

New commission to review Alabama Medicaid's pharmacy program

A new Pharmacy Study Commission to review Medicaid's pharmacy delivery and reimbursement system and evaluate options for reform has been established by Governor Robert Bentley. Governor Bentley signed Executive Order 40 on June 6 following the ceremonial signing of Senate Bill 340 which is designed to reform Alabama's Medicaid program.

Commission members are specifically charged with analyzing the current system, comparing Alabama's program with other states' operations, identifying alternative pharmacy systems that could maintain quality and save money for Alabama and the estimated savings and economic impact for each described system if implemented. The commission is to report its findings to the Governor no later than December 1, 2013.

Reforming Medicaid by increasing efficiency and improving care has been a long-term goal for Governor Bentley. The Governor established the Alabama Medicaid Advisory Commission in October of 2012 to evaluate the financial stability of Alabama Medicaid and the care that is provided to Medicaid recipients. Commission findings were incorporated into Senate Bill 340 which was later approved by the Legislature and signed into law.

State Health Officer Dr. Donald Williamson, who served as chair of the Alabama Medicaid Advisory Commission, will also chair the new Alabama Medicaid Pharmacy Study Commission. Acting Alabama Medicaid Commissioner Stephanie Azar will serve on the new commission as well.

Other members of the commission include Senate Finance and Taxation General Fund Committee Chair Arthur Orr; House Ways and Means General Fund Committee Chair Steve Clouse; Senate Health Committee Chair Greg Reed; House Health Committee Chair Jim McClendon; an independent pharmacist appointed by the Governor; a hospital administrator appointed by the Governor; a practicing physician appointed by the Governor; and additional members as the Governor deems necessary.