



**Michigan Department of Health and Human Services**  
Medical Services Administration

**Medical Care Advisory Council**

Meeting Minutes

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**Date:** Wednesday, February 24, 2021

**Time:** 1:00 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

**Where:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**Attendees:** **Council Members:** Jeff Towns, Amber Bellazaire, Alison Hirschel, April Stopczynski, Barry Cargill, Bill Mayer, Lisa Dedden Cooper, Deb Brinson, Dianne Haas, Dominick Pallone, Farah Jalloul, Chris George (for Amy Hundley), Jim Milanowski, Jason Jorkasky, Kim Singh, Marion Owen, Phillip Bergquist, Salli Pung, Stacie Saylor (for Rebecca Blake), Norm Hess, Amy Zaagman

**Staff:** Kate Massey, Lonnie Barnett, Brian Keisling, Pam Diebolt, Michelle Doeblor, Erin Emerson, Sara Grivetti, Farah Hanley, Phil Kurdunowicz, Amy Miller, Jackie Prokop, Steve Prichard, Penny Rutlege, Robert Swanson, Cindy Linn, Mary Beth Kern-Collins

**Other Attendees:** Randy Walainis, Angela Minicuci, Linda Jordan, Pooja Neiman, Tiffany Stone, Virginia Gibson, Rich Farran, Bobbi Kuyers

**Welcome, Introductions, Announcements**

Alison Hirschel opened the meeting and introductions were made.

**MDHHS Leadership Change**

**New Director - Elizabeth Hertel**

Kate Massey announced that Elizabeth Hertel, who formerly served as Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) Chief Deputy for Administration, was appointed by Governor Whitmer to serve as director of MDHHS on January 22, 2021. David Knezek has been selected as Ms. Hertel's replacement as Chief Deputy for Administration.

**Budget Update**

**Fiscal Year (FY)22 Budget Update**

Farah Hanley shared a PowerPoint presentation to provide details on the FY 2022 Executive Budget recommendation, and the document was discussed.

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### COVID-19 Updates

#### COVID-19 Immunization Update

Robert Swanson provided the following updates on COVID-19 immunization:

- As of February 24, 2021, vaccines manufactured by Pfizer and Moderna have received approval for use by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which must be administered in two doses.
- To date, over 1.9 million COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered in Michigan, which include:
  - 1.2 million individuals age 16 years and older (15% of Michigan's total population) who have received at least one dose of a vaccine,
  - 700,000 individuals aged 16 years and older (8.2% of Michigan's total population) who have received a second dose of COVID-19 vaccine,
  - 37% of individuals over the age of 65 who have received at least one dose of COVID-19 vaccine, and
  - 16.5% of individuals over the age of 65 who have received a second dose.
- Vaccine deliveries that had been delayed due to weather are expected to be completed by Friday, February 26, 2021. Further, Michigan is on track to receive 200,000 vaccine doses per week.
- A third vaccine manufactured by Johnson & Johnson, which will only require a single dose, is expected to receive approval for use by the FDA soon. Mr. Swanson indicated that this vaccine will be targeted for allocation to certain populations, including homebound individuals. In response to an inquiry, it was further indicated that homebound individuals will be among those prioritized for receiving the Johnson & Johnson vaccine due to the difficulty and costliness of reaching this population.
- The State of Michigan was among those states chosen by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for a pilot program to administer COVID-19 vaccine to Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) directly from the CDC, which would not be deducted from the state allocation.
- The State of Michigan is working to distribute COVID-19 vaccine to the two Tribes within the state who did not elect to receive their vaccine allotment directly from the federal government through Indian Health Services.
- Mr. Swanson shared that MDHHS is working to implement a program that will encourage special vaccination and outreach projects focusing on people ages 60 and older in communities with the high Social Vulnerability Index (SVI) and high COVID mortality rates. The department is seeking applications from provider groups to administer COVID-19 vaccines under this program. Each applicant may apply for up to 2,500 doses. Applications are available on the MDHHS website at [www.michigan.gov/covidvaccine](http://www.michigan.gov/covidvaccine).
- Meeting attendees were referred to the [COVID-19 Vaccine Dashboard](#) for metrics on COVID-19 Vaccine distribution, including race data.

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MDHHS staff and meeting attendees continued to discuss COVID-19 vaccination outreach efforts at length.

### **COVID-19 Vaccines for Homebound Individuals**

Sara Grivetti shared that the MDHHS Public Health Administration, Aging and Adult Services Administration, and Medical Services Administration are working together to develop a strategy for administering COVID-19 vaccinations to homebound individuals. Ms. Grivetti noted that such an effort will be complex as it includes identifying those who are truly homebound, scheduling vaccine appointments, coordination with a vaccinator, and administering the vaccine in a way that offers a level of comfort for the person receiving the vaccine when the vaccinator enters the home. The local Area Agencies on Aging are also assisting with the department's efforts to identify homebound individuals. In addition, MDHHS intends to reach out to beneficiaries of other Medicaid programs (e.g., Program of All-Inclusive Care for the Elderly [PACE], Home Help, etc.) who are homebound as part of this strategy. A meeting attendee requested that the Department consider providing vaccine administration reimbursement for provider types who do not typically provide vaccines. In response, MDHHS staff outlined current COVID-19 Vaccine Administration policy as described in [Bulletin MSA 20-75](#) (issued December 23, 2020), and indicated the Department would explore extending reimbursement to additional provider types. MDHHS staff and meeting attendees continued to discuss this issue.

### **Extension of Federal Public Health Emergency (PHE)**

The Biden administration sent a letter to the states indicating their intent to continue the PHE throughout 2021 and that states will be notified 60 days prior to the expiration. In addition, the current enhanced Federal Matching Assistance Percentage (FMAP) rate for services to treat COVID-19 is extended through the end of the fiscal quarter in which the PHE is terminated.

