



# MEETING MINUTES

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February 4, 2022  
1:00 – 3:00 PM

*A quorum of the CHIPAC Executive Subcommittee attended the meeting at the Department of Medical Assistance Services (DMAS) offices at 600 East Broad Street, Richmond. A WebEx teleconferencing option was also available to allow Committee members and the public to attend virtually.*

**The following CHIPAC Executive Subcommittee members were present in-person:**

- Sara Cariano, Virginia Poverty Law Center Vice Chair
- Lanette Walker, Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association Member at Large
- Freddy Mejia, The Commonwealth Institute Member at Large

**The following CHIPAC Executive Subcommittee members attended virtually:**

- Irma Blackwell, Virginia Department of Social Services Member at Large
- Emily Griffey, Voices for Virginia's Children Member at Large
- Emily Roller, Virginia Health Care Foundation, substitute for Denise Daly Konrad (Chair)

**The following DMAS staff members attended:**

- Jessica Anecchini, Senior Advisor for Administration (virtual)
- Hope Richardson, Senior Policy Analyst; Policy, Regulation, and Member Engagement (PRME) Division (in-person)
- Marina Hench, Senior Policy Analyst; PRME Division (virtual)

**Welcome**

Sara Cariano (Virginia Poverty Law Center), Vice Chair of CHIPAC, called the meeting to order at 1:01 PM. Cariano welcomed members and explained that the meeting was being held both in person and electronically, with a quorum attending in person. Cariano explained that she would be standing in as Chair for the meeting in Denise Daly Konrad's absence. Attendees introduced themselves and attendance was taken.

## **I. CHIPAC Business**

### **A. Review and approval of minutes from previous Executive Subcommittee meeting.**

Executive Subcommittee members reviewed the minutes from the November 5, 2021 Executive Subcommittee meeting. Freddy Mejia, The Commonwealth Institute, moved to accept the minutes and the Subcommittee voted unanimously to approve.

### **B. Membership update and discussion.**

Hope Richardson, DMAS staff, explained that due to the retirement of Christine McCormick, Virginia Association of Health Plans (VAHP) has nominated a new representative, Heidi Dix, to serve on the Committee. Richardson circulated the candidate's CHIPAC questionnaire response and asked the Executive Subcommittee to consider Dix's candidacy for membership. Mejia made a motion for the Executive Subcommittee to recommend Dix to the full committee for membership. The Subcommittee voted unanimously to approve.

Richardson reminded the Subcommittee that because December's CHIPAC meeting was fully virtual, no votes were held, and the planned vote on the candidacy of Dr. Susan Brown, American Academy of Pediatrics Virginia Chapter, would also take place at the March meeting. Richardson also announced that the Department of Education's representative to CHIPAC, Quyen Duong, has retired and VDOE is in the process of appointing a new representative to the Committee.

Richardson then explained that the Committee's votes on leadership transitions, which were also postponed, would take place at the March 3 meeting. At that time, the full committee will vote on the candidacy of Sara Cariano to become Chair and Lanette Walker to become Vice Chair.

### **C. Discussion of meeting location/format for upcoming meetings.**

Cariano and Richardson explained that DMAS was monitoring guidance regarding state public meeting requirements and that the current plan is would be hold the March 3 CHIPAC meeting in the same location at DMAS. The meeting would be a hybrid meeting, in which electronic participation is permitted but a physical quorum is required for the Committee to discuss important business or hold votes. Richardson stated that she would keep Committee members apprised of any new developments.

Richardson stated that the Committee will likely continue to hold meetings at DMAS in the near-term because the setup is convenient for hybrid meetings. She explained that DMAS and Committee leadership will work with any members who anticipate difficulty with the DMAS location such as parking issues and will encourage members to reach out to her and to Cariano with questions and concerns.

The Subcommittee discussed the possibility of surveying the full committee later in the year to gauge member preferences regarding meeting length, location, and format (for example, breakout groups and workshop topics).

## **II. DMAS and VDSS Updates**

### DMAS Update

Richardson introduced Marina Hench, the new Senior Policy Analyst in the Policy, Regulation, and Member Engagement Division at DMAS. Richardson discussed the current legislative session and DMAS' role in analyzing legislation for the Secretary and Governor's office and providing technical assistance to the Virginia General Assembly. She stated that at the March CHIPAC meeting, DMAS would provide an update on active legislation and the Governor's proposed budget, highlighting items relevant to the Committee.

Richardson provided an Enrollment update: As of January 1, approximately 80,000 children were enrolled in FAMIS and approximately 90,000 children were enrolled in CHIP-funded Medicaid; approximately 639,000 children were enrolled in Medicaid coverage. Enrollment in Medicaid for Pregnant Women was at 22,073. As of February 1, approximately 5,000 members were enrolled in the FAMIS programs for pregnant women.

