

GREEN MOUNTAIN CARE BOARD (GMCB)  
GMCB Board Meeting Minutes  
Wednesday, January 15, 2020  
1:00 pm

**Attendance**

Kevin J. Mullin, Chair  
Susan J. Barrett, JD, Executive Director  
Michael Barber, General Counsel (*absent*)  
Robin Lunge, JD, MHCDS  
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 that during the morning of Wednesday, January 15, 2020, Primary Care Advisory Group (PCAG) Members testified in the House Committee on Health Care and in the Senate Committee on Health and Welfare regarding primary care workforce. On Wednesday, January 22, 2020 the Department of Vermont Health Access (DVHA) will be presenting to the Board on the Act 53 Health Information Exchange Consent Implementation Report and Vermont Information Technology Leaders (VITL) will be presenting the FY 2020 budget adjustment. The Board Meeting information can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website. The GMCB Annual Report was submitted on Tuesday, January 14, 2020 and the Act 17 Primary Care Spend Report was submitted on Wednesday, January 15, 2020. Reports can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website.

**Minutes**

The Board voted (4-0-1) to approve the minutes from January 8, 2020. Board Member Jessica Holmes abstained from the vote.

**Primary Care Workforce Panel**

Elizabeth Cote, Director, Office of Primary Care and AHEC Program, The Larner College of Medicine, University of Vermont  
Kathryn Becker Van Haste, Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT)  
Jessa Barnard, Executive Director, Vermont Medical Society  
Helen Labun, Vermont Director of Public Policy, Bi-State Primary Care Association  
Dr. Joe Haddock, Thomas Chittenden Health Center  
Dr. Christa Zehle, Interim Senior Associate Dean for Medical Education, Larner College of Medicine  
Dr. Cathleen Morrow, Chair and Associate Professor, Department of Community & Family Medicine, Dartmouth-Hitchcock Medical Center and Geisel School of Medicine at Dartmouth-Hitchcock  
Dr. Fay Homan, GMCB Primary Care Advisory Group Member

Dr. Katie Marvin, GMCB Primary Care Advisory Group Member

Chair Kevin Mullin welcomed Representative Michael Marcotte, Representative Robert Bancroft, Representative James Carroll, and Representative Zachariah Ralph. Chair Kevin Mullin introduced the panel and the panelists.

Elizabeth Cote explained what Vermont Area Health Education Centers Program (AHEC) is and its goal of healthy Vermonters through a focus on health workforce development. The slides about AHEC and the data on its programs are available [here](#) on the GMCB website. AHEC suggests action areas to increase health care workforce: language, a collaborative action network, get comfortable with the uncomfortable data and economics, listen and adjust, and look inward first.

Kathryn Becker Van Haste gave a federal perspective and spoke to programs that could be more utilized: Graduate Medical Education, National Health Service Corps, and Public Health Service Corps. Senator Bernie Sanders' Medicare for all legislation would allow for more access to primary care, and he wants to expand Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs), the National Health Service Corps, and Teaching Health Centers with help from Congress. Kathryn Becker Van Haste encouraged anyone who needs assistance navigating the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program to reach out to their office.

Jessa Barnard explained what Vermont Medical Society is and the slides can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website. Solutions that she recommended were tax incentives, supporting clinical preceptors, and the workforce solutions outlined in the Rural Health Services Task Force report. Jessa Barnard spoke about the importance of improving the practice environment and supporting physicians who are currently practicing, making individual, organization, and health systems interventions, and the Accountable Care Organization's work streamlining quality measures.

Helen Labun spoke about Bi-State Primary Care Association and the work they do with primary care practices in rural areas. She spoke about the importance of focusing on recruiting primary care physicians to rural Vermont, the retention of recruited physicians, and the need for an avenue of flexibility and innovation in Vermont.

Dr. Joe Haddock recommended [Dr. Fay Homan's article: Effective Strategy Needed to Expand Primary Care Workforce](#). He spoke about the three areas of focus that would be most effective in improving primary care workforce: reimbursement, administrative burden, and loan repayment. He explained that it has been successful and beneficial for his practice to participate in the Accountable Care Organization capitation model and comprehensive payment reform.

Dr. Christa Zehle told of how she came from and practiced in rural Vermont with help from a loan repayment program. She spoke about the efforts of Larner College of Medicine's efforts to address the physician shortage with increased enrollment and freezing tuition. The areas that need to be looked at are: the number of Vermonters enrolled, additional scholarship funding, increased ability to train medical students in longitudinally, working with individuals who have already made a commitment to primary care, and early recruitment without boxing in students.

Dr. Cathleen Morrow told her personal story of coming from a suburban area and choosing to practice in rural areas. The Geisel School of Medicine tries to identify students early to be in primary care with enrichment programs for early identification, but tertiary studies are conducive to training specialists and not to primary care. Dr. Cathleen Morrow spoke about the importance of placing students in rural communities for residencies, family medicine training programs, remembering that money is a large influence on whether students will choose primary care, and loan repayment.

Dr. Fay Homan spoke about the importance of selecting students who are likely to stay in primary care, loan repayment and tuition, the need to train family medicine residents in Vermont, early exposure to family medicine, the availability of teachers, reducing administrative burden, tax credits, and paying physicians to move to Vermont. Dr. Fay Homan spoke about how primary care is a rewarding career, the need to change the negative narrative students are told about primary care, and how health care reform is only possible with primary care.

Dr. Katie Marvin spoke about the unequal pay for primary care physicians, experience for students in primary care, board scores, scholarship design, transparency of rates, primary care for all, the need for long- and short-term solutions, and the need for more studies on primary care.

Chair Kevin Mullin welcomed Representative William Lippert, Representative Kristi Morris, Representative Anne Donahue, Representative Lori Houghton, Representative David Durfee, Representative Woodman Page, Representative Peter Reed, Representative Brian Cina, Representative Annmarie Christensen, Representative Charles Kimbell, Representative Lucy Rogers, Representative Emilie Kornheiser, Representative Stephanie Jerome, and Representative Mari Cordes. Chair Kevin Mullin spoke to Dr. Cathleen Morrow about the prevalence of Vermonters at the Geisel School of Medicine and the National trend of doctors returning to the communities they grew up in. Dr. Cathleen Morrow referenced the article: [The Decline in Rural Medical Students: A Growing Gap in Geographic Diversity Threatens the Rural Physician Workforce](#), which can be seen [here](#) on the GMCB website.

Board Member Jessica Holmes had a conversation with the panelists about how the payment reform efforts in Vermont could be used to reach out to providers who want to move away from using fee-for-service in their practice and the creative ways to attract providers to Vermont. Board Member Maureen Usifer spoke with the panelists about the need for short term solutions, Graduate Medical Education, the work culture, and job satisfaction. Board Member Tom Pelham discussed the benefits and challenges with the Accountable Care Organization with the panelists. Board Member Robin Lunge spoke about the general themes that the panel discussed, and the health care workforce recommendations put forth by the Rural Health Services Task Force.

### **Public Comment**

Dr. Deborah Richter  
Representative James Carroll  
Robyn Alvis  
Representative Michael Marcotte  
Grace Solomon

Dr. Robert Penney  
Walter Carpenter

**Old Business**

None

**New Business**

None

**Adjourn**

The Board voted (5-0) to adjourn at approximately 3:45 pm.

Unapproved