Medicaid Advisory Committee Meeting
August 12, 2025
1:00 p.m. – 3:00 PM
LDH/Bienville: Room 118
Meeting Minutes

Members Present:
Ann Kay Cefalu Logarbo, MD, FAAP – *Aetna*
Cheryll Bowers-Stephens, MD, MBA – *Healthy Blue*
Damien Cuffie, DDS, MPH – *DentaQuest*
Eboness Black – *Volunteers of America*
Gerrelda Davis, MBA – *Louisiana Primary Care Association*
Joe R. Rosier, Jr., CFA – *The Rapides Foundation*
Joseph Biggio, Jr., MD, MS - *Ochsner*
Kathleen Willis, MD – ***Acting Chair*, *LDH***
Kevin Stephens, MD – *Humana*
Larry Humble, PharmD, PhD – *University of Louisiana Monroe*
Michael Bodin, MD – *OLOL Physicians Group*
Michael Giorlando, DDS – *MCNA*
Rodney Wise, MD – *AmeriHealth Caritas of Louisiana*
Steve B. Spedale, MD, FAAP – *Infamedics*
Stewart T. Gordon, MD – *Louisiana Health Care Connections*
Tonya Joiner – *Louisiana Department of Health*, ***Present by Proxy***
Vanessa de la Cruz, MD – *Louisiana Department of Health*
Wes Hataway – *Louisiana Nursing Home Association,* ***Present by Proxy***
Yvonne Dominigue, MS, RN – *Department of Children and Family Services*

Members Absent
Annelies De Wulf, MD, MPH, FAIM – *LSU Health Sciences*
David M. Carter, DMD – *Smiles Family Dentistry Orthodontics*
Floyd Roberts, Jr., MD – *Louisiana Hospital Association*
Glenda Johnson, MD – *United Healthcare Community*
Jamie Duplechine - *Advocate*
Justin Bennet, FNP-BC – *Rural Health Nursing*
Mark Keiser, MBA, MPH – *Access Health Louisiana*
Rep. Stephanie Berault – *Louisiana House of Representatives*
Sen. Regina Barrow – *Louisiana State Senate*

LOUISIANA DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by Dr. Kathleen Willis at 1:05 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Kate Stewart conducted the roll call; a quorum was met, with 19 out of 28 members present.

3. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

- Review of minutes from the November 12, 2024, meeting. Quorum was not met at the May meeting, so the committee reviewed the minutes during the current meeting. Dr. Steve Spedale made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Dr. Stewart T. Gordon seconded. Motion is passed.
- The minutes from the previous meeting on May 13, 2025, were reviewed. A motion to approve the minutes was made by Dr. Ann Kay Logarbo and seconded by Dr. Steve Spedale. The minutes were approved as presented.

4. Medicaid Program Updates

Kolynda Parker provided updates on the Medicaid program.

- MAC members were emailed the revised Quality Strategy on Friday, August 8, 2025. Feedback was requested by August 20, 2025.
    - CMS requires a revised quality strategy to be submitted every three years.
    - Revised items include: Performance Improvement Project (PIP) topics, performance measures, and dental.
    - Additional updates include the Office of Public Health's (OPH) STI/HIV/Hepatitis Program (Louisiana State Health Improvement Plan).
- The Secretary hosted the Quality and Value Convention on July 15 and 16, 2025.
    - Revisions to the strategy are forthcoming to include additional items from the convention.

Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC) Updates and Intro

Presented by Dr. Kathleen Willis

- The first BAC meeting was convened on July 9, 2025.
- The council is comprised of 10 BAC members.
- The meeting provided insight into the purpose, mission, goals, and action items of the council.
- BAC members also voted on the Chair and Co-Chair.
    - Al Thibodeaux – Chair
    - Theresa Stevenson – Co-Chair

Members of the BAC who attended this meeting, including the Chair and Co-Chair, introduced themselves to the MAC and provided summaries of their professional backgrounds and experiences.

