



## **The Delaware Health Care Commission (DHCC) Meeting**

February 2, 2023

9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.

### **Meeting Attendance and Minutes**

**Commission Members Present:** Theodore Becker, Steven Costantino (surrogate for Cabinet Secretary Molly Magarik), Dr. Nancy Fan (St. Francis), Cabinet Secretary Rick Geisenberger (DOF), Dr. Roger Harrison (Nemours), Richard Heffron, Nick Moriello (Highmark), Dr. Jan Lee (DHIN), and Frank Pyle (surrogate for Commissioner Trinidad Navarro)

**Meeting Facilitator:** Dr. Nancy Fan (Chair)

**Commission Members Absent:** Melissa Jones, Cabinet Secretary Molly Magarik (DHSS), Dr. Richard Margolis (DSCYF), and Insurance Commissioner Trinidad Navarro (DOI)

**Health Care Commission Staff:** Stephanie Hartos (Public Health Administrator), Latoya Wright (Manager of Statistics and Research), Colleen Cunningham (Senior Social Service Administrator), Elisabeth Massa (Executive Director), and Tynietta R. Congo-Wright (Administrative Specialist III)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

It was determined a quorum was present, and Dr. Fan called the meeting to order at approximately 9:04 a.m. via WebEx. Dr. Fan asked public attendees to virtually sign-in by placing their name and affiliation in the chat box or by sending an email to the DHCC Resource Account ([dhcc@delaware.gov](mailto:dhcc@delaware.gov)).

### **BOARD BUSINESS**

#### **ACTION ITEM: Approve January 5, 2023, meeting minutes**

Dr. Fan asked the commissioners to take a moment to review the January 5, 2023, meeting minutes. Nick Moriello made a motion to approve the minutes. Ted Becker seconded the motion. Hearing no objections, the minutes were unanimously approved for the commissioners present. The minutes are available on the [DHCC Website](#).

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Primary Care Physicians in Delaware 2021**

Tibor Tóth, Ph.D. Assistant Professor with the Biden School of Public Policy and Administration, presented a summary of the Delaware Primary Care Physicians Survey 2021. This is the 10th time this survey has been conducted and the main goal of this study is to provide input into the shortage area designations for the State of Delaware. The survey was conducted in the middle of the COVID pandemic in 2021 and was published at the end of 2022. The study population is primary care physicians providing direct patient care in the State of Delaware. For the survey, a list of about 6,000 active licensed physicians was obtained from the Division of Professional Regulation some of which were duplicate licenses. 2,687 licenses were contacted. Roughly 2,480 are physicians who have addresses in the State of Delaware. Only 800 responses came in, 150 were non reachable. This is a response rate of about 30%. In 2021, 865 primary care physicians were practicing in the state of Delaware with 660 full-time equivalent (FTE).

Dr. Tóth's study included data points on physicians practicing in Delaware such as age, education, residency, practice site, etc. Dr. Tóth's study included data points on physicians practicing in Delaware such as practitioner's age, education, residency, practice site, etc. The study also looked at workforce shortages.

At the conclusion of his presentation, Dr. Tóth asked if there were any questions. Dr. Fan asked what his thoughts were about the number of people who participate in the survey and how can we make that more robust? Dr. Tóth stated in the response rate does have an impact on the response error. In this case, there is not a sampling error, but a response error. 30% is reasonable and would like to have a 100% response rate. There are conversations around how to make this survey mandatory during licensing.

Nick Moriello commented the DHCC Workforce Subcommittee has also discussed attaching survey to licensure and considering policy recommendations to share with the Health Care Commission.

Secretary Rick Geisenberger asked how long it takes to complete the survey. Dr. Tóth stated it is a paper survey with about 55 questions and should take on average ten minutes to complete. Secretary Geisenberger asked why Survey Monkey or email was not used. Dr. Tóth shared a pre letter is sent first and then several mailings along with the survey. Follow-up reminder cards are then sent. The paper-based survey is sent to the practice and typically opened by front desk staff that hands it off to the physician. Dr. Tóth has found the paper survey is a better way to reach physicians because emails are more likely to be deleted or overlooked in an inbox. Secretary Geisenberger asked if there were any conclusions drawn as to what drew a provider to Delaware (residency, job, marriage, etc)? Dr. Tóth stated that is something he does not capture, but if there is certain information needed, connect with the Division of Public Health to

request the data and he can do tabulations of that information. Dr. Jan Lee added a question could be added to the survey such as, “What made you decide to practice in Delaware?” Dr. Fan commented that she thinks personally it is an inherent bias that older people take paper surveys, and that the younger population are not going to take a paper survey. Also, adding mandatory questions to licensure might give us a bit more information.

