

GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD (GMCB)
GMCB Board Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 21, 2020
1:00 pm

Attendance

Kevin J. Mullin, Chair (*via phone*)
Susan J. Barrett, JD, Executive Director (*via phone*)
Michael Barber, General Counsel (*via phone*)
Robin Lunge, JD, MHCDS (*via phone*)
Maureen Usifer (*via phone*)
Jessica Holmes, PhD (*via phone*)
Tom Pelham (*via phone*)

Executive Director's Report

Chair Mullin called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 pm. Susan Barrett announced the FY21 Hospital Budget Debrief agenda item will be rescheduled. No public comments were received during the special comment period regarding the Revised 2020 Medicare Benchmark Proposal.

Minutes

The Board voted (5-0) to approve the minutes from October 14, 2020.

New Tools to Help States Address Hospital Costs

Christopher Whaley, PhD, Policy Researcher and Professor, Pardee RAND Graduate School
Marilyn Bartlett, CPA, CMA, CFM, CGMA, NASHP Senior Policy Fellow

Chair Mullin introduced the presenters. Christopher Whaley reviewed the acknowledgements of the RAND Hospital Price Transparency Project, the reasons for conducting the study including the rise in prices paid by employer-sponsored health care plans, why we should care about health care spending, what is known and unknown about hospital prices, the fiduciary responsibility of self-funded employers, the effect of COVID-19 on hospital prices, why RAND undertook the study, and the three phases of the study. Christopher Whaley presented the study approach and discussed how comparing prices can be challenging. The study measured prices in two ways: relative to a Medicare benchmark and price per case-mix weight. Christopher Whaley discussed data protections, the study findings, and the implications and conclusions including the role for state and federal policymakers. The presentation can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website.

Marilyn Bartlett explained that NASHP, under an Arnold Foundation grant to look at costs, developed a hospital cost tool. The goal of the tool was to help purchasers and regulators better understand hospital costs and it can be used to complement recent findings reported in the

RAND Corporation's study. Officials from several states have reviewed the tool and expressed interest in leveraging its analysis of their hospitals in different ways. Marilyn Bartlett presented the findings of the hospital tool when applied to Vermont hospitals including a high level summary, a summary of charity care, uninsured, and bad debt, a summary of payer mix, hospital prices in four breakeven levels, a summary of physician costs, and comparisons of academic hospitals. The presentation can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website.

Christopher Whaley answered the Board, GMCB staff, and public's questions. Marilyn Bartlett answered questions from the Board regarding the federal price transparency rule, hospital designations, the break-even level analysis, Medicaid and Medicare reimbursement, and 340B savings. Marilyn Bartlett then answered questions from the public.

Public Comment

Walter Carpenter, Health Care Activist

Dale Hackett, Health Care and Disability Rights Advocate

Michael Del Trecco, Sr. Vice President of Finance & Operations, VAHHS

Sara Teachout, Director, Government and Media Relations, BCBSVT

Richard (Mort) Wasserman, MD, MPH, Professor Emeritus of Pediatrics, Larner College of Medicine, University of Vermont

Michael Fisher, Chief Health Care Advocate, Vermont Legal Aid

Marc Stanislas, Vice President of Finance, University of Vermont Health Network

Robyn Alvis, CFO, Northwestern Medical Center

Hamilton Davis, Journalist and Policy Analyst

Revised 2020 Medicare Benchmark Proposal – Potential Vote

Sarah Lindberg, Director of Health Systems Data Analytics, GMCB

Sarah Lindberg reviewed the recommendation for the Board to revise the methodology for the Benchmark for the 2020 Medicare program with OneCare Vermont to use a retrospective trend to account for the uncertainty with COVID-19. Board Member Robin Lunge moved to propose a revision to the 2020 Medicare ACO Benchmark for OneCare Vermont to be a retrospective trend to account for the uncertainty with COVID-19. Board Member Maureen Usifer seconded the motion. The Board voted (5-0) to approve the motion.

Public Comment

None

Old Business

None

New Business

None

Adjourn

The Board voted (5-0) to adjourn at approximately 3:00 pm.