

Executive Director's Report

2025

Date: September 15, 2025
To: Group Insurance Commission
From: Matthew Veno, Executive Director
Subject: Executive Director's Report

Purpose: The purpose of this memo is to provide Commissioners with the monthly Executive Director's report in writing. Questions and comments from Commissioners on the content of this memo are welcome during this portion of the agenda.

LEGISLATIVE & MUNICIPAL

Vaccine

Earlier this month, Executive Director Veno and other state leaders joined Governor Maura Healey as she announced new state measures aimed at strengthening vaccine access and public health independence. These actions include ensuring the availability of COVID-19 booster shots at retail pharmacies, ensuring insurance coverage for vaccines, and launching a regional public health collaborative. The GIC will align with a new directive from the Division of Insurance and Department of Public Health (DPH) that requires insurers to cover vaccines recommended by the DPH rather than solely relying on the CDC. This policy applies to vaccines for respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, flu, and RSV, as well as routine childhood immunizations such as measles, chickenpox, and hepatitis B.

Legislative

Though the Legislature is often quiet in August, the GIC fielded inquiries from this summer regarding the Governor's FY26 veto of \$27.5M related to GLP-1 coverage from a GIC line item, as well as the related legislation that would allow the GIC to make mid-year plan changes in FY26.

Several bills we are tracking have had public hearings, and we continue to track these and other pieces of legislation as they move through the legislative process. Since our last Commission meeting, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed S.2543, *An Act strengthening health care protections in the Commonwealth*, a reproductive rights and gender-affirming care bill that seeks to protect access and patient data, among other issues. We will keep the Commission apprised of any legislation that is moving and would be impactful for the GIC.

Municipal

Staff have been onboarding READS Collaborative, which is joining effective January 1, 2026. The GIC is offering a Special Enrollment period from October 6 – October 24 for eligible READS members.

Over the summer, GIC staff were made aware of a municipal joint purchasing arrangement (JPA) based in Western Mass called the Hampshire County Group Insurance Trust is facing significant fiscal

Executive Director's Report

2025

challenges. This trust is comprised of 73 member municipal units and about 12,000 members. Since learning this information, GIC staff have been working with the Governor's office, other state agencies, and Legislators from the area to offer support and guidance to municipal entities seeking to join the GIC. We sent a letter to the units detailing next steps for any of the entities that wished to learn more about joining the GIC and asked for a response by September 15. To date, we have interacted with 41 HCGIT member units; of that number, 37 appear to be eligible and have expressed interest in learning more. We offered these units two informational webinars, which included a brief presentation about the GIC and ample time for questions and answers. We are evaluating our procedures in order to onboard any units that decide to join as efficiently as possible since we have not seen municipal interest like this to date.

Relatedly, GIC staff are also taking steps to engage with another JPA, Massachusetts Strategic Health Group, which is reportedly also facing financial instability. We plan to conduct similar outreach to Mass Strategic units as well, in order to be proactive and set expectations for any units looking to join the GIC.

COMMUNICATIONS

The U.S. Department of Justice's Title II Final Rule on Web Accessibility mandates that all content and services offered online in web or mobile applications, by a state or local government, be accessible to people with disabilities by the Spring of 2026. The GIC has been working with Administration and Finance (A&F) IT on this project since late July of this year to ensure all GIC's documents and systems meet the new accessibility requirements by the April 24, 2026 deadline. Given the large number of member documents GIC publishes and online member materials and tools, this is a very large and complex project.