



Medicaid Advisory Committee Meeting
March 10, 2026
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 PM
LDH/Bienville: Room 118
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:

Allen "Al" Thibodeaux – *Beneficiary Advisory Council*
Annelies De Wulf, MD, MPH, FAIM – *LSU Health Sciences*
Cheryll Bowers-Stephens, MD, MBA – *Healthy Blue*
Damien Cuffie, DDS, MPH – *DentaQuest*
Joe R. Rosier, Jr., CFA – *The Rapides Foundation*
Joseph Biggio, Jr., MD, MS - *Ochsner*
Justin Bennet, FNP-BC – *Rural Health Nursing*
Julie Morial, MD – *AmeriHealth Caritas*
Kathleen Willis, MD – **Acting Chair, LDH**
Larry Humble, PharmD, PhD – *University of Louisiana Monroe*
Laura Drake, MD – *Strawberry Patch Pediatrics & Family Clinic*
Michael Bodin, MD – *OLOL Physicians Group*
Michael Giorlando, DDS – *MCNA*
Rep. Stephanie Berault – *Louisiana House of Representatives*
Steve B. Spedale, MD, FAAP – *Infamedics*
Steven Youngblood, MD – *Humana Healthcare*
Stewart T. Gordon, MD – *Louisiana Health Care Connections*
Theresa Stevenson – *Beneficiary Advisory Council*

Members Absent

Ann Kay Cefalu Logarbo, MD, FAAP – *Aetna*
Floyd Roberts, Jr., MD – *Louisiana Hospital Association*
Gerrelda Davis, MBA – *Louisiana Primary Care Association*
Jamie Duplechine - *Advocate*
Sen. Regina Barrow – *Louisiana State Senate*
Tonya Joiner, JD – *Louisiana Department of Health*
Vanessa de la Cruz, MD – *Office of Behavioral Health*
Wes Hataway – *Louisiana Nursing Home Association*
Yvonne Dominique, MS, RN – *Department of Children and Family Services*

1. Roll Call

Kate Stewart conducted the roll call, confirming a quorum with 18 of 28 members present. Dr. Julie Morial announced that Dr. Rodney Wise has retired and that she has now taken on the role of CMO at AmeriHealth.

2. Call to Order

Dr. Kathleen Willis called the meeting to order at 1:04 p.m.

3. Medicaid Program Updates – *Dr. Kathleen Willis*

The Regular Legislative Session began on Monday, March 9, 2026. Dr. Willis announced her transition to the Office of Women’s Health, indicating she will no longer be involved with LDH Medicaid.

4. Medicaid Medical Director Updates – *Dr. Kathleen Willis*

MAC and Subcommittee Appointments and Nominations

Dr. Willis announced Jordan Losavio as a new MAC member and nominated her to serve as Chair of the Thrive Well Subcommittee. She clarified that Thrive Well focuses on addressing often overlooked factors that influence health.

Dr. Spedale made a motion to nominate Jordan Losavio as Thrive Well’s Chair. Dr. Biggio seconded the motion. The motion is passed.

Review Minutes from November 18, 2025, Meeting

The committee reviewed the meeting minutes from November 18, 2025, which they had received in advance.

Al Thibodeaux made the motion to accept the meeting minutes without changes. Justin Bennett seconded. The motion is passed.

Bylaws

The MAC Bylaws were updated and distributed to the committee ahead of the meeting for review. The revisions involved correcting grammatical errors, adding the new Thrive Well Subcommittee, removing the LMTU Subcommittee, modifying voting procedures for subcommittee chairs, and updating CMS language regarding term limits.

Dr. Gordon made the motion to accept the updated bylaws. Dr. Spedale seconded the motion. The motion is passed.

HR 1 Medicaid Work Requirements

Dr. Willis summarized the HR 1 job requirements for Medicaid expansion recipients.

- The new federal law requires some adults on Medicaid to report their work or community engagement hours to keep their health coverage.

- Of the 1.5 million Louisiana Medicaid members, 1.2 million will not be affected.
- The changes will be implemented starting January 1, 2027.
- It is recommended that members keep their contact information up to date with LA Medicaid.

5. Presentation by Robin Gruenfeld

Robin Gruenfeld, March of Dimes Director of MCH Collective Impact and CBSS Subcommittee, presented on the report “Medicaid Investments for a Healthy Louisiana,” which was created in response to HR 246 (CBSS Subcommittee). The subcommittee recommends that Louisiana create a Community Information Exchange and Community Care Hubs. The full presentation can be found [here](#).