Mejia recommended that the upcoming full committee meeting include further updates on the Public Health Emergency (PHE) and DMAS plans to reach out to members. Richardson confirmed that DMAS will share an update at the meeting on "unwinding" plans and agency response to any federal changes impacting enrollment.

Richardson shared that DMAS' legislative report on the topic of merging the children's coverage programs has been publicly released on the Legislative Information Services website at <https://rga.lis.virginia.gov/>. She also shared that DMAS is participating in an affinity group with other states, led by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Mathematica, focused on quality improvement and infant well child visits. DMAS is receiving technical assistance on quality improvement strategies, analyzing well visit data on a monthly basis, and identifying levers for change for improving child well visit rates.

Jessica Anecchini gave an update related to eligibility and enrollment and unwinding the flexibilities put in place for the PHE. She stated that Marketplace open enrollment closed January 15, 2022, creating a significant volume of applications; as workers continue to process applications received during open enrollment, it is possible there will be some backlog, but it is expected that any backlogs will be quickly resolved. Cover Virginia has reduced backlog and is expected to work through any remaining backlog by the end of March. Anecchini stated that DMAS will give a full update related to unwinding the PHE to the full committee in March, including the

communications and outreach plan for the unwinding period. She stated that the three key messages that will be stressed in the communications are to encourage members to update contact information, to inform them when it is time for their renewal, and if the renewal is not successful, to let them know the next step, including potential referral to the federal Marketplace. She explained that in recent weeks, DMAS has started to hold more collaboration sessions with Social Services, making sure that the agencies are aligning plans and messaging.

Anecchini stated that DMAS already has federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds that the agency is using to bring on additional staff. She explained that DMAS is working to determine how to spread the workload among contract and permanent staff. Anecchini explained that under federal rules, contract workers cannot make a full eligibility determination. The system does not automate tasks such as the resource tests needed for non-MAGI populations' applications, and so contract workers cannot touch those cases. In addition, non-DSS staff/contractors cannot touch a multi-program case in which the family/household is applying for not only medical assistance but also other public benefits such as SNAP. Anecchini also shared that contractors will be assisting with following up on returned mail that comes back to DMAS, verifying and updating addresses when possible.

Anecchini stated that the process of enrolling Afghan evacuees is wrapping up, with cases being either assigned to local agencies or closing if individuals are no longer eligible for coverage.

#### VDSS Update

Irma Blackwell, Medical Assistance Program Manager, Division of Benefit Programs, provided a VDSS update. She stated that VDSS is currently working to provide legislative analysis of bills affecting the agency during the General Assembly session. Blackwell explained that last year's HB 2065 regarding "Food as Medicine" did not pass, but similar legislation has been introduced during the current session.

Blackwell stated that VDSS did not directly receive funding for additional staff to support the unwinding work but may be getting some limited assistance outside of working hours. She stated that VDSS is working to develop training materials for staff, with a concentration on eligibility renewals and redeterminations, in order to support a smooth unwinding process.

Cariano asked if VDSS could provide, in a future update to the full committee, high-level information on work conducted by the agency related to other public benefit programs affecting children and families as the PHE closes, such as other flexibilities that will end with the PHE.

Mejia highlighted budget amendments related to water quality and requested that the committee consider discussing the topic and any pending proposals at a future meeting.

### **III. Agenda items for the March 3, 2022 Full Committee Meeting**

Richardson reminded the Subcommittee that at the December Full Committee meeting, Dr. Tegwyn Brickhouse, VCH Health, suggested two potential agenda items for future meetings: (1) updated recommendations of the U.S. Preventive Services Taskforce regarding application of fluoride varnish to children under the age of 5 by primary care providers (not just dentists) and (2) HPV vaccine hesitancy and COVID vaccine hesitancy and children.

The Subcommittee discussed potential topics for future meetings in 2022 and the possibility of focusing each meeting on a theme and ensuring presentations are streamlined enough to allow time for committee discussion.

The Subcommittee discussed agenda topics for the March 3 CHIPAC meeting. Members proposed including in the meeting agenda a committee discussion of the General Assembly session. Members confirmed that they would welcome updates from DMAS on unwinding from the federal PHE, Open Enrollment, COVID-19 response (including children and pregnant women's vaccination rates), Afghan evacuees, and the federal Build Back Better legislation.

The Subcommittee proposed the following draft agenda for the March 3 Full Committee Meeting:

- 1) Welcome**
- 2) CHIPAC Business**
  - a. Review/approval of minutes from prior meeting**
  - b. Membership update**
- 3) VDSS: Evolution Initiative**
- 4) Discussion: General Assembly Session**
- 5) Unwinding Update**
- 6) COVID-19 Vaccination Update**
- 7) Agenda for next CHIPAC Meeting**
- 8) Public Comment**

### **IV. Public Comment**

Public comment was invited. There was no public comment.

### **Closing**

The meeting was adjourned at 2:22 PM.