### **Coverage of FDA Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) Drugs, Devices, and Biological Products**

MDHHS staff provided a summary of bulletin [MSA 20-81](#)-COVID-19 Response: Coverage of FDA EUA Drugs, Devices and Biological Products for COVID-19 Prevention and Treatment, issued February 2, 2021.

### **Long-Term Care**

#### **Long-Term Care COVID-19 Immunizations and Data**

MDHHS staff shared an update on the Federal Pharmacy Partnership for Long-Term Care (LTC). A PowerPoint presentation was provided and the document was discussed.

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### Education and Promotion Activities

MDHHS staff from the office of communications shared information on the department's efforts to promote COVID-19 vaccine administration, and invited meeting attendees to share educational materials developed by department staff. A PowerPoint presentation was provided and the document was discussed.

### **Update for Care and Recovery Centers (CRCs) and COVID-19 Relief Facilities**

The purpose of CRCs is to provide care for COVID-19 positive patients discharging from a hospital or residents from nursing facilities that are unable to care for residents with confirmed COVID-19 positive who have not met the criteria for discontinuation of Transmission-Based Precautions, but do not require hospitalization. As of February 17, 2021, there are 23 operational CRCs in Michigan with a total of 459 beds operating statewide, with 82% of these beds currently available. In correspondence with a recent decline in COVID-19 case rates and COVID-19-related hospitalizations, MDHHS has received requests to decommission certain CRCs and reduce bed capacity. In response, the department is continuing to monitor trending COVID-19 data to inform future decisions about a potential reduction in CRC capacity.

Public Act (PA) 231 of 2020 requires that in order for a nursing facility to maintain or admit COVID-19 positive residents, the facility must seek approval from MDHHS and demonstrate that there are staff and facilities available that are dedicated to treating **only** COVID-19 positive patients as a condition of approval. The requirements of PA 231 of 2021 are further outlined in bulletin [MSA 20-73](#), issued November 16, 2020, and [MSA 20-78](#), issued November 30, 2020.

### **Long-Term Care Facility Visitation**

Erin Emerson announced that due to the progress of ongoing COVID-19 vaccination efforts and the decline in COVID-19 cases, MDHHS is considering an expansion of long-term care facility visitation policy. Under the current MDHHS guidance, long-term care facility visitation is only allowed in counties with a risk level of A, B, C, or D as determined by the MI Safe Start Plan if the facility has not had a positive COVID-19 case within 14 days, unless the local health department has determined that the facility should not allow visitors. As of February 19, 2021, over 50 Michigan counties were determined to have a COVID-19 risk level lower than "E".

Citing the negative health effects among nursing home residents that can result from social isolation away from family members, Bill Mayer further encouraged the department to allow greater opportunity for long term care facility visitation, especially as vaccination rates increase. In response, Ms. Emerson noted that no final decisions have been made, but that MDHHS staff are actively discussing the possibility of broadly allowing nursing home visitation with limited exceptions as vaccination and COVID-19 case rates allow. MDHHS staff and meeting attendees continued to discuss this issue.

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### **MIChoice - PACE Ombudsmen Program**

Alison Hirschel announced that the Michigan Elder Justice Initiative (MEJI) has received funding to start a new Ombudsman program to advocate for and support the needs of MIChoice, PACE, and Community Transition Services applicants and participants that will begin on March 1, 2021.

### **Electronic Visit Verification (EVV) Update**

MDHHS is continuing to move forward with implementing an EVV system for providers of personal care services as required by the 21<sup>st</sup> Century CURES Act. The development of the EVV system has been delayed; the department now plans to complete development of the EVV system by FY 2022 with a planned implementation for FY 2023. In response to an inquiry, Sara Grivetti confirmed that MDHHS will notify providers directly about the delay and give advance notice prior to the new implementation date. MDHHS is also working to obtain CMS approval for the new implementation date.

### **Maternal and Child Health Updates**

#### **12 Months Post-Partum Coverage**

MDHHS has received funding in the FY21 budget to extend Medicaid coverage for pregnant women from 60 days post-partum to 12 months post-partum and is exploring options for implementation.

### **Healthy Michigan Plan (HMP)**

#### **Caseload Growth**

Jackie Prokop discussed the impact of the current COVID-19 PHE on HMP enrollment and shared that there are currently 885,500 beneficiaries enrolled in HMP, compared to 694,000 HMP enrollees in February 2020. Much of this increase is due to the MDHHS suspension of Medicaid case closures for the duration of the PHE except in limited circumstances beginning March 18, 2020 as described in bulletin [MSA 20-19](#).

#### **Supreme Court Oral Arguments Date**

Erin Emerson shared that oral arguments in the Supreme Court on an appeal over Medicaid work requirement programs in Arkansas and New Hampshire are currently scheduled to take place on March 29, 2021. Following the action by CMS to notify states of its determination that work requirements are not compatible with the purpose of Medicaid, the U.S. Solicitor General filed a motion asking the Court to remove the case from its docket. As of February 24, 2021, no action had been taken on this motion.

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### **Policy Updates**

A policy update handout was distributed and the following item was discussed:

- MSA 20-49 - COVID-19 Response: Update to Bulletin MSA 20-17 - ICD-10-CM Coding Guidance and Exemption of Co-Pays for Services to Treat COVID-19.

### **Future Agenda Items**

Bill Mayer invited meeting attendees to share potential topics to include on the agenda for the next MCAC meeting to take place on May 26, 2021.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:49 p.m.

*Next Meeting: May 26, 2021*