

GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD (GMCB)  
GMCB Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, September 25, 2019  
1:00 pm

**Attendance**

Kevin J. Mullin, Chair  
Susan J. Barrett, JD, Executive Director  
Michael Barber, General Counsel  
Robin Lunge, JD, MHCDS – *not present*  
Maureen Usifer  
Jessica Holmes, PhD  
Tom Pelham

**Executive Director’s Report**

Chair Kevin Mullin called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 pm. Susan Barrett announced on Wednesday, October 2, 2019 the Board Meeting will be a panel called “An Update on Health Care Workforce Solutions.” On Wednesday, October 16, 2019 there will be a traveling board meeting held at Northwestern Medical Center in St. Albans, VT. The October 2019 schedule can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website. Hospital budget orders will be released by October 1, 2019. During this meeting there will be an old business topic brought up and discussed.

**Minutes**

The Board voted (4-0) to approve the minutes from September 18, 2019.

**The Vermont Health Care Uniform Reporting and Evaluation System (VHCURES) in Action: Examples of how Vermont’s claims data are used to understand and improve care – Intro by GMCB Staff**

Kathryn O’Neill, Director of Data Management Analysis and Data Integrity, GMCB

Kathryn O’Neill explained that VHCURES is Vermont’s all-payer claims database, and the three presentations showcasing how VHCURES was used in research. The database includes eligibility information and medical/pharmacy claims provided by commercial health insurers, Medicaid, Medicare, and has been collected since 2007. Kathryn O’Neill introduced the presenters.

**RTI International Study using VHCURES Data: Opioid Medication Discontinuation and Risk of Adverse Opioid-Related Health Care Events**

Tami L. Mark, PhD, Senior Director, Behavioral Health Financing and Quality Measurement, RTI International

Tami Mark presented the pilot study funded by RTI International which focused on the opioid epidemic and was published in the Journal of Substance Abuse Treatment. The objective of the study was to look at the time for discontinuation among long-term high dose prescription opioid users, if the clinical guidelines for tapering off opioid medications were followed, and the association between tapering time and the risk of negative health care consequences. Tami Mark reviewed the study methods, the summary of the main findings, and the limitations of the study. After the study was published, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) raised awareness regarding potential issues from misapplication of their Guidelines that could put patients at risk. The presentation and the article can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website. The Board asked questions and had a discussion with Tami Mark.

### **Public Comment**

Kaili Kuiper

### **Pediatric Health Services Research using VHCURES**

Valerie Harder, PhD, MHS, Associate Professor of Pediatrics and Psychiatry, Director, Health Services Research Team, Vermont Child Health Improvement Program (VCHIP), University of Vermont

Valerie Harder presented five research projects using VHCURES that VCHIP has conducted. The first research project involves attributing every child 0-26 years old to a single primary care physician and each physician to a single practice location. The goal of this research is to measure the impact of VCHIP's quality improvement efforts at the practice level. The second research project addressed quality improvement with asthma care. The data looked at emergency department visits before and after participation in the initiative. The third research project looked at trends over time for developmental screening. The fourth study was recently published in Annals of Family Medicine and titled "Change in Site of Children's Primary Care: A Longitudinal Population-Based Analysis." The workforce study used attribution data to examine the proportion of children at different practice types from 2009 to 2016, and showed children received care at family medicine practices less frequently since 2009. The fifth research project, still underway, looks at the effects of the July 1, 2017 opioid prescribing policies on opioid/opiate overdoses and opioid-related adverse effects. The results of the study are still preliminary. The presentation can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website. The Board asked questions and had a discussion with Valerie Harder.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Vermont Department of Health Analysis using VHCURES Data: Mental Health Related Emergency Department Claims for Vermont Children**

Laurin Kasehagen, MA, PhD, Epidemiologist/CDC Assignee, Vermont Department of Health & Department of Mental Health

Laurel Omland, MS, NCC, Director of the Child, Adolescent & Family Unit, Vermont Department of Mental Health

Laurel Omland presented the project conducted by Anita Wade, epidemiology fellow under the supervision of Laurin Kasehagen, in partnership with the Children's Division at the Department of Mental Health. The context of the study was to analyze trends in children and youth in mental health crisis waiting in hospital emergency departments. The goal of this analysis was to better understand this trend to inform policy and program development for the system of care as well as workforce development needs. Laurel Omland reviewed the relevant national data.

Laurin Kasehagen reviewed the data analysis, including what they were interested in studying, methods, pros and cons of using VHCURES as the data source, inclusion criteria, creating mental health categories, results, and policy and practice implications. Laurel Omland reviewed the need for mobile response and stabilization services (MRSS) in Vermont. The presentation can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website. The Board asked questions and had a discussion with Laurel Omland.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Overview of GMCB's Data Governance and Stewardship Program**

Kathryn O'Neill, Director of Data Management Analysis and Data Integrity, GMCB

Kathryn O'Neill explained that the GMCB is the steward of VHCURES and several other data resources and the concerns of data governance that the Board addresses: risk management, data quality, program sustainability, and data release. The Data Governance Council is composed of seven voting members who are data contributors, data users, technical experts, or policy leaders. Kathryn O'Neill reviewed the current issues before the Data Governance Council including potential Rule revision, policy guidance, health care data-related activities at state and federal levels, and specific data release applications and data linkage requests. There are numerous current Data Use Agreements (DUAs) for use of the VHCURES database, as well as one pending application. The presentation can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website.

### **Public Comment**

None

### **Old Business**

Board Member Maureen Usifer made a motion to recognize UVMMC's accounting adjustment to reclassify payment reform investments as NPR/FPP deductions, which results in an effective NPR/FPP growth rate of 6.4%. UVMMC's FY20 total approved NPR/FPP remains the same at approximately \$1,348,125,703. Board Member Jessica Holmes seconded the motion. The Board voted to approve the motion (4-0).

**New Business**

None

**Adjourn**

The Board voted (4-0) to adjourn at approximately 3:00 pm.