



The Delaware Health Care Commission (DHCC) Meeting

October 5, 2023

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

Meeting Attendance and Minutes

Commission Members Present In-Person: Dr. Nancy Fan (St. Francis), DHSS Cabinet Secretary Josette Manning, Nick Moriello (Highmark Delaware), Dr. Stephanie Traynor (DSCYF), and

Commission Members Attending virtually: Theodore Becker, Melissa Jones, Dr. Roger Harrison (Nemours), and Dr. Jan Lee (DHIN), Insurance Commissioner Trinidad Navarro (DOI)

Commission Members Absent: Cabinet Secretary Rick Geisenberger (DOF), Richard Heffron

Meeting Facilitator: Dr. Nancy Fan (Chair)

Health Care Commission Staff: Elisabeth Massa (Executive Director), Dionna Reddy (Public Health Administrator I), Latoya Wright (Manager of Statistics and Research), Colleen Cunningham (Social Service Senior Administrator), and Susan Walters (Public Health Treatment Program Administrator)

Anchor Location: The Chapel, Herman M. Holloway Sr. Health and Social Services Campus
1901 N. DuPont Highway, New Castle, DE 19720

CALL TO ORDER

After confirming a quorum, Dr. Fan called the meeting to order at approximately 9:02 a.m. Public attendees were asked to identify themselves by placing their name and affiliation in the chat box and those attending in-person to sign the sign-in sheet in the Chapel.

BOARD BUSINESS

ACTION ITEM: Approve September 7, 2023, meeting minutes

The Commissioners reviewed the September 7, 2023 meeting minutes. Dr. Fan asked if there were any comments. Hearing none, Nick Moriello made a motion to approve the minutes, and Dr. Jan Lee seconded. No objections were made. The minutes were approved by the commissioners and are available on the [DHCC Website](#).

DHCC Strategic Retreat Update

Dr. Fan confirmed that date for the retreat as November 16 at Buena Vista. The meeting is scheduled for 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. Light refreshments will be available. Devona Williams will moderate. This will be a hybrid meeting to allow for maximum participation.

Action Item: Approve proposed State Loan Repayment Awards

The student loan repayment program is a combination of federal and state funds. Awards must be approved by the Commissioners. These awards result in two-year contracts, estimated to start December 15, 2023.

The first data set included those awards made through the use of federal dollars. Dr. Fan reviewed the data and inquired if there were any questions. Dr Lee requested clarification of what constitutes a contract. Elisabeth Massa explained that the contract stipulates that the awardee will agree to two years of service at the specified facility within the state of Delaware. The contract is written between the health care practitioner and the State. As an example, if the award amount is \$30,000, the awardee would receive \$15,000 after completion of the first year of service and the balance in year two. Dr Lee noted the majority of applicant were upstate and inquired if individuals from Sussex were not submitting applications. Ms. Massa stated that many applications were not received from providers from downstate facilities, most are from New Castle and Kent Counties. Dr Fan reminded everyone that the DHCC is managing two loan repayment programs and acknowledged that applicant numbers from Sussex need to be monitored as this is certainly one of the tools to attract providers to the state.

Will Albanese from Atracare echoed the sentiments that more needs to be done to attract healthcare providers to Sussex. Atracare is trying to recruit primary care providers and inquired on the application deadlines. Ms. Massa explained that although there are two cohort cycles each year spring and fall, applications were reviewed on rolling admissions basis. The next cycle will be reviewed in the spring. In addition, the federal loan program no longer requires a state match.

Student Loan Repayment Program information has been shared broadly, including the Beebe and Bayhealth residency programs. Dr Fan encouraged anyone interested in the loan repayment program to review the eligibility requirements on the DHCC website and reach out to Colleen Cunningham and Elisabeth Massa for additional information.

Ted Becker motion to approve the specific loan repayment program awards as noted on the slide, seconded by Nick Moriello. No objections or abstentions were made.

Data on current loan repayment awardees were also shared with the Commissioners.

Data on current Health Care Provider Loan Repayment Program (HCPLRP) awardees were also shared. These awards utilize state dollars. Recipients include those employed in pediatric practices.