CMS Access Rule Updates:

Dr. Kathleen Willis stated that CMS has introduced new requirements for MACs and BACs. A key requirement involves implementing term limits as well as:

- Members of the MAC and BAC will serve for a term length determined by the state, which may not be immediately followed by a consecutive term for the same member, on a rotating and continuous basis.
- The bylaws will be revised to include the new CMS requirements.
- Terms could be staggered to adhere to the rule without having turnover of the entire committee at the end of each term

Discussion: Gerrelda Davis inquired whether another person from the provider group or MCO can serve on the committee, or if this means the entire MCO or provider group will no longer be eligible to serve on the MAC. Tim Williams and Kolynda Parker confirmed that the requirements apply only to a person and not to the organization.
Response: Kate Stewart spoke that a person can return to the committee as long as the allotted time has passed.

- The state will determine what that time frame is. For example, 3 years in between the last term or 5 years in between the previous term could be the time required for the member to be off the committee before returning.
- 1, 3, and 5-year term durations could be used to help stagger the terms.

Discussion: Yvonne Domingue inquired whether state agencies would still maintain a presence on the committee.
Response: Kolynda Parker stated that the bylaws state which organizations participate in the MAC. The CMS Final Rule specifies which organizations can participate, but none of the organizations currently on the MAC need to be removed under the Final Rule. Ms. Parker said that LDH does not plan to remove any organization.
Response: Kate Stewart clarified that CMS requires state agencies to serve on the committee, but CMS will now require them to be non-voting ex officio members.

Discussion: Kolynda Parker asked when the new bylaws will be available.
Response: Tim Williams stated that the revised bylaws should be available at the November meeting.

Suggestions: Dr. Steve Spedale suggested doing 5-year terms due to multiple changes and high turnover within organizations. Dr. Kevin Stephens suggested staggered terms of 1, 3, and 5 years.

Discussion: Dr. Michael Giorlando asked if there were any specifications regarding Dental organizations.
Response:

- Kolynda Parker stated that requirements would be no different than the MCOs.
- Kate Stewart stated that CMS requires all managed care entities, which include dental.
- Kolynda Parker stated the new requirements do not pertain to subcommittees.

Discussion: Dr. Spedale asked whether current committee members could start a new term now and then be required to spend time off the committee before returning, or whether members need to spend time off the committee immediately.
Response: Kolynda states the team will ask CMS and report back.

Subcommittee Implementation Form

Dr. Kathleen Willis presented the Subcommittee Quarterly Update Form and the Subcommittee Project Form.

- The Subcommittee Project Form is for the subcommittees to document their plans and goals for the year.
- The Quarterly Update form is to capture the subcommittee's progress and adjust plans as needed.

5. Presentation by Dr. Wyche Coleman

Dr. Wyche Coleman delivered a presentation outlining the Surgeon General's Office's Medicaid objectives in Louisiana. Among them are:

- Lowering barriers to access for Medicaid patients
- Case Management and Doctor-Patient Relationships
- Prior Authorization Improvements/Gold Carding
- Have "able-bodied" persons be independently insured

Discussion: Dr. Bowers-Stephens spoke that the MCO contract requires Managed Care Organizations to implement some form of utilization management. This process is essential to controlling costs and addressing quality.
Response: Dr. Wyche Coleman stated that Louisiana health data should be housed in one location. He also asked if MAC members could provide some recommendations and thoughts on goal carding.

- Gold carding is a program that waives prior authorization requirements for providers who consistently demonstrate high approval rates for their prior authorization requests.
- MCOs approve it rather than the provider needing to wait for a decision before providing care.

Discussion: Dr. Kevin Stephens asked if there is a randomized study showing the validity of gold carding.
Response: Dr. Wyche Coleman stated there was not.
Response: Dr. Kevin Stephens noted that he would be willing to partner with him on a study.

Response: Dr. Ann Kay Logarbo stated that a health plan she previously worked for in Louisiana implemented gold carding and encountered financial losses as a result.

