

Minutes – Combined meeting of the Medical Care Advisory Committee (MCAC) and Payment Policy Advisory Board (PPAB), September 25, 2015

MCAC members attending:

Assistant Secretary for MassHealth Daniel Tsai (also chair of PPAB)
Carole Upshur
Katherine Holahan

PPAB members attending:

Steven Friedman (CHIA)
Mark Reynolds;
David Matteodo

Other attendees:

Erin Liang – Health Care Financing Committee
Brendan Abel – Mass Medical Society
John May - MassHealth
Dennis Newman – MassHealth

Discussion:

Assistant Secretary Tsai began the meeting by noting that many members of the two boards were unable to attend for various reasons and those in attendance introduced themselves.

Assistant Secretary Tsai then discussed the first presentation, which covers both near-term and longer term improvements for the Managed Care Organization (MCO) program. A question was raised about whether the recent cost increase for Hepatitis C drugs will be offset by future savings. The general consensus was that while such savings may occur over the long term, these savings may not flow to MassHealth or the Commonwealth. However, the short-term budgeting issue is a significant challenge regardless of whether future savings occur. Other topics discussed were:

- the impact of member auto-assignment is mitigated because MassHealth has a protocol to assign previously enrolled members into their prior plans;
- the cost of MCO behavioral health carve out arrangements;
- the currently unknown extent, over a 5-year or longer time horizon, that MassHealth members remain (despite periodic eligibility interruptions) in the same health plan;

In response to a question about the current status of the redetermination effort, Assistant Secretary Tsai said that the effort is on track to meet the December 31 deadline for resolving the 1.2 million member backlog, and reviewed some statistics from the first half of CY 2015 showing a much better than normal response rate.

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Assistant Secretary Tsai then discussed the second presentation, which covers the stakeholder engagement process currently underway to support implementation of Alternative Payment Methodologies (APMs). There was considerable discussion of the feedback to date, as well as the timelines and expectations for this process. There was also discussion of experiences in other states. Assistant Secretary Tsai noted that many previous efforts in other states have been unsuccessful for a variety of reasons, and that the goal of the current process is to ensure that the approaches adopted in the Commonwealth are not only practical and operationally feasible, but also are effective and sustainable.