

**ALABAMA MEDICAID AGENCY
PHYSICIANS' TASK FORCE MEETING
December 7, 2011
4TH FLOOR BOARDROOM
1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.**

Members Present:

R. Bob Mullins, Jr., Robert H. Moon, Melinda Rowe, Wes Stubblefield, Chelley Alexander, Noble Anderson, Cary Kuhlmann, Jeff Arrington, Will Smith, Marsha Raulerson, Robert Smith, Linda Lee, Steve Baldwin (phone), and David Johnson (phone).

Medicaid Staff Present:

Henry Davis, Kathy Hall, Nancy Headley, Mary Hasselwander, Letrice Ware, Trena Blair-Edwards, Desiree Nelson, Teresa Thomas, Cyndi Crockett, Chris McInnish, and Kelli Littlejohn.

Welcome and Review of Minutes:

Dr. Moon welcomed everyone and thanked them for their attendance. The new Assistant Medical Director, Dr. Melinda Rowe, was introduced and credentials shared. Dr. Moon went over the content of the meeting packet. The minutes from the last meeting were accepted with no changes.

Updates by Commissioner Mullins:

Commissioner Mullins discussed the Information Exchange, which is probably one of the easiest projects the Agency is involved in at the moment. He also discussed the development of the Insurance Exchange; particularly how does the Agency deal with the Insurance Exchange and the massive expansion of coverage that the Agency will have to provide by 2014. He also discussed the fact that the 2013 general fund budget will be approximately \$460 million dollars less than the 2012 budget. The Agency will have to come up with ways to meet the deficit.

New Business/Topics of Discussion:

Pharmacy Update by Kelli Littlejohn:

Dr. Littlejohn gave an update on the implementation of the PA process for antipsychotics. She reported the implementation was a success, stating it went very smoothly due to the educational efforts and preparation. During the first month, there were approximately 72% approvals every week. Reasons for denials included poly pharmacy prescription not being written by a psychiatrist, and no diagnosis on file. As the Agency expected, the approval rate dropped during the subsequent month due to stable therapy. The Agency continues to coordinate with Mental Health; there was a meeting in November with the Community Mental Health Centers where approximately 15 sites were represented. During this meeting, several different issues were addressed on a case by case basis.

- Implementation of the legislatively-mandated brand limit moving from five to four for adults has gone well; no issues to report.
- An ALERT went out regarding physicians billing for IUDs. The pharmacy will no longer bill Medicaid for IUDs effective January 1, 2012. Thank you to the PTF for your feedback and recommendations on this issue.
- The Pharmacy Division is working on e-prescribing initiatives.

Patient Care Networks Update by Chris McInnish:

- An overview was given on the locations of the Patient Care Networks and how boundary lines are drawn.
- The board composition was discussed relating that at least half the board must be Patient 1st physicians. No more than one member can be hired by the same entity. It also includes FQHCs, hospitals, Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH), Mental Health (MH), and a pharmacist.
- The Networks improve the system of care by working with the Patient 1st physicians in regular meetings, engaging pharmacists, and patient specific care management. All of the components work together to improve health and reduce cost.
- Priorities for care management were discussed which are as follows:
 - o Asthma
 - o Diabetes
 - o High Cost
 - o High Service Utilization
 - o High Pharmacy Utilization
- There are different processes used to support care management. Some examples are:
 - o Transition Care – Staff is located in the hospital looking at Patient 1st recipients in the hospital and helping with the transition to home.
 - o Referrals – There are Care Managers located in the high volume doctor's offices that can help with the referral process.
 - o Informatics – Currently there are volumes of information that can be analyzed. This information is sent out to the Networks so they can identify recipients that really need care management.
- The Care Management staff is made up of the following:
 - o Chronic Care Clinical Champion
 - o Care Managers
 - o Community Health Workers
- An overview was given regarding the RMEDE system which was developed by the University of South Alabama. This system is based upon previous versions of RMEDE used in the Agency.

Patient Care Networks Update by Dr. Stubblefield - East:

Dr. Stubblefield, Medical Director of Care Network of East Alabama, gave an overview of the Network and explained how he started in the role as Medical Director. He stated he has an interest in the health home and in the treatment and care of asthma in children.

Currently, the East Alabama Network includes two representatives from the hospital, a Network pharmacist, an RN quality manager, and a community pharmacist. The Care Managers are made up of four licensed social workers, two RNs, and one community health worker supervised by a Chronic Care Manager. Costs were kept low by housing board operations at East Alabama Medical Center.

