

## **Flex Advisory Committee Minutes**

**October 20, 2011**

**Snelling Office Park**

**Red River Room**

**10 AM—2 PM**

**Members Present:** Stacy Barstad, Sanford Tracy and Westbrook; Pam Biladeau, EMSRB; Brian Carlson, LakeView Hospital; Ray Christianson, UMD Medical School; Rick Failing, Kittson Memorial Hospital; Rachel Friedlander-Holm, Sen. Franken's office; Ann Gibson, Minnesota Hospital Association; Mike Hagen, Riverwood Healthcare Center; Mike Hedrix, Essentia Health; Barb Heier, TriCounty Health Care; Maria King, MDH Compliance Monitoring; Karen Miller, Rep. Bachman's office; Vicki Olson, Stratis Health; Joe Schindler, MHA; Colleen Spike, River's Edge Health; Bobbe Teigen, Paynesville Area Health Center; Trish Townsdin, Minnesota Valley Health Center; Tom Vanderwal, Greater Northwest Emergency Medical Services; Gary Wingrove, Gold Cross Ambulance.

**Staff Present:** Craig Baarson, Doug Benson, Judy Bergh, Deb Jahnke, Cindy LaMere, Anne Schloegel, Mark Schoenbaum, Kristen Tharaldson, Karen Welle.

**Guest Present:** Gary Sabart, TSP Architectural Engineering

**Roundtable Reports from Committee Members about** their organizations.

### **Flex Advisory Team Business:**

- Buck McAlpin is the new chair of the Flex Advisory Committee, replacing Mike Hagen. The committee elected Brian Carlson to assume duties of vice chair.
- In response to a question, staff will collect information on current members' term expirations and report to the committee.

### **Update on Federal Flex Grant Year**

*Judy Bergh, Flex Program Coordinator*

- Judy reviewed the work plan for Flex Year 13, which began September 1, 2011, and continues through August 31, 2011.
- The Office of Rural Health Policy at HRSA, which administers the federal Flex Program, will be implementing a new set of measures to be reported by all state Flex programs. The goal is to provide a greater level of accountability for the expenditure of Flex funds throughout the country. Toward that end, Minnesota has changed the method of gathering data from Flex sub-grantees. Judy presented a copy of the reporting form that grantees will be asked to use. Building on that, the Minnesota Flex Program will seek a contractor to assist in developing a way to aggregate and summarize the data received from all grantees.
- Handouts:
  1. [Flex Program Budget for 2011-12](#)
  2. [Flex Program Workplan Summary](#)
  3. [Flex Sub-Grant Reporting Tool](#)

## **Rural Health Advisory Committee (RHAC) Update**

*Kristen Tharaldson, RHAC staff*

- RHAC has four new members, including Tom Vanderwal who sits now on both RHAC and Flex Advisory Committees.
- RHAC has six open appointments that are posted with the Secretary of State ([www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=308](http://www.sos.state.mn.us/index.aspx?page=308)). These openings are for a mid-level practitioner, long term health care representative, higher education representative, hospital representative, consumer and physician members. People engaged in rural health policy issues are encouraged to apply.
- RHAC is in the process of developing a two-year workplan. Topics under consideration are rural health system change and adaptation; aging, dementia and long term care; mental health first point of contact issues; medication therapy management (MTM) for chronic disease; rural community wellness models; and EMS leadership development.
- RHAC's rural obstetrics workgroup is underway. The purpose of the workgroup is to examine the availability of obstetric services in rural Minnesota and analyze provider, hospital and community issues related to the provision of obstetric services. A webinar on obstetric training, residencies and related workforce issues will be held November 30 from 12-1:30 p.m. Contact [kristen.tharaldson@state.mn.us](mailto:kristen.tharaldson@state.mn.us) for more information.

## **CAH Eligibility for National Health Service Corps**

*Deb Jahnke, ORHPC Primary Care Coordinator*

A Critical Access Hospital (CAH) in a federally designated Health Professional Shortage Area (HPSA) affiliated with an outpatient, ambulatory care clinic may be approved to participate in a three-year expansion pilot of the National Health Service Corps (NSHC) programs. Eligible providers must split their time between the approved CAH and clinic per program requirements. Each CAH is limited to 10 total NHSC participants during the three-year pilot project. More information is available on our website at <http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/orhpc/funding/loans/cah.html>

## **News From the World of Quality Measurement**

*Vicki Olson, Stratis Health*

- Vicki Olson presented an update on a quality measurement activity. She also discussed CMS quality improvement initiatives, value based purchasing, and proposed 2012 hospital measures.
- Handouts:
  - 2012 Hospital Measures—Proposed
  - CMS Quality Improvement Initiatives
  - Hospital Inpatient Value-Based Purchasing Program Baseline and Performance Periods (including Model VBP Worksheet)

## **Federal and State Policy Update**

*Mark Schoenbaum, Director of the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care*

- Mark provided an update on federal and state policy initiatives (see attached slides). He also announced the first [National Rural Health Day](#), to be celebrated November 17, 2011.
- Handouts:
  1. Results of National Rural Health Association survey of CAHs regarding potential effects of proposed policy initiatives on CAH operations.
  2. Policy Update slides
  3. [Medicare Beneficiary Quality Improvement Project fact sheet](#)
  4. [NOSORH National Rural Health Day fact sheet](#)
  5. Sample letter to congressional representatives on altering mileage requirements for CAH designation
  6. [MHA factsheet](#): Minnesota Hospitals' Key Concerns and Challenges, Federal Debt Ceiling/Budget Debate, October 2011
  7. Craig Thomas Rural Hospital and Provider Equity (R-HoPE Act of 2011) [Fact Sheet](#)
  8. [HRSA ORHP Medicare Rural Hospital Flexibility Grant Program](#)

**Next Meeting**  
January 10, 2012  
10 a.m.-noon  
Conference Call