



Provider Engagement Meeting
Louisiana Department of Health
February 18, 2022: 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Meeting Minutes

Welcome and Introduction: *Dr. Marcus Bachhuber*

- Dr. Marcus Bachhuber made welcomes and introductions.

Medicaid Executive Director Remarks: *Patrick Gilles*

- LDH is working on an extended enrollment period through April 1, 2022, for postpartum coverage for women.
- The Provider Enrollment Portal was down for about three weeks because a security issue was discovered through testing.
 - A full forensic audit that went back a few years was completed, and it was determined that no provider data had been released.
 - The portal reopened on February 14, 2022.
 - A request was sent to CMS to extend the current March deadline to allow providers to apply by June 30, 2022. Providers who do not register will not be able to participate in Medicaid after that date.

Medicaid Program Updates: *Dr. Marcus Bachhuber*

- Dr. Bachhuber stated that the second annual Experience of Care Report has recently been issued. This summarizes results of surveys performed by the MCOs on the experience of care for their members.
- Dr. Bachhuber stated that the annual HEDIS report has recently been issued. It summarizes the results of HEDIS measures in a narrative form and compares incentivized measures to targets and the prior year.
- Dr. Bachhuber stated that the new Health Plan Report Card has been posted online. The Health Plan Report Card summarizes health plan performance in various categories using a star rating system based on National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) guidelines. It's designed to help members select a plan for themselves and their families.
- Dr. Bachhuber explained the following Quality Dashboard updates:
 - The time period terminology can be confusing because it refers to the measurement year. For example, currently 2020 HEDIS refers to care that happened in 2019 but was reported in 2020.
 - This terminology is being updated. The year will refer to when the care occurred. For example, 2020 HEDIS will refer to care that happened in 2020 and was reported in 2021.
 - The Quality Dashboard has been updated with this change. All years on the dashboard now refer to the year when the care occurred.
- Dr. Bachhuber provided the following updates on the Provider Enrollment Portal:
 - The Provider Enrollment Portal is live and providers should be able to access it.
 - Medicaid sent a letter with instructions to all providers.
 - If a provider does receive the letter, they can send an email, which must include the provider name and NPI. Providers will receive a confirmation email from Gainwell when the email is received, including an anticipated response time.

- Dr. Bachhuber provided the following updates on the MCO RFP:
 - LDH announced its intent to award MCO contracts to five entities.
 - However, the 14-day protest period began on February 12, 2022, and will end on February 25, 2022.
 - If there are any questions, please refer to the LDH MCO RFP website.
- Dr. Bachhuber provided the following information about the LDH Business Plan:
 - This is an initiative by the LDH Secretary to advance certain priorities, including initiatives around maternal and child health.
 - Maternal Health has two focus areas in the first year: 1) technology to improve pregnancy care, which includes remote patient monitoring and telehealth and 2) services and supports to enhance breastfeeding for new moms
 - Remote patient monitoring is being explored as part of this business plan.
 - Dr. Bachhuber provided the following information about the LDH Business Plan:
- Dr. Bachhuber further explained the remote patient monitoring initiative from the LDH Business Plan:
 - Discussions were held with stakeholders, subject matter experts, and the Perinatal Commission.
 - Research was done on how to expand coverage and the estimated of eligible members.
 - Most of the MCOs offer some sort of remote patient monitoring services for pregnant enrollees, either through a vendor or direct provider reimbursement.
 - LDH is also conducting a fiscal analysis to look at the fiscal impact of coverage and also researching technology options to improve access to care.
- Dr. Bachhuber further explained the breastfeeding enhancement initiative from the LDH Business Plan:
 - LDH has added coverage of human milk flexible plastic storage bags, which is more convenient and easier to store than the already covered polycarbonate bottles. This will be posted for publication and added to manuals over the next few weeks.
 - LDH is proposing a clinical and reimbursement policy that expands covered lactation services. LDH held a series of focus groups to understand the current landscape, services, and support that would be most helpful.
- Dr. Bachhuber informed attendees of LDH's 2021 MCO Performance Improvement Project (PIP) to increase developmental screenings:
 - In collaboration with the Office of Public Health, the objective of this PIP was to increase the number of Medicaid-insured children ages 0-3 years old who receive a developmental screening.
 - LDH found that screening increased in 2021 by about 10%, with the final screening rate at about 22%, calculated by measuring the new procedure code. The screening rate may be higher than 22%, but that is the rate found by looking at procedure codes.
- Dr. Bachhuber discussed LDH's work in increasing Medicaid pediatric vaccination rates:
 - LDH is collaborating with existing immunization programs and health systems to direct vaccination catchup efforts in areas that have below average vaccination rates in the pediatric Medicaid population.
 - The development of infrastructure is needed, such as the creation of an internal analysis database in order to more easily cross-link vaccine information with Medicaid enrollment data.
 - LDH participated in a multi-state Community of Practice through the CDC to explore interventions and strategies to increase uptake.
 - LDH met with other states and some subject matter experts in Louisiana on HPV vaccinations, specifically in adolescents, to discuss some barriers and successes that have occurred elsewhere.
 - The next steps are 1) to complete a draft plan to identify the gaps and 2) to develop interventions in the next phase of the business plan.
- Dr. Bachhuber informed attendees of LDH's initiatives to increase fluoride varnish application:

