

GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD (GMCB)  
GMCB Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, June 2, 2021  
1:00 pm

**Attendance**

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

**Executive Director's Report**

Chair Mullin called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 p.m. Susan Barrett announced there is a General Advisory Committee meeting on Monday, June 7, 2021, at 2:00 p.m. and the June 2021 Board Meeting schedule is posted to the Board's website. The Board is continuing to accept [public comment to inform a potential new agreement with the State of Vermont and CMS](#), which will be shared with the other All-Payer Model signatories.

General Counsel Michael Barber announced on June 1, 2021, the Board approved the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Vermont Association Health Plan rate filing for 2022 with an anticipated average premium change of -1.3%.

**Minutes**

The Board voted (5-0) to approve the minutes from May 26, 2021.

**An Update on Federal Issues Related to Vermont Health Insurance**

Ena Backus, Director of Health Care Reform, Agency of Human Services  
Emily Brown, Director of Rates and Forms, Department of Financial Regulation  
Adaline Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Vermont Health Access  
Dana Houlihan, Plan Management Director, Department of Vermont Health Access  
Sean Sheehan, Policy and Implementation Analyst, Department of Vermont Health Access

Ena Backus provided context for the presentation, explaining Vermont's essential health benefit (EHB) benchmark plan has not been changed since it was established for plan year 2014. Current federal rules do not require states to revisit their plan selection but are allowed to reevaluate and make changes in accordance with three options as specified by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). The group of presenters, with input from GMCB staff, established a

process and timeline for periodic review of the plan. You may find the established EHB benchmark plan process [here](#) on the GMCB website.

Emily Brown provided an overview of the EHB benchmark plan change process. In 2019, CMS outlined three options to update benchmark plans (see slide 4). The option Vermont will most likely pursue is to select a set of benefits to constitute the State's benchmark plan. The process takes several years and requires planning and support, including actuarial services. Proposals to change or select a new EHB benchmark plan must be submitted to CMS for approval in spring of the second year prior to implementation of the new plan. Emily Brown reviewed the timeline for this process and explained the Department of Financial Regulation (DFR) applied for a federal grant to fund this work. Board Members asked questions and provided comment on the process timeline.

Adaline Strumolo provided context for the second half of the presentation related to the qualified health plan benefit and subsidy changes made at the federal level. Dana Houlihan outlined the four 2022 notice of benefit and payment parameters (NBPP) changes impacting qualified health plan (QHP) designs and provided an updated summary of plan design changes for 2022 QHPs.

Sean Sheehan discussed the five ways the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) impacts Vermont health insurance, including more generous premium tax credits and tax credit eligibility with higher incomes for 2021 and 2022. Sean Sheehan walked through the key 2021 milestones for Vermont's health insurance marketplace and provided examples on how these changes will impact Vermonters. Sean Sheehan summarized who will be protected and by how much in 2022 and who will not be protected from 2022 premium increases. Chair Mullin asked how the State will inform consumers of these changes and options available. Sean Sheehan explained the outreach planned. The presentation can be found [here](#) on the GMCB website.

### **Public Comment**

Dale Hackett, Activist  
Hamilton Davis, Journalist and Policy Analyst  
Walter Carpenter, Health Care Advocate

### **Old Business**

Chair Mullin brought up Mike Fisher's, Chief Health Care Advocate of Vermont Legal Aid, proposal to put together a committee to address duplicative efforts in the health care system. Board Members agreed the committee could be helpful if people are willing to participate. Chair Mullin asked that if anyone is interested in participating on this committee to please reach out to him and/or Mike Fisher directly.

### **New Business**

None

**Adjourn**

The Board voted (5-0) to adjourn at approximately 3:20 p.m.

Unapproved