6. Subcommittee and BAC Updates

Adult Medicine – Dr. Michael Bodin, Chair

- Continued focus on access to care.
- Interested in assessing quality metrics.
- Potentially collaborating with MCOs for possible wellness contracts.

Behavioral Health – Dr. Lannis Tynes, Chair

- Dr. Tynes is stepping down from the subcommittee chair position.
- Assessing the quality of data.
- Brainstorming ways to improve access to mental health services and conducting an in-depth analysis of resident clinics.

Community-Based Social Services (CBSS) – Nick Albares, Chair

- Nick has stepped down as Chair of the CBSS subcommittee.

Dental – Dr. Nicholas G. Mosca, Chair

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Emergency Medicine – Dr. Annelies De Wulf, Chair

- Ongoing interest in evaluating whether employing Community Health Workers (CHWs) reduces Emergency Department visits.
- The data shared by Dr. Willis at the previous MAC meetings has been beneficial.

Discussion: Dr. DeWulf stated she is interested in reviewing the quality measures. She asked when they would become available.

Response: Kate Stewart informed her that the measures are being finalized and the technical specifications are currently being developed. She mentioned that the list will be shared with the MAC.

Discussion: Dr. Bowers-Stephens mentioned that a cancer navigation and bridge clinic will be introduced.

Neonatology – Dr. Steve Spedale, Chair

- Surveys were sent to all level 2 and 3 NICUs in the state regarding lactation specialists.
 - Breast pumps were offered at 70% of hospitals
 - 100% referred to WIC
 - 20% during hospitalizations

- Partnering with breast pump manufacturers to provide vouchers for patients to receive hospital-grade breast pumps.

Discussion: Dr. Bowers-Stephens asked how we are compared to other states.

Response: Dr. Spedale stated that he is unsure.

Obstetrics – Dr. Joseph Biggio, Chair

- The subcommittee met in December, and the next meeting is March 24, 2026.
- The subcommittee aims to connect patients with the appropriate resources that can assist them with postpartum support.
- Examining the main risk factors.
- Dr. Biggio mentioned that many changes in care coordination can result in missed opportunities.

Pediatrics – Dr. Laura Drake, Chair

- The subcommittee is continuing to discuss the topic of health care access.
 - Long Term Care Therapy
 - Credentialing process and prescriptive authority
- Looking to create proposals by the May meeting.
- Dr. Willis stated that she would like to have quarterly updates.

Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC) – Al Thibodeaux, Chair

- No updates

7. Open Forum

Discussion: Participants confirmed the reimbursement rate for CHWs. The state reimburses CHWs \$18.11 per 30-minute session, with a minimum of 16 minutes of interaction required. This reimbursement requires a provider order for authorization.

Response: Dr. Humble suggested that reviewing claims data could be beneficial. Relevant codes include 98960, 98961, and 98962.

Discussion: Dr. Bodin noted that understanding more about CHWs would be helpful, as he mentioned being unaware of the full scope of their roles. He also suggested that knowing their locations and having a central hub, as mentioned in Robin’s presentation, would be advantageous.

Response: Some members proposed that Ashley Winnerstrum attend the meeting to present on CHWs.

Discussion: Joe Rosier expressed concerns regarding the financial aspects of the CHW hubs he helped create. He mentioned that expecting the MCOs to cover the overhead costs seems unrealistic.

Dr. Youngblood expressed support for the CBSS’s CHW Hub proposal but acknowledged that it will be an uphill battle.

Response: Robin clarified that the hubs will serve as the contracting entity for the MCOs, including contract management. The hub will serve as a centralized location for all contracts with MCOs and Community-Based Organizations (CBOs). Essentially, it will be where administrative services are based.

Discussion: Robin noted that increasing benefits and pay might draw more people to become CHWs.

Discussion: Justin Bennet asked Robin whether exchanging communication information would be considered the same as sharing electronic records.

Response: Robin said that it is the same.

Discussion: Theresa Stevenson mentioned that the Medicaid member is not integrated into the ecosystem presented by Robin. She noted that members are often unavailable during typical work hours, such as 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., and believes this issue should be addressed and incorporated into future developments.

Response: Robin reassured Theresa that members are central to the development of this system. She explained that the presentation's main focus was to highlight the process between the hub and MCOs.

Public Comment: None

8. Adjourn

Dr. Spedale made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Justin Bennet seconded the motion. The motion is passed. Meeting adjourned at 2:27 p.m.

2026 Meeting Dates:

- May 12, 2026
- August 11, 2026
- November 10, 2026