Dr. Harrison asked about the map, New Castle has a mix of green and then right around New Castle was a lot of red, why is there such a contrast of physician representation in that area? Dr. Tóth stated it’s a combination of where physicians choose to provide care, choose to live, and where the population is. Dr. Toth sees a greater concentration of physicians around Foulk Road in North Wilmington and population density. Secretary Geisenberger followed up on Dr. Harrison’s question as it relates to the contrasting information in New Castle County. Many doctors have more than one practice site and how does that get counted in the survey? Dr. Tóth replied that with those physicians having more than one location, it is hard to set questions to cover multiple practice locations and recognized that is missed data. Rich Heffron commented there are these clusters because at one time, physicians used to have offices in their homes and there is more than one physician in the same building.

Steven Costantino asked if the survey asks how many practices are hospital based or office based? Dr. Tóth stated there are specific questions that ask about the practicing facility site for example clinical care setting, federal health facility, school-based, etc. Mr. Costantino asked if there is variation in salary and benefits in the three counties? Dr. Tóth stated the survey does not ask about benefit packages.

Dr. Lee added she thought specialists are more likely to be working out of multiple locations than primary care providers. Dr. Fan shared primary care providers that have more than one location are typically pediatricians and OB-GYN physicians. Dr. Fan suggested a question could be asked on a future survey, how much (percentage) of your practice is spent at your primary care location?

Dr. Tóth’s presentation is available on the [DHCC website](#), and the “Primary Care Physicians in Delaware 2021” study is available on the Primary Care Reform Collaborative [website](#).

**From the WebEx Chat Box:**

from Cheryl Heiks to everyone:

Since this was done in 2021, there may have been more than expected losses or earlier retirements because of the stress of the pandemic?

from Anthony Onugu to everyone:

Speaking for my ACO, I know that we are able to assist in getting our providers to respond.

from Wayne Smith to everyone:

A suggestion. Valuable would be plotting the location of primary care / pediatric offices and determining how many people live within 5/10/20/25/30 miles of how many providers -- and comparing that to regional / national statistics. Some of the mapped response areas show little coverage yet those response areas are within ten miles of better served areas.

from Cheryl Heiks to everyone:

Could we get more information about those who care for the elderly and individuals with disabilities and those with dementia?

from Wayne Smith to everyone:

Sec Fin asks a great question. I participated in a primary care physician survey within the last three years. It was a phone survey, very high response and got the results in days.

from Anthony Onugu to everyone:

A 55 question paper survey is a challenge. Even CMS is looking to move to online surveys.

from christina to everyone:

One of the important benefits of hospital affiliated primary care providers is that they do not limit Medicaid patients

from Roger Harrison he/his to everyone:

Agreed

## **UPDATES**

### **Health Workforce Subcommittee**

The DHCC Health Workforce Subcommittee co-chair, Nick Moriello shared an update about their recent meeting which was held January 31, 2023. Highlights included:

1. Setting goals for 2023
2. Looking to make policy recommendations
3. Data analysis-identifying gaps in data
4. Construct of the subcommittee; ensuring the Subcommittee is fully represented

The group will meet again at a to-be-determined date.

### **DIMER**

Dr. Fan provided a DIMER update as the interim DIMER Chair. DIMER met on January 25, 2023. At the meeting, Sydney Kimmel Medical College (SKMC) provided an update on applications and how many they have accepted. The DIMER board discussed updating the DIMER board composition and how the chair is elected. To move forward, this will require a legislative change. Housing was also discussed as there is an issue with ensuring housing for students in

rotations. The Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA) provided an update on DIMER information sessions they have hosted. The next DIMER meeting is scheduled for April.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

None

**ADJOURN**

The meeting was adjourned at 11:20 a.m. The next DHCC meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2023, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. and will be virtual.

**Public Meeting Attendees  
February 2, 2023**

Anthony Onugu	United Medical
Brian Olson	La Red Health Center
Cristine Vogel	DOI
Cheryl Heiks	Delaware Health Care Facilities Association
David Bentz	DHSS
David Roose	Department of Finance
Christina Crooks Bryan	Delaware Healthcare Association
Susan Jennette	DOI
Frank Pyle	DOI
Joann Hasse	League of Women Voters of Delaware
Jessica Jena	Highmark Health Options
Juliann VILLECCO	DHSS
Jeff Schott	DOI
Lincoln Willis	The Willis Group
Maggie Norris Bent	Westside Family Healthcare
Lolita Lopez	Westside Family Healthcare
Chris Otto	Delaware Nurses Association
Sarah Stowens	ChristianaCare
Elizabeth Lewis	Hamilton Goodman
Mollie Poland	Nemours
Nicholas Conte	DHSS
Nichole Moxley	DHSS
Pamela Gardner	Delaware Health Sciences Alliance
Pam Price	Highmark Delaware
Paula Roy	Roy Associates
Steven Costantino	DHSS
Tyler Blanchard	Aledade
Wilmington University Student	
Wayne Smith	
Eli Turkel	

Joseph Fitzgerald  
Russ Larson  
Janice James-Webb