UPDATES

Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA)

Dr. Omar Khan, president and CEO of the Delaware Health Sciences Alliance (DHSA), updated the Commissioners on activities and progress that DHSA has made over the past year. Dr Khan reviewed the role that DHSA plays in Delaware, sharing the current organizational membership. DHSA plays a key role in keeping Delawareans engaged in pursuing a medical education, ensuring representation from under-represented minorities and communities.

DHSA partners with the DHCC on DIMER activities. Dr. Kahn reviewed DIMER eligibility criteria, posted on the DHCC website. He shared updates on activities in Sussex county, including attendance at the Beebe White Coat Ceremony and the Family Medicine Residency Program Launch. He also shared ongoing medical education initiatives taking place throughout the state. High school and college outreach panelists received recognition for their work, especially in raising interest with minority population recruitment.

DHSA collaborates closely with DIMER on an annual report. Partners from the Delaware Academy of Medicine (DAM) and the Delaware Public Health Association (DPHA) contribute data and production assistance.

Delaware is the second-highest state that attracts DIMER student back for residency. Over the last year, five of those matched at ChristianaCare, one at Bayhealth. In the future, it is hoped to see additional students matched across additional health organizations. Pediatrics, internal medicine, and family medicine were the specialties that topped the current list for DIMER students.

Targeting former DIMER student but open to the public, DHSA sponsors an annual recruiting event that brings all major healthcare systems under one roof.

Moving forward, DHSA will continue to focus on medical education. They are cognizant of the need in Kent and Sussex counties as under-represented geographies, and understand the need to be innovative in recruiting those Delawareans from under-represented minority groups.

They see the partnership with DIMER as critical to retaining students and residents as attending physicians in the Delaware community. DHSA plans to continue engagement activities with DIMER students as well as initiatives supporting the DIMER program.

Dr. Fan asked if there were any questions. Dr. Lee inquired if there is a correlation between the country (of student's residence) and returning to that county for residency activities. Dr. Kahn stated that DHSA conducted a workforce analysis a few years ago; when 100 students went through the DIMER pipeline, approximately 19 to 20 returned to practice in Delaware. There is no data available yet for Sussex county since the Beebe program is still relatively new. However, the indicators that can be reviewed include the number of students that are choosing a branch campus experience in Sussex county. There appears to be strong interest from Delaware and out-of state students to participate in a branch campus experience at Beebe. He indicated that New Castle county was over represented because of the number of student opportunities, but stated everyone is committed to seeing that Kent and Sussex have equal opportunity to participate, and so far, students are choosing to participate at Beebe. Dr Khan expect to be able to better answer Dr. Lee's question in a few years.

Secretary Josette Manning inquired about the percentage of non-DIMER students who return to Delaware and the admissions incentive aside from the building of relationships. Dr Kahn responded that the incentive to participate in DIMER has traditionally been the preferential acceptance to medical school. Admission is extremely competitive; but DIMER has contracted spots with contracted schools, so those in DIMER have a better chance of acceptance. Partner mentors is also a huge draw for students. Unlike in years past, there are now financial incentives, such as housing for those that return to a branch campus for third and fourth year. Those that choose to apply for the health care loan repayment program, their school debt could be paid by working for a Delaware practice. While non-DIMER students are also eligible for this program, DIMER students will receive extra points on their application.

Responding to the Secretary's question regarding the percentage of non-DIMER students returning to Delaware, Dr Khan states that it is still approximately 20%.

Chris Fraser from Westside Family Health Care inquired how the state was trending, particularly with underrepresented minority groups. Dr. Khan shared that, like other state federally qualified health centers (FQHCs) West Side is a partner in recruitment efforts and participated in the statewide recruitment event. He furthered by saying the partnership with FQHCs is critical in training future primary care practitioners. Dr. Khan added that the efforts have not achieved results that have been hoped for, and fewer than five percent of physicians across the nation are African American, but that number is growing. This past year has seen a substantial increase in the number of minority applicants accepted in the DIMER-partner medical schools. One of the partner medical schools reported 20% of acceptances from minority students. While institutions no longer have to report race and ethnicity in formal reports, DIMER strives to develop a workforce that "looks like Delaware" onto medical school.

