

## **Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee**

Minutes of Meeting  
2021 Interim  
August 20, 2021

### **I. CALL TO ORDER**

Representative Rick Edmonds, chairman of the Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee, called the meeting to order at 9:48 a.m. in Room 5, in the state capitol in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

### **II. ROLL CALL**

#### **MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Representative Rick Edmonds, chairman  
Representative Scott McKnight for Representative Tony Bacala  
Representative Roy Daryl Adams for Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore  
Representative Thomas A. Pressly  
Representative William "Bill" Wheat  
Senator Regina Ashford Barrow  
Senator Heather Miley Cloud  
Senator Bob Hensgens

#### **MEMBERS ABSENT:**

Representative Dustin Miller  
Representative Patricia "Pat" Moore  
Senator Jimmy Harris  
Senator J. Cameron Henry, Jr., vice chairman  
Senator Patrick McMath

#### **STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:**

Meah Johnson, attorney  
Chas Nichols, budget analyst  
Rashida Keith, attorney  
Kristy Neubrandner, committee administrative assistant  
Nevonda S. Reed, division director

#### **ADDITIONAL ATTENDEES PRESENT:**

Faye Talbot, House sergeant at arms

Edna Buchanan, Senate sergeant at arms  
John Rogers, Senate sergeant at arms

### **III. DISCUSSION**

#### **Update on modernization of the state's Medicaid management information systems**

Mitzi Hochheiser, Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only. She detailed to the committee the ways in which House Bill No. 618 of the 2021 Regular Session has been beneficial to the Medicaid modular procurement process.

Ruth Johnson, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only.

Senator Barrow questioned the status of LDH's cybersecurity technology. Mitzi Hochheiser assured the committee that LDH's current cybersecurity system is much better than in the past because of the rigorous certification process they go through.

#### **Update on closure of Robinswood intermediate care facility**

Julie Foster Hagan, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only. She provided information on the evacuation (following Hurricane Laura) and subsequent closure of Robinswood intermediate care facility and the needs and challenges LDH has faced in finding new providers to support the former Robinswood residents.

Ruth Johnson, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only.

#### **Status of administrative rulemaking to establish a wage floor for direct care staff providing services through certain Medicaid waiver programs**

Ruth Johnson, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 3 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

**Review of LDH's initial plan for expending enhanced federal funding provided through the American Rescue Plan Act (Public Law 117-2) for home- and community-based services submitted to the federal Medicaid agency in July, 2021**

Chairman Edmonds provided a handout, Exhibit A, which is included in the committee records.

Ruth Johnson, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only. She detailed LDH's desired areas of focus in the plan, adding that LDH wants more time to amend the plan to include some of these areas. She also explained how this plan provides an opportunity to move TEFRA from a waiver service to a state plan service.

Jennifer Katzman, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only. She and Ruth Johnson carefully guided the committee through LDH's spending plan.

Caroline Meehan, Community Provider Association, 4324 Banks Street, New Orleans, LA 70119, (202) 374-8695, spoke for information only. She shared her concerns about the spending plan with the committee and provided a handout, Exhibit B, which is included in the committee records. She said her association is not opposed to the activities outlined in the plan; however, she feels that the spending priorities are not focused on the most emergent needs as they should be during this unprecedented pandemic.

Kelly Monroe, The ARC of Louisiana, 600 Colonial Drive, Baton Rouge, LA 70806, (225) 910-2439, spoke for information only. She explained how her organization faces a staffing shortage because they do not have enough funds to pay staff a reasonable wage.

Denise Bottcher, AARP - Louisiana, 301 Main Street, Suite 1012, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 368-6120, spoke for information only. She described her unease with the pay disparity between children providers and senior providers that was created by House Bill No. 1 of the 2021 Regular Session.

Tory Rocca, Disability Rights Louisiana, 8325 Oak Street, New Orleans, LA 70118, (504) 522-2337, spoke for information only. He reiterated Denise Bottcher's concerns about the pay disparity between children providers and senior providers that was created by House Bill No. 1 of the 2021 Regular Session.

Mathew Wallace, Easter Seals Louisiana, 7031 Myrtle Bluff, Baton Rouge, LA 70810, (225) 888-6055, spoke for information only.

Witness cards submitted by individuals who did not speak are as follows: 2 for information only. Witness cards are included in the committee records.

**Update from the La. Department of Health on hospital payment reform**

Chairman Edmonds announced that the update from LDH on hospital payment reform will be postponed until the next committee meeting.

**Report on the Crisis Response Team formed pursuant to the *A.J. versus LDH* settlement agreement**

Steve Russo, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only.

Michael Boutte, LDH, Office of the Secretary, 628 North 4<sup>th</sup> Street, Baton Rouge, LA 70802, (225) 342-9509, spoke for information only.

**Any other business that may come before the committee**

There was no other business.

**IV. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

There were no announcements.

**V. ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 12:17 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Chairman Rick Edmonds  
Joint Medicaid Oversight Committee

Date adopted: