

**Health Insurance Advisory Council**  
**September 21, 2010**  
**4:30-6:00 PM – Landmark Medical Center, Woonsocket, RI**

**Minutes**

**Attendance:**

Members: Bill Martin (Co-Chair), Chris Koller (Co-Chair), Rick Brooks, Howard Dulude, Phil Papoojian, Hub Brennan, DO, Gregg Allen, MD, Bill Schmiedeknicht, Ed Quinlan, Jeff Swallow

Health Plans: Lauren Conway, Craig O'Connor

OHIC Staff: Adrienne Evans

Not in Attendance: Pat Mattingly, Roland Benjamin, Robin Benoit, Peter Quattromani, Joel Cooper, Pat Mattingly, Karen Fifer Ferry, Peter Asen, Monica Coughlin

Guests:

1. Introductions

- Members of the Council introduced themselves.

2. Updates

- Staffing Changes: Chris Koller updated the Council on efforts to hire a replacement Counsel, the retention of a temporary Counsel in the interim, and the opportunities for additional OHIC staffing with new Federal Grant Money (see below).
- Federal Reform and OHIC: Chris Koller briefly reviewed the work of the Office over the summer on Federal health Care Reform. This has focused on working with health insurers to make sure subscriber contracts reflect the reforms (as well as the new 8<sup>th</sup> grade reading requirement). More recently the Office instituted a formal review health plan estimates of the effects of benefit expansions under PPACA on rates. A decision from OHIC to the plans is due out next week. The Office also applied for three different Federal Grants related to the reform effort – two (Consumer Assistance and Exchange Planning) are still pending.

In response to questions from the Council Mr. Koller confirmed that these efforts have crowded out other work of the Office, such as the issuing of regulations and more public engagement in rate reviews. Areas of state vs federal jurisdiction are unclear and being worked out – plans have been cooperative. A great challenge has been communicating with stakeholders who are looking for information. It is not expected that any grant funds received would “crowd out” existing General revenue funding. There was also discussion about changes in 1099 reporting, the potential burden on businesses, and the increased tax revenues expected to be generated.

3. Discussion

A. OHIC Rate Review Grant

- The Office has received a grant of \$1 million to be spent by October 1, 2011 on efforts to improve rate oversight activities. Mr. Koller handed out the proposed budget for the grant, which will hire three staff and dedicate staff and consulting resources in four areas: Rate Review Management, Affordability Standards Implementation, Communications and Consumer Engagement and Analysis. OHIC has begun the process of posting for the staff, which will then permit the other work to be done. There will be grant monies available beyond 2011, which will be competitively bid. OHIC believes it is well positioned for this money, given its rate review activities, but also has only budgeted about 30% of this grant for staffing, to allow for a small future budget.
- Questions were asked about the analysis of hospital payments work to be done as part of the grant as well as the ability of the Office to seek state funding for these position in future years. Mr. Koller noted that the 2011/12 budget discussions appear to include proposals to fund this Office based on a surcharge of insurers, as was proposed last year as well.

B. Proposed Agenda for 2010/2011

- Bill Martin reviewed the proposed agenda for 2010/2011, which the co-chairs had developed. It calls for continued focus on Affordability, only looking at the aspects of Federal Health reform that effect commercial insurance directly, and greater efforts to increase public attention on the Council's work and health plan engagement with the Council. Mr. Koller noted that this was all subject to change with a new Commissioner in January
- Comments were generally supportive of the agenda as presented. Council members expressed support for the idea of more presentations by health plans about how they are doing this work. There were also conversations about to engage providers.
- Several Council members asked if it was possible for OHIC to produce a quarterly dashboard with key indicators on the commercial insurance market by carrier and on the system evaluation measures promoted by HIAC. Mr. Koller indicated this would be a function of the new analyst.
- Council members raised questions about the exchange planning process. As envisioned by the grant, this would be led by an interagency task force with outside input. Members asked to be briefed in March.
- Council members talked about increasing awareness of the Council's work and the importance of briefing Gubernatorial candidates on it. Mr. Koller noted that this could not be the work of the Council itself but individual members or their associations could. Phil Papoojian offered the Smaller Business Association of New England as a forum. Mr. Koller noted that much works has been done with the RI Business Group on Health

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- Council members offered no changes to the charter approved last year. It was approved by unanimous consent.

#### C. Feedback on October Meeting

- Council members gave specific feedback on what they would like to hear from health plans at next month's discussion on implementing the primary care portion of the affordability standards, with a focus on measurable effects and anticipated future changes in payment and utilization. They also expressed a desire for more context – particularly about patient centered medical homes and the performance of Rhode Island as a whole.
- Mr. Koller will set up the meeting based on this direction

#### 4. Other Business

- Bill Martin solicited input on where the HIAC could meet out side of the Department of Labor and training. Council members felt strongly that the hosting organization was important to generate interest and engagement – even if the agenda had to be changed to accommodate it. The suggestions made included:
  - RI Business Group on Health (Howard)
  - The RI Chamber Coalition (Jeff Swallow)
  - Bradford Soap (Bill Schmiedeknecht)
  - Newport Chamber or Hospital (Chris Koller)

Chris Koller will follow up with these.

#### Next Meeting

October 19, 2010.

4:30 pm – DLT, Cranston, RI

Agenda:

- Primary Care Affordability Standards

The meeting then adjourned.