalime	X	Kathy Silard	R
Jeff Flaks	X	Paul Lombardo	R	Chris Ulbrich	X
Lou Gianquinto	R	Andy Markowski	X	Kristen Whitney-Daniels (<i>guest</i>)	R
Deidre Gifford	R	Susan Millerick (<i>guest</i>)	R	Josh Wojcik	R
Brent Miller, OHS	R	Olga Armah, OHS	R	Michael Bailit, Bailit Health	R
Krista Moore, OHS	R	Kelly Sinko, OHS	R	Matt Reynolds, Bailit Health	R
Jeannina Thompson, OHS	R	Hanna Nagy, OHS	R		
Tina Hyde, OHS	R	R = Attended Remotely; IP = In Person; X = Did Not Attend			

Agenda			
	Topic	Responsible Party	Time
1.	Welcome, Introductions, and Roll Call	Claudio Gualtieri	3:00 pm
	Claudio Gualtieri welcomed everyone to the July Steering Committee meeting and acknowledged Vicki Veltri's departure from OHS and this Steering Committee. Claudio acknowledged Kim Martone as the newly appointed Acting Executive Director of OHS and introduced himself as the new Chair of the Steering Committee. Claudio also noted that OHS had invited several members of the Stakeholder Advisory Board to attend the meeting, introducing patient representatives Jonathan Gonzalez-Cruz, Susan Millerick, and Kristen Whitney-Daniels. Claudio then invited Matt Reynolds to conduct a roll call. There was a quorum present.		
2.	Public Comment	Members of Public	3:05 pm
	Claudio Gualtieri offered the opportunity for public comment. There were no public comments.		
3.	Committee Action: Approval of May 23, 2022 Minutes	Steering Committee Members	3:10 pm
	Karen Moran motioned to approve the May 23rd meeting minutes. Kathy Silard seconded the motion. Claudio Gualtieri abstained since he was not present at the May meeting. There was no opposition. The minutes were approved.		
	Kathy Silard requested that meeting materials be sent out several days in advance of future meetings to allow members sufficient time for review.		
4.	Virtual Meeting Etiquette	Claudio Gualtieri	3:15 pm
	Claudio Gualtieri reviewed expectations for Steering Committee virtual meeting etiquette, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> members should keep their cameras on and give their full attention to the meeting proceedings; if members need to temporarily step away to attend to a pressing matter, they should indicate as such in the meeting chat box, turn off their camera, and then turn their camera back on upon return, and members should actively participate during meeting discussions with respect, courtesy, and honesty as guiding principles. 		

5.	Discussion of Constructive Partnership for the Common Good	Steering Committee Members and Invited Guests	3:25 pm
	<p>Claudio Gualtieri outlined the need for the Steering Committee to work together to improve affordability, quality and equity in healthcare for Connecticut residents. Claudio asked each Steering Committee member and invited guest to answer the following two questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Why did you agree to serve on the Steering Committee (or Stakeholder Advisory Board)? 2. How can we all best work in constructive partnership to achieve the goals of the Healthcare Benchmark Initiative? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paul Grady stated he joined the Steering Committee because he is concerned about healthcare costs and tired of employers paying more for healthcare and shifting costs to employees. Paul discussed the importance of transparency to the Steering Committee’s work and added that he thought collaboration was needed on payment transformation. Paul thought the Steering Committee should be trying to leverage state initiatives across the marketplace. • Ben Alvarez noted that he moved to Connecticut to help move the state’s healthcare system towards value and he joined the Steering Committee because of this common interest. Ben thought a shared vision was needed as well as a willingness to be patient and suspend judgment and personal interests to hear out other points of view. • Susan Millerick stated that she joined the Stakeholder Advisory Board as a patient representative because she has frequent interactions with the healthcare system in Connecticut to manage several chronic conditions. • Josh Wojcik stated that he joined the Steering Committee because of the unsustainable rate of current healthcare cost growth that was creating and continues to create access challenges. Josh thought the Steering Committee needed shared goals as well as strategies that mitigate risks and maximize benefits. • Paul Lombardo stated that he joined the Steering Committee because of the increasing rate at which healthcare expenditures are growing. Paul thought that all stakeholders had to be willing to give a little to get a lot. • Lou Gianquinto stated that he joined the Steering Committee because Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield is a big part of the equation in Connecticut and it is one of Anthem’s major initiatives to control healthcare spending trend. Lou noted that lowering costs in the state is easier said than done, especially with market consolidation in the state. Lou stated that he thought it was necessary for the Steering Committee to think about collaborative models that make sense for all parties. Lou added that outcomes had to have the right incentives and reward improved outcomes. Lou also noted that pharmacy was a big issue needing to be addressed. Finally, Lou suggested the Steering Committee take a fresh look at new variables, including inflationary pressures and labor costs, and the impact of the pandemic on outcomes and case-mix. • Stephanye Clarke stated that she joined the Steering Committee because the body needed community representation. Stephanye added that she thought she could help bring the lens of community members and how they are impacted, as well as a public health perspective. Stephanye thought it was essential for the Steering Committee to provide space for all to talk to and listen to each other. • Kathy Silard stated that she joined the Steering Committee because as both a citizen and a healthcare leader, healthcare costs were and are spiraling uncontrollably. Kathy thought the Steering Committee needed to find good solutions that were actually going to work. Kathy stated that the Steering Committee needed to review best practices from other states. Kathy shared that she thought the Steering Committee needed to look beyond just hospital costs, pointing to the pharmaceutical industry in particular. Kathy thought it was necessary for the Steering Committee to recognize cost shifting from underpayment from Medicaid and Medicare as well as uncompensated care for the uninsured. Kathy also pointed to the need to recognize the impacts of inflation and the double digit increases in 		

labor costs. Finally, Kathy noted the need for the Steering Committee to work collectively to build on strengths of the current system to come up with solutions that would work for everybody.

