



Executive Council Committee – SPECIAL MEETING Summary of Meeting Minutes January 12, 2016

COMMITTEE MEMBERS	PUBLIC REPRESENTATIVES
Gerd Clabaugh	
Dan Royer	
Dennis Tibben	
Nancy Hale	DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES
Kirstie Oliver	Mikki Stier
Paula Connolly	Julie Lovelady
Shelly Chandler	Jennifer Steenblock
Anthony Carroll	Deb Johnson
Jim Cushing	Liz Matney
Cindy Baddeloo	Matt Highland
	Lindsay Buechel
NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS	Sean Bagniewski
Jess Purcell Smith	

Introduction:

Introduction by Gerd on the purpose of Director Palmer's request for this special meeting of the MAAC Executive Committee and reminds the group regarding the January 19th regular Executive Committee meeting which is scheduled to start at 2:30 pm instead of the usual 3:00 pm. Roll Call:

Council Update and Expectations Discussion (Director Palmer and Director Clabaugh)

Gerd mentioned that representatives from the Attorney General's (AG) office will be at the January 19 meeting to go over statutory and administrative responsibilities as an Advisory Council. He introduced Director Palmer to share his thoughts with the Executive Committee (EC) relative to the operation of the council.

Director Palmer stated that his main objective for attending this meeting is to establish a dialogue with the members of the EC about how to work together constructively and with more frequency. He acknowledged the advisory role of the EC to the DHS and to himself. He acknowledged that there used to be a more frequent dialogue between him and the EC and would like to take this opportunity to re-establish this relationship. He posed the question to the EC, What do we need to do to establish this regular dialogue? Director Palmer gave a brief overview of his thoughts regarding the focus of the Governor's remarks at the opening of the new legislative sessions particularly the focus on Medicaid. Director Palmer framed the managed care transition initiative within the context of a holistic approach to health care. He stated that the differences in opinion forms part of the challenge of this transition. Director Palmer suggested that we should simply focus on continuing to do a better job communicating with each other and with members, providers, stakeholders, and partners. He cited that there will continue to be push back from many he still believes that March 1st will hold and the executive branch will continue to work toward that date. Director Palmer stated that ultimately, doing this right comes down to simply doing it together and he doesn't mean we have to agree on everything. He stated that even if this seems like a significant change, it forms part of a larger goal of improved health care delivery which makes the collaborative and holistic approach of delivering healthcare to low-income and vulnerable Iowans even more important. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that we are doing this within the context of a changing Iowa with changing demographics.

Director Palmer stated that the committee has a lot invested in this matter and that he would like to figure out how we can constructively work together. He stated that he is not being critical about anyone nor is he trying to intimidate anyone into simply agreeing. He stated that he would like to be more fully engaged with the Executive Committee and have an upfront candid discussion and identify opportunities. Director Palmer stated that he applauds the group for taking this on and going out to the various community outreach meetings. He asked the committee members – what do you think can we do to make this dialogue, this exchange, this relationship more constructive going forward? How do we make this exchange more civil and more open? He underscored that he would like to spend more time with each in the group to have this dialogue. He acknowledged the policy as well as technical advisory role of committee members. He admitted that he has not made himself as available to receive this advice and engage in dialogue. He stated that he wants to see how this can be improved. How can we do a better job?"

Dennis Tibben started by pointing out the issue of the timeliness of responses from the department has been a source of frustration. He stated that we, as a committee, want to give out information quickly but a long delay in responses from the department makes this very challenging. We are asking for better commitment from the department as a whole is responding to things that are discussed at the scheduled meetings. Director Palmer suggested that there should be "Action Items" in the meeting minutes. He also suggested that people should come to successive meetings with a status report on the action items. Dan Royer indicated that this group has been simply "reactive" to events or policy changes instead of being fully engaged partners and that not being fully engaged compromises the group's ability to impart information to the people we serve. He stated that oftentimes, the department states that they will review a request or question from the committee but end up not returning with a response. Director Palmer stated that to be fair, it should be kept in mind that there are many issues that this group deals with that are highly sensitive issues where the department may not be able to provide an immediate response. There may be implications in providing a response but nevertheless it necessitates a proper and thoughtful response. He stated that at the very least, knowing who in the department can best address the query is one way to address this point. Jess Purcell Smith stated that she thought a lot of the confusion stemmed from the question of eligibility and the timeline of the mailings contributed to the confusion. She did also followed up by stating that improvement in the member outreach has begun to diffuse the confusion and that consumers have a better understanding now of where they stand in all this. She stated that a second thing she would like to see happen is a regular report from the MCOs about how their grievance numbers look like to determine if there are trends and how many grievances have to go to the state and how these grievances are being resolved. Director Palmer revisited the situation surrounding the mailings and acknowledged that there was a communications issue. He stated that the department listened to multiple inputs in forming the strategy of the mailing and that the timing of the mailing was less than ideal because there was much focus on not actually doing it because that's where the world was at that point in time. Shelly Chandler expressed that there is great concern that there are three different MCOs and with it, three different systems. She pointed out that there is success with the universal credentialing and application effort among the MCOs but questioned how we can do the same around prior Authorization (PA), incident reporting etc. and coming up with a truly statewide system. She pointed out that it is part of our duties to be technical advisors to the department.

Director Palmer sympathized with this concern. He stated that he is meeting with the MCOs regularly and while being sensitive to the proprietary nature of MCOs we are encouraging integration of the process. He stated that he did not wish to see three more separate silos and that this is a shared goal at this point. Anthony Carroll echoed Dennis' point about timely response from the department and concern for items discussed with no follow-up. He acknowledged that the department does a great job on some things and but not on others. He also cited confusion about what providers can and cannot say to members regarding enrollment. Jim Cushing agreed with everything that has been said thus far. He stated that there are a lot of things discussed that we can deliver on with this group with respect to process and timely communication. He echoed others' feedback with respect to utilizing the EC for technical assistance. He acknowledged that everyone was in a "time crunch" but that the delay afforded wiggle room and we should use this time to get more feedback. He commended the pre-communication on the new set of provider training. Director Palmer expressed appreciation for this time to speak with the committee and that the offer to meet with everyone in the committee is genuine. He made a commitment to spend more time with this group to establish this closer working relationship.

IA Health Link Member and Provider Update

Mikki Stier: Mikki stated that there has been a series of communication and informational letters that have gone out since the last meeting and that we continue to set plans to send out informational letters as issues are brought to our attention. Lindsay Buechel provided a very brief update on recent mailing and preview of the agenda for the January 19 meeting. She updated the group on the new set of member education outreach and provider training sessions that are scheduled for the rest of January and early February and that the latest communication activities are on the DHS website. Sean Bagniewski confirmed Lindsay's update and provides a few more points regarding the forthcoming statewide provider training sessions. Gerd Clabaugh adjourned the meeting.

Adjourned at 2:03 PM