

GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD

Data Governance Council

April 4, 2023

2:00pm, via Microsoft Teams

Attendance (Voting Members)

Susan Barrett, Council Chair and Executive Director, GMCB

Sarah Kinsler, Director of Health Systems Policy, GMCB

Cathy Fulton, Executive Director, VPQHC

Lauri Scharf, Manager of Informatics, Bi-State Primary Care Association

Kristin McClure, Chief Data Officer, ADS

Jessica Holmes, Board Member, Green Mountain Care Board (appointed during this meeting)

Jessie Hammond, Public Health Statistics Chief, VDH

Others Present

Attendance report available upon request.

Call to Order, Chair's Report

Susan Barrett called the meeting to order at approximately 2:01 pm. Susan provided a brief update on Board activities.

Approve December Meeting Minutes

The Council voted (6-0) to approve the minutes from December 2022.

Staff Updates

Veronica Fialkowski provided a process update on requirements gathering and an estimated timeline for the re-procurement of contracting for VHCURES database management services.

Kate O'Neill provided an update on GMCB data reporting activities including the APCD snapshot and Total Cost of Care annual reporting.

VUHDDS Overview

Veronica, along with colleagues Matt Griffith from VAHHS-NSO and Jeff Ross from VDH provided an overview of data collection, processing, operations and use cases for the Vermont Uniform Hospital Discharge Data System (VUHDDS).

VHCURES Rule Change

GMCB will propose two changes to the Data Release Rule. The first change will be to add to Section 9.201(b)(3) to include in the Rule that "unavailable" data elements include information related to a "legally protected health care activity" as defined in 1 V.S.A. § 150. The second change will be to add a new Section to Section 9.201 that says "restricted" data under the rule may only be used or disclosed for certain specified permitted disclosures under HIPAA. This change brings use restrictions that were previously set in the GMCB's Data Use and Disclosure Manual, Application Process, and Data Use Agreement into the Rule itself so that the possible uses and disclosures of restricted data elements are clearly stated and established in Rule.

VHCURES Data Release Changes

Currently, records that are submitted into VHCURES which indicate abortion services are flagged during the extract process using diagnosis codes, ICD procedure codes, CPT procedure codes, and national drug codes. For any record flagged as Y, indicating an abortion service, all provider information on the records is masked by converting to -1 so that the provider cannot be identified. This practice has been in place for many years. Beginning in April 2023, with the release of the next extract, we will also apply masking to abortion services records to all of the member information. This will mask all member information (in addition to the provider information) on all records with a Y for an abortion flag. This is a common practice in other state's All-Payer Claims Databases.

Cathy Fulton and Jessica Holmes expressed concern with limiting the ability to conduct related research. Kate said that this change would strengthen protections for this sensitive data, but that in the future some limited research could still be conducted at least at an aggregate level, though we will lose the ability to conduct more granular studies.

Public Comment

None

New Business

None.

Adjourn

The Council voted (6-0) to adjourn at approximately 3:22pm.

Next meeting is Tuesday June 6, 2023. This will be a virtual meeting via Microsoft Teams, although the large conference room at 144 State Street in Montpelier will also be available for anyone who wants to attend in person.