- Jonathan Gonzalez-Cruz stated that he joined the Stakeholder Advisory Board because he is an organizer working with the uninsured, folks with unaffordable high-deductible plans, and employers that are unable to afford providing insurance for their employees. Jonathan noted that decision-makers more often listen to big industry than the people that are directly affected, so he joined to represent those individuals.
- Ted Doolittle stated that he joined the Steering Committee to address quality, access, and affordability, noting cost as the main barrier. Ted noted the importance of collaboration, trust, and patience. Ted shared that while U.S. health care prices are abnormal relative to international prices, the problem took 40 years to build and therefore will not be fixed overnight. Ted concluded that the Steering Committee needed to not just focus on spending trends but what is driving those trends and the decisions behind those trends.
- Cassandra Murphy stated that she joined the Steering Committee so that she could help make improvements for her organization’s members and funds, as well as others in the state. Cassandra noted that people tend to come to these meetings from their individual silos and with their industry perspectives but that instead people should put those aside and keep the broader picture in mind to work cohesively.
- Kristen Whitney-Daniels stated that she joined the Stakeholder Advisory Board to build relationships across different sectors, to access good data, and to be a part of decisions on what to do with that data. Kristen said she would like to see more consumer representation on the Steering Committee as well as a vision towards the future by deciding what to do with the information currently available.
- Karen Moran stated that she joined the Steering Committee to drive real change and learn from others. Karen thought that all members needed to be truly open and thoughtful about what the real drivers of cost growth are, have honest conversations, not take things personally, put consumers and their perspectives at the center of everything the Steering Committee does, and get comfortable with being uncomfortable.
- Sylvia Taylor, on behalf of Ken Lalime, shared that Ken joined the Steering Committee to make sure that community health centers and the patients they serve were represented in discussions on how to improve the healthcare system in the state. Sylvia noted that Ken believes in keeping the patient at the center of every decision, letting data be the driver of truth, and trust.
- Deidre Gifford and Judy Dowd were unable to share their responses to the questions posed but noted that they would share their thoughts with Claudio directly when able.

Susan Millerick observed that the pharmaceutical industry did not seem to be represented in the meeting’s discussion. Krista Moore noted that a pharmacy expert from the Stakeholder Advisory Board had been invited to join the meeting but was unable to attend.

6.	2022 Steering Committee Meeting Plan and Expected Outcomes	Michael Bailit and Claudio Gualtieri	4:25 pm
<p>Michael Bailit reviewed a draft meeting plan for the Steering Committee for the remainder of 2022, noting that the plan may be revised in response to the perspectives shared earlier in the meeting.</p> <p>Kathy Silard shared her view that it is important to understand Medicaid trends before the Steering Committee can craft solutions. Michael Bailit shared that mitigation strategies would take time to finalize so he thought those conversations could begin prior to the presentation of the Medicaid analyses, but be finalized after Medicaid trends are presented.</p> <p>Kathy Silard asked how benchmark results would be communicated to hospitals. Michael Bailit noted that OHS would build into the meeting plan a discussion of how information will be shared with insurers and Advanced Networks in advance of publication of benchmark findings. Michael added that OHS would also build into the meeting plan a discussion of the results of OHS’ annual review of inflation.</p>			

	<p>Paul Grady asked what OHS was doing to gauge current use of value-based payment models in Connecticut. Michael Bailit noted that Bailit Health had been working with OHS to determine how to go about measuring where Connecticut is today with value-based payment. Paul said he would like to see payment reform on the agenda for this year, adding that a key question he would like addressed is whether individual insurers have the leverage to make changes in how they are going to pay a provider.</p> <p>Ted Doolittle said that the agenda seemed to indicate to him that the main problems the Steering Committee was trying to address are pharmacy and Medicaid, and he did not understand why Medicaid was a major concern. Michael Bailit said that he would not characterize the presentation on Medicaid as indicating it as a major problem, but rather as an effort to complete the health care spending picture because OHS did not previously have the Medicaid APCD data to look at cost drivers. Kathy Silard added that 70% of all hospital discharges in the state come from Medicare and Medicaid.</p> <p>Claudio Gualtieri shared that he thought it was a reasonable goal for the Steering Committee to reach majority member agreement, and ideally full consensus, on recommendations for two cost growth mitigation strategies by December 31st to advance in 2023 and beyond. Paul Grady, Ben Alvarez, and Josh Wojcik expressed support for this goal.</p> <p>Claudio Gualtieri noted that the State reserved the right to proceed with independent action as necessary to further the interests of Connecticut residents, though the State would prefer for efforts to improve affordability, quality, and equity to be result of collaborative work by the various stakeholders represented on this Steering Committee.</p>		
7.	Wrap-Up and Next Steps	Claudio Gualtieri	4:55 pm
	<p>Claudio Gualtieri thanked everyone for their participation and welcomed anyone, including members of the public, to contact him personally with any additional thoughts or questions. Claudio shared that the next meeting would be held on Monday, August 22nd from 3-5 pm.</p>		
8.	<u>Committee Action</u>: Adjournment	Steering Committee Members	5:00 pm
	<p>Karen Moran motioned to adjourn the meeting. Ted Doolittle seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:24 pm.</p>		

Upcoming Meeting Dates:

- Monday, August 22nd
- Monday, September 26th
- Monday, October 24th
- Monday, November 21st
- Monday, December 19th

All meeting information and materials are published on the OHS website located at:

<https://portal.ct.gov/OHS/Pages/Healthcare-Benchmark-Initiative-Steering-Committee/Meeting-Agendas>