- She emphasized that gold carding is not an effective tool. According to Dr. Logarbo, MCOs use prior authorization not to deny care but to ensure that services provided are evidence-based.
- Dr. Logarbo noted that Aetna reviews prior authorization and denial data quarterly and adjusts requirements as needed.
- Dr. Logarbo cautioned that if the state adopts gold carding for Medicaid members, it could face severe financial consequences.

6. Subcommittee Updates

*Adult Medicine – **Dr. Michael Bodin, Chair***

- Dr. Bodin stated he was looking for guidance from Medicaid on goals for the subcommittee.
  - Dr. Willis responded that she will have a meeting with the Subcommittee Chairs soon.

*Behavioral Health – **Dr. Lannis Tynes, Chair***

- The subcommittee welcomed a new member.
- Ford Baker has retired. He was an LDH staff member who helped compile and interpret data.
- Overview of the secretary's quality convention.
  - Candace Grace and Dr. Tynes are both on the behavioral workgroup.

*Community-Based Social Services – **Nick Albares, Chair***

- Resource directory completed
- Looking at new members from PelEX and LOUISIANA 211 as it pertains to care coordination.
- Legislative-mandated report is due in February.
  - Mr. Albares would like to know what other taskforces and committees have been set up in the last 5 years that help with the upstream of health.
- Surveying the landscape of what is already out there for community-based services and asks MAC members to provide these services to him.

*Dental – **Dr. Nicholas G. Mosca, Chair***

- Next quarterly meeting will be on September 25.
- Invited BAC members to attend to provide input.
- The subcommittee had a project that was focused on stopping the possible ban of community water fluoridation. The bill did not pass.
- Looking to collaborate with other subcommittees.
- Upcoming Project: Adult Waiver Program and the use of anesthesia services in dental offices.
  - Oral evaluation for members aged 15-20 years.
  - Potential opportunities to provide access to services with pregnant women.
  - Access to Veterans
    - 280k veterans in the state

  - Veterans have to be 100% disabled to gain access to dental services

*Emergency Medicine – **Dr. Annelies De Wulf, Chair***

- N/A: Dr. Wulf was not present at this meeting.

*Neonatology – **Dr. Steve Spedale, Chair***

- Discussions of Hospital Grade Breast Pumps
  - Hospital Pumps are more expensive.
  - Medicaid coverage does not guarantee eligibility.
  - Delays in members getting breast pumps.
- Interested in assessing data and a possible pilot project. More details to come.

*Obstetrics – **Dr. Joseph Biggio, Chair***

- The group hasn't met, but continues to work on addressing quality metrics and adherence to screening
- Screening and treatment for syphilis/congenital syphilis.
- Adherence to postpartum follow-up, especially the role it plays in heart health and mental health.
- Considerations raised to the MAC:
  - Louisiana extended Medicaid while pregnant for 12 months, so if there is a subsequent pregnancy, those things can be avoided, but the question is, how are we really taking charge of those 12 months? Need check-ups for diabetes and heart health.
  - How do we help with doulas and do it in a way that is responsible and respectful to everyone?
- Transportation issues
  - When patients have to go to another center for better care, transportation is harder.

Dr. Logarbo stated that case management could be an issue.

Theresa Stevenson, a BAC member, recommended that doctors should encourage patients to enroll in case management for the greatest success. She stated that if the doctor had not told her, she wouldn't have opted in.

Pediatrics – Vacant

- N/A

Laboratory Medicine and Test Utilization – Vacant

- N/A

Dr. Willis reminds members to send Chair recommendations to her and QualityCommittee@la.gov.

7. Open Forum

- Dr. Gordon recommended that Dr. Willis reach out to somebody at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) for the Pediatric Subcommittee Chair.

- Dr. Tynes suggested there should be a “retreat” for the MAC and Subcommittees to increase collaboration and refine the goals of the group.

A member of the public stated their grievances with the committee regarding case management. The speaker said they are frustrated that the parent is required to discuss the exact diagnosis details with multiple people. The speaker feels this is a tedious task and would like to deal with only one person.

8. Adjourn

Dr. Spedale motioned to adjourn the meeting. Dr. Biggio seconded. The motion is passed.

Meeting adjourned at 2:41 p.m.