

Rural Health Services Task Force
Unapproved Meeting Notes
December 6, 2019

Members Present:

Robin Lunge, Member, GMCB
John Olson, Chief, State Office of Rural Health & Primary Care, VT Dept. of Health
Mike Fisher, Office of the Health Care Advocate
Devon Green, VP of Government Relations, VAHHS (designee for Steve Gordon, President and CEO, Brattleboro Memorial Hospital)
Dr. Rick Barnett, Licensed Psychologist-Doctorate, Licensed Alcohol/Drug Counselor
Toby Howe (designee for Laura Pelosi, Vermont Health Care Association)
Ena Backus, Director of Health Care Reform, Agency of Human Services;
Dr. Paul Parker, Richmond Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine
Steve Maier (designee for Tony Morgan, Executive Director, The Rutland Free Clinic)
Dillon Burns, Director, Mental Health Services of Vermont Care Partners (Julie Tessler, Vermont Care Partners acted as designee when Dillon had to leave the meeting)

Members by Phone:

Jill Olson, Executive Director, VNAs of Vermont; Dan Bennett, Present & CEO, Gifford Medical Center

Absent Members:

Dr. Melissa Volansky, MD, Stowe Family Practice, Executive Medical Director, CHSLV; Kate Burkholder, LADC, Treatment Associates, Inc

Public Present:

Sarah Clark, CFO, AHS; Sandy McGuire, CFO and COO, Howard Center; Heidi Hall, CFO, Washington County Mental Health; Sarah Holland, Washington ; Bob Bick, Howard Center; Kim Fitzgerald, Cathedral Square; Jessa Barnard, Vermont Medical Society; Susan Aranoff, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council; Rebecca Lewandoski, Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC; Lucie Garand, Downs Rachlin Martin PLLC; Jennifer Kaulius, Government and Community Relations, UVMCMC; Spencer Weppeler, OneCare VT; Kristen Murphy, Vermont Developmental Disabilities Council; Susan Ridzon, Health First ED

I. Minute Approval

The Task Force approved minutes from the November 5th and 21st meetings.

II. Report Schedule

Robin Lunge reviewed the calendar and deadlines for the upcoming report:

- Financial metric workbook- due December 15th
- Inventory maps and explanations- due December 15th
- Final workforce white paper- due December 15th
- Comments due on rough draft- December 15th
- Comments due on final draft- January 2nd

III. Global Commitment Financial Issues

Sarah Clarke, CFO for the Agency of Human Services, presented an overview of Vermont's Global Commitment Waiver. Sarah discussed the purpose of the waiver, budget neutrality and investment

spending. Sarah explained that the new waiver, expiring 12/31/2021, has tighter controls than the previous waiver and that if the cap is exceeded, the State would need to use general fund dollars. Sarah answered questions about a pending Medicaid waiver for free-standing institutions for Mental Disease (IMDs).

IV. Designated Agency Financial Health

Sandy McGuire, CFO and COO for the Howard Center, and Heidi Hal, CFO for Washington County Mental Health, presented a financial assessment of the designated agencies and specialized service agencies in Vermont. Sandy and Heidi discussed the rising demand for services, workforce pressures and financial sustainability challenges. The designated agencies collectively self-report and self-monitor financial documents and health metrics.

V. Financial Sustainability Recommendations

The Task Force discussed the recommendations put forth by members.

The Group discussed the designated agencies' proposal to assign review of key financial performance indicators of health care organizations receiving state appropriated funds to the Green Mountain Care Board. There was no consensus on this recommendation.

The Group discussed additional proposals from Task Force members but did not vote. Instead, the Group agreed that a general recommendation focused on administrative burden and reimbursement, opposed to sector-specific recommendations, would be a better approach. The Group agreed on focusing on a system-level problem statement further supported by entity level examples.

VI. Next Steps

The next meeting is scheduled for December 17th in the 4th floor conference room of the Pavilion.