

HB1353 Workgroup Meeting

October 1, 2026

1 PM – 3 PM

Virtual Access Link:

<https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1656156002pwd=RwGV6rSSVIUgKg6laoej8LkqEec2da.1>

Meeting ID: 165 615 6002

Passcode: 268722

Meeting Minutes

Member Attendance	Voting Record Y=Yes, N=No, A=Abstain
Bold = Present, in person <i>Italicized</i> = Absent	Previous Meeting Minutes
Voting Members	
Virginia Department of Health	-
<i>Cynthia deSa, Title V</i>	
Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association	Y
Mary O'Connor	
Medical Society of Virginia	Y
Catherine Ford	
Mary Beth McIntire	
Virginia Mental Health Access Program	Y
Ally Singer-Wright	
Virginia Affiliate of the American College of Nurse-Midwives	M2
Katie Page, Praxis Midwifery	
Virginia Midwives Alliance	Y
Marinda Schindler, Newborn Advisory Committee	
<i>Christina Owens, Newborn Advisory Committee</i>	
Lori Murafka Orme, Newborn Advisory Committee	
Hospitals	
Bon Secours	Y
Blair Bell	
Megan Buchholz	
Chesapeake Regional Health Center	Y
Sarah Gallagher	
<i>Shannon Robert</i>	
HCA Henrico Doctor's Hospital	Y
Laura Carlstrom	
Life Point Health	Y
Leslie Sturdivant	
Riverside Health System	Y
<i>Amy Carlson, Riverside Medical Center</i>	
Ticorea Williams, Riverside Medical Center	
Sentara	Y
Teresita Hammond, Sentara Norfolk General Hospital	
Twin County Regional Healthcare	-
<i>Arielle Wilder</i>	
Virginia Hospital Center	Y
Bobbi Curry	
Withe County Community Hospital	Y
Theresa Dix	

3rd Party Payors Providing Health Care Insurance or Prepaid Coverage	
Department of Medical Assistance Services	Y
<i>Heath Kirby</i>	
Maryssa Sadler	
Virginia Association of Health Plans	-
<i>Heidi Dix</i>	
Public Health Experts	Y
Nichole Wardlaw, Jamii Birth and Wellness Services	
Clinical Experts	
Virginia Neonatal Perinatal Collaborative	Y
<i>Joseph Khoury, VCU Health</i>	
Arthur Ollendorff, Carilion Clinic	
Evan Isaacs proxy for Shannon Pursell, VCU Health	
<i>American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists</i>	-
<i>Jaclyn Nunziato</i>	
American Academy of Family Physicians	
Laurel Wallace, Bon Secours Health System	Y
Rural Health Transformation Program	
Isabelle Drayer, Department of Medical Assistance Services	Y
Patient and Community Advocates	
Danielle Avula, Free Clinic Association	Y
<i>Lisa Brown, Reparative Birth Systems Initiative</i>	-
Martha Crosby, Federally Qualified Health Center Association	Y
<i>Kenda Denia, Birth in Color</i>	-
Kathryn Haines, VA Interfaith Center	Y
Amy Hammond, Postpartum Support Virginia	Y
Nataki Hill, Virginia Doula Association	Y
Katie Hill, VA Health Care Foundation	Y
<i>Danielle Montague, VA Rural Health Association</i>	-
<i>Chantel Spinner, Huddle Up Moms</i>	-
Phyllis Stoneburner, Healthy Chesapeake	Y
Ex-Officio	
Delegate Olivia Aghdami	
Delegate Laura Jane Cohen	
Christina Barrille	
Dalton Bisson	
Christen Grimes	
Public Participants	
Katie Boyle	
Sarah Campbell	

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) Staff Attending: Mikayla Mason, Jayla Dickens, Jennifer Macdonald

Workgroup Business

The meeting was called to order at 1:03 PM. Roll call was completed and quorum achieved. Previous meeting minutes were approved.

Presentations on Current Initiatives in Virginia

Virginia Mental Health Access Program (VMAP) for Moms+
By: Ally Singer Wright

The workgroup received an overview of VMAP, including the purpose and background of VMAP. Singer-Wright provided background on the program's launch and discussed the scope of maternal mental health needs in the state and nationally.

The presentation highlighted the prevalence and shared impact of mental health concerns that can result from pregnancy, including perinatal mood & anxiety disorders (PMADs) and their link with suicidality risks.

VMAP developed the Virginia Mental Health Access Program for Moms+, which provides provider education and serves as a resource for mothers seeking mental health support and treatment. Singer-Wright also reviewed the steps taken to develop and implement the program, as well as its impact to date. Already in its short span of existence, it has been described as a lifeline that connects individuals with expert guidance, resources, and appropriate mental health care.

Rural Health Transformation Project (RHTP)

By: Isabelle Drayer

The workgroup received an overview of the RHTP, including proposed changes submitted by the Commonwealth to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) through its Year 2 non-competing continuation (NCC) application. The proposed changes could expand eligibility beyond the current Federal Office of Rural Health Policy's (FORHP) definition by adding 13 additional counties where many residents meet the applicable criteria.

Drayer also reviewed the project's primary rural health priorities, including CareIQ, Homegrown Health Heroes, Connected to Care and Closer to Home, and Live Well, Together. An overview of the project's funding structure and process and how the various priorities support rural health transformation efforts was also provided.

Group Discussion

The members reviewed the purpose of the workgroup and emphasized the feasibility of implementing a statewide initiative. The group discussed the potential for academic partnerships to support the initiative, as well as current needs, opportunities for growth and improvement, goals, and identified gaps. Members discussed synthesizing findings and recommendations from various reports and presentations, including the Maternal Mortality Review Team (MMRT), Plan for Well Being (PfWB), the Maternal Health Task Force report, and the Title V State Action Plan, into a list of potential maternal safety initiatives for the workgroup to review and prioritize.

The group considered categorizing potential initiatives based on feasibility, including actions that could be implemented with little or no funding and those requiring greater resources and effort. Members also discussed strategies for implementing workgroup recommendations, evaluating their effectiveness, and finding opportunities for improvement.

As next steps, VDH will synthesize information from workgroup presentations, relevant reports and recommendations into a list of potential safety initiatives for the workgroup's consideration and prioritization. Staff will share applicable reports with workgroup members in preparation for the next meeting, where members will further develop and prioritize potential initiatives. Members were also invited to identify any additional topics for discussion at the next meeting.

Public comment

No public comment.

Next Steps/Adjournment

Virginia Department of Health (VDH) staff shared the next steps and intended deadlines for the workgroup. Of note, this included that an interim report will be submitted by 11/1/26, and that a final report with the work group's recommendations will be due to the House Committee on Health and Human Services, the Senate Committee on Education and Health, and the Commission on Women's Health no later than July 1, 2027.

Members were notified that they would receive a poll to decide on the date and time of the next meeting. VDH staff also shared the meeting minutes will be voted on at that meeting and posted to Town Hall once approved.

Meeting was adjourned at 2:40 PM.