

GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD (GMCB)  
GMCB Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, February 16, 2022  
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)*  
Jessica Holmes, PhD *(via Microsoft Teams)*  
Tom Pelham *(via Microsoft Teams)*  
Thom Walsh, PhD, MS, MSPT *(via Microsoft Teams)*

**Executive Director's Report**

Chair Kevin Mullin called the meeting to order at approximately 1:00 pm. Susan Barrett announced that we would be adding an item to the agenda, an overview of the Wait Times Report that was released on February 16, 2022. Susan Barrett reviewed [the open special comment periods on the GMCB website](#). Susan Barrett announced there was a Primary Care Advisory Group meeting on February 16, 2022 from 5:00 - 7:00 pm and there would be no Board Meeting on February 23, 2022.

**Minutes**

The Board voted (5-0) to approve the minutes from February 9, 2022.

**Wait Times Report Overview**

Ena Backus, Director of Health Care Reform, Agency of Human Services (AHS)  
Michael Pieciak, Commissioner, Department of Financial Regulation (DFR)

Ena Backus announced that the findings of the Wait Times assessment had been published on February 16, 2022 and [the report can be found here on the DFR website](#). Ena Backus presented the report rationale and structure, along with the impacts of delayed care and the goals of the investigation.

Michael Pieciak reviewed how data was gathered for the wait times report, which included public and provider comments, patient surveys and a survey tool titled Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems (CAHPS). The wait times were quantified using three methods: claims data analysis, a secret shopper survey, and a primary care chart audit. Michael Pieciak presented the key findings and possible causes and presented some recommendations for moving forward.

The Board Members asked questions about data breakdown by specialty and a proposed timeline for next steps.

## **Public Comment**

Sharon Gutwin, PT, Owner, RehabGYM  
Walter Carpenter, Health Care Advocate

## **Essential Health Benefits (EHB) Benchmark Plan Updates**

Adaline Strumolo, Deputy Commissioner, Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA)

Emily Brown, Director of Insurance Regulation, DFR

Ena Backus, Director of Health Care Reform, AHS

Sebastian Arduengo, Assistant General Counsel, DFR

Mara Donahue, Assistant Director, Blueprint for Health

Rebecca O'Reilly, Manager, Heart Disease and Diabetes Prevention Program, Vermont Department of Health (VDH)

Nicole Lukas, Director of Health Systems for Chronic Disease, VDH

Emily Brown began with a follow up to a question posed at the January 26, 2022 Board Meeting about benefit design language and how that will affect the new benefit design. Emily Brown presented the non-discriminatory benefit design impacts for benefits including but not limited to nutritional counseling and foot care. Emily Brown stated the current coverage issues and the proposed EHB coverage for each one going forward.

Adaline Strumolo provided a reminder on the jurisdiction for DVHA and the GMCB and presented the three options for the Benchmark Plan Design. DVHA recommends using federal option three, which is to create a new benchmark plan and include all the existing benefits within the Blue Cross Blue Shield plan and add hearing aid coverage. This would be submitted to CMS for plan year 2024. Adaline Strumolo explained the hearing aid benefit description, described the hearing aid benefit considerations, and presented other benefit options that DVHA does not currently recommend adding to the Benchmark Plan.

Mara Donahue reviewed the Blueprint statute, provided a brief history on the Blueprint programs and an overview of the Blueprint workshop offerings and participation. Nicole Lukas provided some background on the roles created to support the self-management programs. Rebecca O'Reilly presented the programs in My Healthy Vermont and context for each one. Rebecca O'Reilly reviewed the "Hub and Spoke" style model which includes VDH operational support and outreach support through regional coordinators. Rebecca O'Reilly addressed the priorities for current needs in the Blueprint-VDH collaboration, and priorities for long term success.

The Board Members asked questions and discussed the hearing aid benefit, scaling back certain other benefits, and insurers contribution to the Blueprint.

## **Public Comment**

Sharon Gutwin, PT, Owner, RehabGYM

Walter Carpenter, Health Care Advocate

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

None

**Adjourn**

The Board voted (5-0) to adjourn at approximately 3:50pm.

Unapproved