



*The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Health Policy Commission
Two Boylston Street
Boston, MA 02116*

September 13, 2013

Scott Taberner
Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership
1000 Washington Street, Suite 130
Boston, MA 02118

Dear Mr. Taberner:

The Health Policy Commission (HPC), in collaboration with the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Center for Health Information and Analysis (CHIA), is required by state law to hold annual public hearings concerning health care cost trends in the Commonwealth. (See the Notice of Public Hearing attached as "Exhibit A."). G.L. c. 6D §8 requires the HPC to identify a representative sample of health care providers and payers as witnesses for the hearing. In accordance with these provisions, Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership has been identified as a witness and is hereby requested to submit written testimony to the questions of the HPC in "Exhibit B" in accordance with this notice and exhibits.

Your assistance and active participation in this hearing process will assist the HPC to prepare its annual report on statewide spending trends, including underlying factors contributing to growth and strategies to increase the efficiency of the Commonwealth's health care system.

Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership is required to electronically submit to HPC written testimony, signed under the pains and penalties of perjury, responding to the areas of inquiry identified on the attached "Exhibit B" on or before the close of business on Tuesday, October 1, 2013.

The written testimony should be submitted to HPC.Testimony@state.ma.us. Any and all written testimony will be a public record and will be posted on the HPC's website.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David Seltz".

David Seltz
Executive Director

cc: Thomas O'Brien, Office of the Attorney General
cc: Áron Boros, Center for Health Information and Analysis

Enclosures:

Exhibit A: Notice of Hearing

Exhibit B: Instructions and HPC Questions for Written Testimony

Exhibit A

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 6D, §8, the Health Policy Commission will hold a public hearing on health care cost trends. The hearing will examine health care provider, provider organization and private and public health care payer costs, prices and cost trends, with particular attention to factors that contribute to cost growth within the Commonwealth's health care system.

Scheduled hearing dates and location:

Tuesday, October 1, 2013, 9:00 AM
Wednesday, October 2, 2013, 9:00 AM
University of Massachusetts Boston
Campus Center
Third Floor, Ballrooms B and C
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125

The HPC encourages all interested parties to attend. For driving and public transportation directions, please visit: http://www.umb.edu/the_university/getting_here/directions. If you are driving, please park in the Bayside Lot, 200 Mt. Vernon Street at the former Bayside Expo site (cost: \$6). Free shuttle service runs every 5-7 minutes from the Bayside Lot to the Campus Center. If you are taking public transportation, UMass Boston runs a free shuttle service from JFK/UMass Station (which serves both the Red Line and Old Colony Line) to the Campus Center. The trip normally takes less than 10 minutes.

For more information, including details about the agenda, expert and market participant panelists, testimony and presentations, please check the Annual Cost Trends Hearing section of the HPC's website, www.mass.gov/hpc. Materials will be posted regularly as the hearing dates approach.

Exhibit B: Instructions and HPC Questions for Written Testimony

Instructions:

On or before the close of business on October 1, 2013, electronically submit **in both PDF and Microsoft Word format** written testimony signed under the pains and penalties of perjury to: HPC-Testimony@state.ma.us. Please submit any data tables included in your response in **Microsoft Excel or Access format**.

Please begin all responses with a brief summary not to exceed 120 words. If necessary, please include supporting testimony or documentation in an Appendix. If your organization uses an 'other', 'miscellaneous', or similar category in any response, please explain what such a category includes.

The testimony must contain a statement that the signatory is legally authorized and empowered to represent the named organization for the purposes of this testimony, and that the testimony is signed under the pains and penalties of perjury. An electronic signature will be sufficient for this submission.

If you have any questions regarding this process or regarding the following questions, please contact: Lois Johnson at Lois.Johnson@state.ma.us or (617) 979-1405.

Questions:

1. C.224 sets a health care cost growth benchmark for the Commonwealth based on the long-term growth in the state's economy. The benchmark for growth between CY2012-CY2013 and CY2013-CY2014 is 3.6%.
 - a. What are the actions your organization has undertaken to ensure the Commonwealth will meet the benchmark?
 - b. What are the biggest opportunities you have identified at your organization to improve the quality and efficiency of care? What current factors limit your ability to address these opportunities?
 - c. What systematic or policy changes would help your organization operate more efficiently without reducing quality?
 - d. What steps have you taken to ensure that any reduction in health care spending is passed along to consumers and businesses?
2. The 2013 Examination of Health Care Cost Trends and Cost Drivers by the Attorney General's Office found that growth in prices for medical care continues to drive overall increases in medical spending. What are the actions your organization has undertaken to address the impact of growth in prices on medical trend and what have been the results of these actions?
3. C.224 requires health plans, to the maximum extent feasible, to reduce the use of fee-for-service payment mechanisms in order to promote high quality, efficient care delivery. What actions has your organization undertaken to meet this expectation? What factors limit your ability to execute these strategies or limit their effectiveness?
4. C.224 seeks to promote the integration of behavioral and physical health. What are the actions your organization has undertaken to promote this integration?

- a. What potential opportunities have you identified for such integration?
 - b. What challenges have you identified in implementing such integration?
 - c. What systematic or policy changes would further promote such integration?
5. After reviewing the reports issued by the Attorney General (April 2013) and the Center for Health Information and Analysis (August 2013), please provide any commentary on the findings presented in light of your organization's experiences.