

Board of Community Health
Meeting
July 11, 2024

Members Present

Norman Boyd
Roger Folsom
David Crews
Anthony Williamson
Cynthia Rucker
Shane Mobley
Tommy Hopkins
Robert Cowles
Kathleen Ruth

Members Absent

The Board of Community Health held its meeting via Zoom teleconference. (An agenda and a List of Attendees are attached hereto and made an official part of these Minutes as Attachments #1 and #2). Chairman Norman Boyd presided and called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

Minutes

The Minutes of the June 13, 2024 meeting were unanimously approved.

Opening Comments

Chairman Boyd provided the following updates:

- Board member Nelva Lee's resignation and thanked her for the service to the Board.
- Welcomed new Board member Dr. Kathleen Ruth.

Dr. Ruth expressed that she is honored to be in this role and looks forward to working with Board members to successfully improve the delivery of quality care to Georgians.

Commissioner's Report

Commissioner Carlson thanked the Board, members of the public, and staff for participating via Zoom.

The following updates were provided to the Board:

- Welcomed Dr. Ruth and looks forward to working with her and values the expertise and experience that she will bring to this Board.

- Stuart Portman, our Medicaid Director will join me in participating in a panel to discuss the importance of the hospital community at the request of the Georgia Hospital Association (GHA).
- I appreciate the complex work from staff preparing these items for Board consideration. The Department is also appreciative of public input from stakeholders, associations, organizations, and individuals.
- Four waiver rate increases were approved by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), effective July 1, 2024:
 1. Elderly and Disabled Waiver Program (EDWP)
 2. Independent Care Waiver Program (ICWP)
 3. New Options Waiver (NOW)
 4. Comprehensive Supports Program (COMP)
 - These rate increases were proposed to enact the results of the 2023 DCH rate study that was conducted in response to Senate Bill 610 of the 2022 Georgia legislative session.
 - The COMP waiver also includes newly approved services and sites of care.
 - Commissioner Carlson thanked the DCH team for their work and ongoing collaboration with the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Disabilities (DBHDD). Specifically on the NOW and COMP waivers and the numerous stakeholders and legislators involved in this process for years and CMS' quick review and turnaround. Our members will receive care reimbursement based on a current cost-based reimbursement rate.
- There will be two Board meetings in August. At the first meeting, the State Health Benefit Plan (SHBP) will discuss the 2025 plan year, open enrollment, and the impacts on members. The AFY and FY budgets will be presented at the second meeting.
- Regulatory changes to Certificate of Need (CON): There has been a lot of progress made. In the coming months, you will begin to see proposed rules distributed for public review.
- Recognition for employees' years of service milestones.

Kim Morris, Director of Reimbursement presented to the Board for final adoption the Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Increase Reimbursement Rates for Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy Public Notice.

Pending approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Department of Community Health (DCH) proposes to increase seventy-seven (77) CPT codes to eighty-five percent (85%) of the Medicare 2023 Part B fee schedule.

Cost Impact:

	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
SFY 2025	\$4,855,862	\$9,426,086	\$14,281,948

The Department will not adjust the reimbursement rates for CPT codes not priced by Medicare or reduce the reimbursement rates in those instances wherein application of the 2023 Medicare rate would result in a reimbursement rate reduction.

An opportunity for public comment was held on June 18, 2024 at 10:00 a.m. via Zoom. Written comments were due on or before June 25, 2024.

Oral comments received:

- Aileen Deogracias, Georgia Therapy Tri-Alliance

Written comments received:

- Kelly J. Ball, Representative, Georgia Speech Language Hearing Association
- Dhara Shah, PT, DPT, President, American Physical Therapy Association
- Stephanie Johnson, OTR/I, PhD, MHS, President, Georgia Occupational Therapy Association
- Amie LoCicero, PT, DPT, Representative Georgia Therapy Tri-Alliance

The following summary of comments was received:

1. The commenters were in full support of the Department increasing rates for speech-language pathology, audiology, physical therapy, and occupational therapy to eighty- five percent (85%) of the 2023 Medicare Part B fee schedule. Commenters also stated that the increase in reimbursement rates will help address workforce shortages in pediatric therapy services and help with recruitment and retention of therapists.

DCH Response: The Department thanks the commenters for their public and written comments and support.

Ms. Morris respectfully asked for the Board's favorable consideration of final adoption.

Tommy Hopkins MADE a MOTION to approve the Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Increase Reimbursement Rates for Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Public Notice. Shane Mobley SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE MOTION, the yeas were 9, nays 0, abstained 0, and the MOTION was APPROVED.

(A copy of the Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Increase Reimbursement Rates for Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, Physical Therapy, and Occupational Therapy Public Notice is attached hereto and made an official part of these minutes as Attachment #3).

Maxine Elliott, Deputy Executive Director, Service, Delivery & Administration presented to the Board for final adoption the Medical Assistance Plans, Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) Rate Development Public Notice.

Pending approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and the Department of Community Health (DCH) Board, the Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) will be a new designation of placement created by the Family First Prevention Services Act (FFPSA) effective July 1, 2024.

The Qualified Residential Treatment Program – otherwise denoted and referred to as “QRTP” is a new designation created by the Family First Prevention Services Act. This program aims to provide a trauma-informed treatment model to address the needs, including the clinical needs of children with serious emotional or behavioral disorders.

Criteria for a QRTP include the following:

- Licensed and accredited
- Must use a trauma-informed treatment model
- Facilitate and document family involvement and outreach
- Provide at least six months post-discharge, family-based aftercare
- Have registered or licensed nursing staff and other licensed clinical staff (on-site consistent with the treatment model and available 24/7)

This is a joint initiative between DCH and the Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS).