- A MCO Performance Improvement Project (PIP) to increase fluoride varnish for enrollees aged 6 months through 5 years by primary care clinicians was started in 2022.
- LDH aims to increase the provision of fluoride varnish in the medical home by 500 applications for Medicaid-enrolled children.
- Participation in an oral health affinity group project is ongoing.
- LDH disseminated a survey on barriers to fluoride varnish applications in early February, looking forward to getting feedback.
- LDH is preparing a webinar series for providers in conjunction with the provider associations and the MCOs.
- Dr. Bachhuber reported on the Health Equity Action Team (HEAT)'s recent activities:
 - A health equity policy checklist has been created. This checklist can serve as a guide when checking for appropriate language when reviewing policy manuals or any other public-facing documents. Health equity considerations can be reflected in the language being used.
 - The HEAT is looking at ways to update the Medicaid enrollment experience survey, like adding new questions, to gain insight into equity in the enrollment/application process.
- Dr. Bachhuber updated attendees on the new coverage of Community Health Worker (CHW) services
 - New CHW services will be added to the state plan amendments. They include: 1) health promotion and coaching, 2) care planning with beneficiaries and healthcare team, and 3) health system navigation resource and coordination.
 - The CHW would provide services under the supervision of a physician, advanced practice registered nurse, or physician assistant.
 - More information will be available after CMS issues approval and the state plan amendments are updated.

COVID-19 Updates: Dr. Marcus Bachhuber

- Dr. Marcus Bachhuber stated that as a federal requirement, LDH currently covers at-home COVID-19 test distribution for pharmacies (up to 8 test per month per member), if the test has received a EUA and does not require additional technology or skills to administer/process. The pharmacy must submit a claim to Medicaid to be reimbursed.
- Dr. Marcus Bachhuber provided information on the following COVID-19 medication coverage:
 - LDH is now covering the dispensing oral COVID-19 antivirals. The medications themselves are currently distributed to providers at no cost, and no PA is required.
 - LDH covers COVID-19 pre-exposure prophylaxis administration, as required by federal law. The medications themselves are currently distributed to providers at no cost. It is covered through the medical benefit because it requires two deep intramuscular injections.
- Dr. Bachhuber explained that the following flexibilities remain in place: coverage of COVID-19 testing, coverage of FDA approved antibody testing, coverage of at-home tests per the CDC guidelines, coverage of all treatment approved by the FDA under EUA, PT and OT telehealth, waiver of DME delivery signatures, and allowing many DMEs as a 90-day supply with PAs.
- Dr. Bachhuber informed attendees that the COVID-19 vaccination rate varies widely based on age: ages 5-11, 11.03% are vaccinated or have evidence of at least one dose of vaccine; ages 12-15, 30.2%, and ages 16 and over is 45.3%.
 - LDH is continuing to push to increase vaccinations, including a COVID-19 vaccination PIP and linking immunization registry with Medicaid enrollment data to distribute lists of unvaccinated eligible to the plans for outreach to providers and members.
 - LDH provides weekly reports of vaccine performance and monthly reporting of related activities and strategies.

Presentations of Special Topics or Quality Related Studies/Activities: *Kristina Larson, Jessica Fridge, Dr. Marcus Bachhuber, and Dr. Ashley Wennerstrom*

- Kristina Larson and Jessica Fridge from the Office of Public Health presented on Hepatitis C initiative updates. Presentation slides are available on the Quality Committee website at <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/2175>.
 - Data on how many have accessed HCV treatment through Medicaid, how many have completed treatment, how many have accessed the treatment because of Medicaid expansion, etc. were presented.
 - Information about the Linkage to Treatment program (to link people experiencing substance use disorder and confirmed to have HCV) was provided.
 - Information about how LDH has worked to increase provider capacity for the Hepatitis C treatment initiative was discussed.
- Dr. Bachhuber asked Kristina Larson to explain to the group more about how the data linkage happens or how it is done. Kristina responded that, once a month, OPH gets a data set from Medicaid that includes a Medicaid enrollment file, an encounter file, a pharmacy claim file, and laboratory claims.
 - Kristina Larson advised that the enrollment file is matched to the Hepatitis C surveillance system through linkage software called Linking. Additionally, a second matching algorithm is run through a program written by the CDC. Any discrepancies between those two different matching algorithms are manually reviewed and investigated.
 - Then, Medicaid IDs are imported into the surveillance system. Additionally, the laboratory file and the pharmacy claims file are checked to see who has been tested and who has started treatment.
- Dr. Bachhuber asked how results are obtained for those with a negative viral load and how negative tests are reported and how accurate they are. Kristina Larson responded that the sanitary code was updated in May 2019 as part of this Hepatitis C elimination initiative to require the reporting of all laboratory results for Hepatitis C, including negative results. Previously, only positive HCV results were required to be reported.
- Dr. Marcus Bachhuber presented on the Medicaid Hepatitis C Subscription Model update. Presentation slides are available on the Quality Committee website at <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/2175>.
- Dr. Ashley Wennerstrom of LSU School of Public Health presented on Community Health Workers (CHW). Presentation slides are available on the Quality Committee website at <https://ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/2175>. An attendee asked if there was a reason that behavioral health providers were not included as a CHW supervisor. Dr. Bachhuber responded that the initial goal was to get experience with coverage of CHW as part of a medical model, although he's aware that there's an overlap between physical and mental health.

Announcements

- There were no further questions, comments, or issues brought forward.
- Dr. Bachhuber announced the 2022 Medicaid Quality Committee Schedule. The next meeting will be on Friday, May 20 at 1PM – 3PM.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 2:23 PM.

2022 Medicaid Quality Committee Schedule

May 20, 2022

August 19, 2022

November 18, 2022