

**Meeting of the
Medicaid Physician Advisory Committee (MPAC)
Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS)
600 East Broad Street, Suite 1300
Richmond, Virginia**

April 24, 2003

DRAFT MINUTES

Present:

Dr. Frederic Garner
Dr. William Cook
Lawrence Bates
Dr. Swaeng Woraratanadharm
Dr. Eloise Haun (on phone)
Dr. Karen Rheuban (on phone)
Dr. Todd L. vanden Hoek (on phone)

Absent:

Dr. Mark Arner
Dr. Leon Brown
Dr. Lornel Tompkins
Dr. Christine Matson
Dr. Daphne Bryan

DMAS Staff:

Patrick Finnerty, Director
Cindy Jones, Chief Deputy Director
Cheryl Roberts, Deputy Director of Operations
Jim Cohen, Director, Program Support Division
Moses Adiele, M.D., Director, Medical Support Services
Craig Markva, Acting Director of the Office of Communications and Legislative Affairs
Chris Schroeder, Committee Liaison

Others:

Dr Elmer Neil (BMAS)
Dr. Manikoth Kurup (BMAS)
Terone Green (BMAS)

Opening Remarks by Director and Introduction of the Members:

DMAS Director Patrick Finnerty introduced himself and asked the members of the MPAC and staff to introduce themselves. Mr. Finnerty stated that he was glad that this committee has been formed to give a voice to physicians who work within the Medicaid system. He also stated that he is looking forward to their input on Medicaid issues. The director explained to the committee that because of regulations enacted last year we need to keep minutes of all meetings and post them on the internet for public viewing.

Purpose and Expectation of the Committee:

Mr. Finnerty explained the purpose and expectations of the committee. He said that reviewing issues affecting the physician community would be a top priority of the committee. He also stated that the state budget limits what DMAS can accomplish in relation to rates for physicians but that those issues could, nevertheless, be discussed. He stated that he wants the committee members to feel free to contact DMAS staff concerning physician issues.

Dr. Moses Adiele, Dr. Neil and Dr. Kurup all agreed with the purpose of the Committee and urged the members to contact DMAS if they needed help on any issues. Dr. Kurup stated that he appreciated the members' participation on the Committee. He also stated that physicians have not seen a rate increase in the last 15 years and that DMAS would be willing to work with them on these and other issues.

Several Committee members agreed with the overall purpose and expectations of the Committee.

Identification of Issues for MPAC

Lawrence Bates stated that it is important to understand the relationship between the hospitals, the HMO's and the physicians. He also stated that he understands the fiscal problems that the Commonwealth faces, but we cannot let physicians get further behind in rates.

Dr. William Cook stated that he had met with his front office staff before the meeting. He stated that they had some questions and concerns with the "nuts and bolts" (i.e. administration) of Medicaid. Dr. Cook also touched on the "swipe card" issue and how some doctors might not be able to afford the new system. Mr. Finnerty stated that the new MMIS will be up and running by June 20 and that the use of the swipe card will be optional. He stated that DMAS is putting some information together in order to help the doctors and their staff better negotiate the new MMIS.

Dr. Karen Rheuban stated that she would like to see the Committee more involved in policy and coverage issues. She would also like the Committee used as a resource for information on Federal regulations. Dr. Rheuban also suggested that information regarding different areas of the state be discussed.

Dr. Frederic Garner stated that another issue that is affecting Medicaid is the over utilization of the emergency rooms. He stated that he worked for Unicare in Northern Virginia and they had different utilization data from across the country and that Virginia utilization was very high compared to other states.

Dr. Eloise Haun stated that the Committee should look at the lack of access to care that patients have in the Medicaid system. Dr. Haun also stated she would like the Committee to look at the Preferred Drug List (PDL) issue.

Mr. Finnerty stated that in addition to the issues identified by the members, the new preferred drug list (PDL) would be a good issue for discussion at the next MPAC meeting. As a result of the discussions, he stated the initial issues for discussion at future MPAC meetings would be: **Discussion of how provider rates are calculated, Analysis of Medicaid Utilization, Access Issues and the PDL.** A Medicaid orientation package being prepared for new members of the

Board of Medical Assistance Services will be distributed at the next meeting. This will give an overview of Medicaid administration. All members were in agreement.

Future Meeting Schedule and Times

Mr. Finnerty asked the Committee what days and times worked the best for them. The Committee discussed and decided that Tuesdays from 4-6 P.M. works well. The members agreed the next meeting of the MPAC will be on July 15, 2003 from 4-6 PM.