Cost Impact:

	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
SFY 2025	\$9,814,132	\$12,581,173	\$22,395,305

The Qualified Residential Treatment program rate and budget estimate have been developed based on various factors, including the Bureau of Labor Statistics salary tables, historical expense reports, and an estimated number of children that could be treated in the Qualified Residential Treatment Program.

An opportunity for public comment was held on June 18, 2024 at 11:30 a.m. via Zoom. Written comments were due on or before June 25, 2024.

Oral comments received:

- None.

Written comments received:

- None.

Ms. Elliott respectfully asked for the Board's favorable consideration of final adoption.

David Crews MADE a MOTION to approve the Medical Assistance Plans, Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) Rate Development Public Notice. Cynthia Rucker SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE MOTION, the yeas were 9, nays 0, abstained 0, and the MOTION was APPROVED.

(A copy of the Medical Assistance Plans, Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) Rate Development Public Notice is attached hereto and made an official part of these minutes as Attachment #4).

Kelvin J. Holloway, Deputy Executive Director & Sr. Medical Director presented to the Board for final adoption the Medical Assistance Plans, Pharmacy Professional Dispensing Fee Increase Public Notice.

Pending approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and the Department of Community Health (DCH) Board, DCH proposes to increase the professional dispensing fee to \$11.50 for independent pharmacies with a prescription claim volume of $\leq 65,000$ per year, coverage effective July 1, 2024.

Cost Impact:

	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
SFY 2025	\$315,064	\$611,664	\$926,729

An opportunity for public comment was held on June 20, 2024 at 11:00 a.m. via Zoom. Written comments were due on or before June 27, 2024.

Oral comments received:

- None.

Written comments received:

- None.

Mr. Holloway respectfully asked for the Board's favorable consideration of final adoption.

Tommy Hopkins MADE a MOTION to approve the Medical Assistance Plans, Pharmacy Professional Dispensing Fee Increase Public Notice. Robert Cowles SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE MOTION, the yeas were 9, nays 0, abstained 0, and the MOTION was APPROVED.

A copy of the Medical Assistance Plans, Pharmacy Professional Dispensing Fee Increase Public Notice is attached hereto and made an official part of these minutes as Attachment #5).

Kelvin J. Holloway, Deputy Executive Director & Sr. Medical Director presented to the Board for final adoption the Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Hospital Inpatient Payment for Long-Acting Injectable (LAI) Antipsychotic Drugs Public Notice.

Pending approval by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Department of Community Health (DCH) proposes to amend its State Plan to allow for an add-on payment to psychiatric inpatient claims for certain long-acting injectable (LAI) antipsychotic drugs, effective with dates of service beginning July 1, 2024.

Cost Impact:

	State Funds	Federal Funds	Total Funds
SFY 2025	\$2,709,288	\$5,259,792	\$7,969,080

An opportunity for public comment was held on June 21, 2024 at 10:30 a.m. via Zoom. Written comments were due on or before June 28, 2024.

Oral comments received:

- Ryan Smith, Teva Pharmaceutical

Written comments received:

- None.

The following summary of comments was received:

Teva Pharmaceuticals requests that its product, Uzedy™, be added to the list of Long-Acting Injectable Antipsychotic Drugs for hospital inpatient use.

DCH Response: The Department declines to add additional products eligible for the hospital add-on payment for inpatient use. Uzedy™ is available on the Department's preferred drug list and provider-administered drug list for outpatient use.

Mr. Holloway respectfully asked for the Board's favorable consideration of final adoption.

Roger Folsom MADE a MOTION to approve the Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Hospital Inpatient Payment for Long-Acting Injectable (LAI) Antipsychotic Drugs Public Notice. Cynthia Rucker SECONDED THE MOTION. ON THE MOTION, the yeas were 9, nays 0, abstained 0, and the MOTION was APPROVED.

(A copy of the Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Hospital Inpatient Payment for Long-Acting Injectable (LAI) Antipsychotic Drugs Public Notice is attached hereto and made an official part of these minutes as Attachment #6).

Melanie Simon, General Counsel presented an informational update to the Board on the Department's implementation of House Bill 663, known as the "No Patient Left Alone Act" (hereinafter "the Act").

Ms. Simon reviewed key aspects of the Act which became effective July 1, 2024. The Act requires DCH to develop informational materials on patient and resident visitation rights and make such materials available to hospitals and long-term care facilities. The facilities must post the information on their websites. Ms. Simon noted that the materials are available on the main page of the DCH website and encouraged hospitals and long-term care facilities to post the information as soon as possible to comply with the Act.


New Business/Closing Comments

None to report.

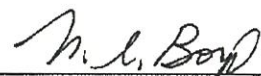
Adjournment

There being no further business to be brought before the Board, Chairman Norman Boyd adjourned the meeting at 11:12 a.m.

THESE MINUTES ARE HEREBY APPROVED AND ADOPTED THIS THE 11th DAY OF July, 2024.



Cynthia Rucker
Secretary



Norman Boyd
Chairman

Official Attachments:

#1 Agenda

#2 List of Attendees

#3 Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Increase Reimbursement Rates for Speech-Language Pathology, Audiology, Physical Therapy and Occupational Therapy Public Notice

#4 Medical Assistance Plans, Qualified Residential Treatment Program (QRTP) Rate Development Public Notice

#5 Medical Assistance Plans, Pharmacy Professional Dispensing Fee Increase Public Notice

#6 Medical Assistance Plans, State Plan Amendment (SPA): Hospital Inpatient Payment for Long-Acting Injectable (LAI) Antipsychotic Drugs Public Notice