As of December 6, 2011, 426 patients were enrolled, 111 of which are considered medium to heavy status and 316 considered light. 250 referrals have been made to ADPH, DHR, MH or other agencies.

To date, there has been a total of four Medical Management Meetings. The meetings are geographically located throughout the Network. The focus has been to determine the type of information to be shared with providers. The providers were interested in getting a list of their patients who visited the ER on a daily basis. The Network worked with East Alabama Medical Center to provide this list to the Care Managers to contact the physicians regarding their patient's ER visits. The doctor could then contact the patient to get them in the office for a visit.

Dr. Stubblefield then discussed two primary initiatives: 1) Educating the physicians about the proper and optimal care of asthma focusing on written action plans and step wise therapy, and 2) Identification of patients for immunization against influenza. A patient registry for asthmatics was also discussed that involved using Care Managers for follow-up on Asthma Action Plans and patient education on inhalers, peak flow meters, and environmental pollutants.

The biggest step forward in getting patients into care management is having Community Care Workers in the office to identify patients that are in the hospital and the ER on a daily basis and coordinate their care with the physician. Physician concerns about patient's care include their living situation and low health literacy. Care Managers knowledge about the patients living environment allows them to develop personal relationships and help coordinate care for needed services including transportation which is one of the biggest contributing barriers to care.

Dr. Stubblefield's vision for the future includes Medical Management Meetings that educate providers on the Care Network role, not as Medicaid, but to support providers in ways to do things differently without increasing cost unnecessarily. His vision also includes seeing providers identify "best practices" with higher quality care at lower cost.

Patient Care Networks Update by Dr. Alexander – West:

Dr. Alexander, Medical Director of Care Network of West Alabama, gave an overview of the Network. The Network contains a six county area that includes Fayette, Green, Hale, Pickens, Bibb, and Tuscaloosa with 30,000 patients enrolled. They have 13 employees including an Executive Director, a Medical Director who is a Chronic Disease Champion for asthma and diabetes, a Clinical Pharmacist, Network Pharmacist, Transitional Nurse who helps patients transition from hospital to home, and five Care Managers, one of whom speaks Spanish and another who works specifically on behavioral health issues.

Dr. Alexander shared a Care Network story from the behavioral health care nurse. A woman with a psychiatric condition and diabetes was identified as making frequent trips to the emergency room and staying for a couple of days. A referral from the Care Manager to a mental health worker revealed significant abuse at home as well as frequent calls for an ambulance to get away from the abusive relationship. The woman was also calling a cab to get to the hospital so she could stop by the grocery store on the way home. The patient is now seeing a mental health provider and transportation has been arranged for her. The Care Managers are doing a great job working on referrals from schools, physicians, and ERs as they are received for those patients that are high risk and high cost.

The first Medical Management Meeting was in Tuscaloosa and there were 34 attendees that included physicians, mental health workers, health department workers, hospital administrators and nurses. It was explained that the Care Networks are effective because they are separate from Medicaid and it is a sense of ownership that is important to the people in the area. Data for emergency room visits and flu shots was discussed and pocket guides for flu shots were distributed. At the end of the meeting, several physicians stated they were excited about the Care Network process.

At the second Care Network meeting, about 34 attended which included physicians, Community Health Workers, and Head Start. The attendees were divided into small groups by county to discuss how to reduce ER visits in their area and brainstorm on how the Network could help. A list of their patients with frequent emergency room visits was included in their packets and a Report Card that showed them the PMPM cost comparison to other Networks ER visits.

Moving forward, the next major focus will be asthma education on the current standards and sharing tools with providers that will help in their practice.

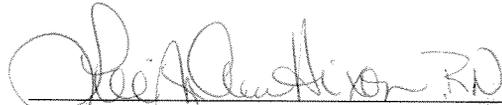
Recommendations from Members:

- The committee would like an update on the Huntsville Patient Care Network.
- The committee would like an update on HIE.

Closing of Meeting – Dr. Moon:

- The **next meeting** will be scheduled **Thursday, April 26th** from 1p.m. to 3p.m.
Please send new topics at least 2 weeks in advance to leighann.hixon@medicaid.alabama.gov,

Submitted by:
Leigh Ann Hixon



Associate Director, Medical Support

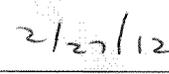


Date

Approved by:
Robert Moon, MD



Chief Medical Officer and
Deputy Commissioner, Health Systems
Alabama Medicaid Agency



Date