

**COHS Planning and Implementation Committee
Meeting Notes
April 24, 2009**

In Attendance:

Implementation Committee Members: Jack Neureuter, Joann Keyston, Michael Humphrey, Dianna Ball, Barbara Graves, Madrone Williams, Naomi Fuchs, Paul Duranczyk, Damon Doss, Don Ransom, Marion Deeds

Staff and Consultants: Cliff Coates, Lynn Scuri

Partnership HealthPlan: Jack Horn, Liz Gibboney, Mary Kerlin, Barbara MacKenzie

Audience: Louie Sanchez, Javier Portela, Kim Seamans, Ned Boatright, Richard Lose, Minena Singh

Absent: Jim McSweeney, Diane Kaljian, Susan Zibblatt, Irma Oregon, Sean Gaskie, Michael Smith, Mich Riccioni, Joan Froess, Jim Vaughn, Evan Rayner, Nancy Oswald, Kirk Pappas, Mary Maddux-Gonzalez, Mary Szecsey, Jane Stone

Welcome, Introductions, Announcements

Cliff Coates welcomed the Planning and Implementation Committee and reviewed the goals of the meeting and the agenda. There were no announcements from the Committee.

Governance Document

The Committee recommended two minor edits to the document. Staff will make the edits and incorporate the concepts into the resolution.

Partnership HealthPlan report

Jack Horn reported that Partnership is moving forward with implementation activities. Fifteen new employees have been hired and are currently being trained. The three year strategic plan was approved by the Board. The major project identified in the Plan is expansion into Sonoma County. Partnership is doing well financially with the new rates. There are on-going concerns with the uncertainty of the State budget situation. Rates for the next fiscal year will be delivered in June. It is likely that payment on new rates will be delayed due to budget negotiations.

Mr. Horn reported that the first member mailing informing beneficiaries of changes will be mailed July 1. The meeting with Kaiser is scheduled for April 27. Kaiser is working with Partnership to determine how many members they currently care for. Kaiser does not bill for all of the medi-cal patients they see.

Liz Gibboney reported that letters regarding the loss of “optional” benefits will soon be mailed to beneficiaries. Members in long term care and under age 21 will not be affected. Partnership has the option to cover “optional” services that the State is no longer funding. Partnership is evaluating this possibility. There were questions regarding whether Partnership was seeking Federal stimulus grant funds. Mr. Horn responded that there are no requests being made but that Partnership expects to participate in the information technology initiatives funded through the stimulus package.

Ms. Gibboney provided an overview of the Partnership substance abuse benefit. Partnership covers all patients while FFS covers only pregnant women and teens. The policy will be circulated to the committee.

Community Clinic update

Naomi Fuchs provided the committee with an overview of the impacts of recent Federal legislation on the Community Clinics.

Federal Stimulus

All of the County FQHC Clinics recently received non-competitive 2-year grants to increase services. Most clinics are increasing pediatric services.

There are two more opportunities for the Clinics to fund capital projects. One opportunity will be non-competitive and must expand services. The second will be competitive and be for shovel ready projects. This opportunity will average \$6 million per grant.

Legislation provides funding for information technology upgrades on a per physician basis. There is five years of funding of \$25 to \$40 thousand per year. This funding is available to all physicians. The Clinics expect to participate.

CHIPRA

Federal legislation that funds the healthy families program in California now provides additional funding for Community Clinics (FQHC). The Clinics will be paid at their medi-cal (cost based) rate for all children in the healthy families program starting in October.

Contracting update

Liz Gibboney reported that Partnership will contract with the Marin Clinic (Pt. Reyes) so that members in Southwest Sonoma do not have to change providers. Barbara MacKenzie reported that specialty contracting is moving forward and that there are now 80 letters of intent out. The shortages are primarily in areas where there are few local physicians. The major specialty medical groups are responding favorably. Mr. Horn reported the Community Clinic discussions are moving forward. Mr. Horn reported that long-term care discussion will be starting soon. Paul Duranczyk agreed to assist in coordinating these discussions.

Mr. Horn reported on the status of contracting discussions with hospitals. Information is being shared with hospitals to arrive at appropriate rates. There are significant data discrepancies which have slowed the Sutter discussions. Sutter, Partnership and the State are exchanging data to reconcile a large financial discrepancy. Memorial hospital is discussing rates and has requested that the County participate in a discussion about the distribution of unfunded patients prior to completing negotiations. The Committee expressed the need to reach agreement as quickly as possible to allow for implementation on schedule. Members of the Committee requested that the County and Partnership stress the need to reach agreement quickly and that unfunded patients should be discussed outside of managed medi-cal implementation. There were questions about timing and the need to have all hospitals in the network. Mr. Horn reinforced the desire and need to have all hospitals participate in the program. This principle is critical to the success of a County Organized Health System.

Public Comment

There will no comments from the public

Other

Mr. Horn reported that he had attended a conference on national healthcare reform and indications are that there will be significant legislation passed by August of this year. The proposed federal budget includes \$470 billion as a down payment on reform.

JoAnne asked if there was something that could be done to avoid the termination of “optional” benefits. Mr. Horn responded that this decision has been made and is being implemented. Michael Humphrey suggested that Committee members work with their constituency groups to educate legislators on this issue.

Next Meeting

Contracting and Kaiser discussions will be on the agenda for the May meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for May 22 at 9:00.