Dr. Fan added that in light of the Supreme Court ruling on Affirmative Action, schools will not be asking specific demographics of the applicant, but they will be able to provide that information on the accepted students.

Dr. Khan's presentation and contact information is available on the [DHCC website](#)

Delaware Institute for Medical Education and Research (DIMER)

Dr. Fan, Acting DIMER Chair, shared that DIMER was originally created for Delaware students to attend medical school. Since Delaware has no medical school, a partnership was created with Sidney Kimmel and Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine to accept a certain number of students from Delaware.

The DIMER Board met on September 27 and discussed:

- Delaware Health Sciences Alliances
- DIMER school updates – data shared from Philadelphia College of Medicine and Sidney Kimmel Medical College
- Residency updates –data shared from Bayhealth, ChristianaCare, St. Francis, and Nemours
- DHCC Strategic Retreat
- Sussex County Update/Recommendation for Medical School – the Sussex County Economic Development Advisory Committee conducted a needs assessment over the summer to determine the need and interest in a medical school in Sussex County. DIMER will share results and recommendations from that report once it is released.
- Legislative Changes Workgroup – Proposed recommendations for revisions to DIMER Board Composition. Recommendations need to be presented to General Assembly.

The next DIMER Board Meeting is scheduled for January 17, 2024

Dr. Fan asked if there were any questions. There were none. Dr. Fan's presentation is available on the [DHCC website](#)

DHCC Workforce Subcommittee

Kathy Matt, Ph.D, presented a brief updated on the subcommittee. New members on the subcommittee include Shauna Slaughter, Division of Professional Regulation, Christopher Otto, Delaware Nurse Association, and Avani Virani, MD, Hignmark Inc.

The Subcommittee continues to gather data and document needs and demands. Activities in other states are being considered. Distribution of additional surveys is being considered. Partnership with DHIN has been created to better understand the data.

Dr. Matt acknowledged a healthcare crisis existed. The workforce needs to be looked at comprehensively. Physicians will not stay unless other aspects of health force are secured. Considerations on retention are as important as recruitment and medical training. Long term care facilities re not operating at capacity. In addition, legislation is considering healthcare worker to resident ratios which could further impact these facilities. Input is still being accepted.

Federal legislation is being proposed to add funding to health care facilities. Dr. Matt asked Commissioners to consider the following questions: How would Delaware access those dollars? What does that look like? Would it involve a state match?

Delaware needs to consider an array of activities in addition to existing DIMER activities. Although it is a long-term solution, Dr Matt recommended more recruitment to middle and high schools. Offering courses in health sciences for dual credit and exposing students to an array of career opportunities could accelerate career pathways.

Zip Code Wilmington (zipcodewilmington.com) has demonstrated success in training individuals in the technology. Perhaps this could also be an opportunity to train individuals in health care as well.

For now, Delaware needs to consider short term solutions, such as retraining the current work force, perhaps considering certificate programs, accelerated nursing programs for those who previously completed an undergraduate degree. Here again, the Subcommittee is considering activities from other states. One of the challenges with the workforce shortage is that professionals do not have the ability to take on more students. One interesting concept being developed is that retail partners, such as Walgreens, are interested in hiring nurses to deliver health care, so they may be able to provide an opportunity for clinical rotations.

Dr. Matt requested that the Commissioners consider this as a topic for the upcoming retreat.

Dr. Fan asked if there were any questions for Dr. Matt. Dr. Lee indicated that Widener University is starting up a Physician's Assistant (PA) training program and she was asked to sit on the advisory board. Training for a PA or Nurse Practitioner is shorter than for a physician, and an appropriate mix of healthcare workers is needed to address the crisis in access to care. Dr. Lee strongly agreed with Dr. Matt that a critical piece is recruiting practices that are willing to service preceptors for clinical rotations. To attract healthcare professionals in Kent and Sussex, a focus needs to be on encouraging providers to accept students and help provide the necessary training.

Dr. Matt also shared the University of Delaware has a program like Widener's, in that students do undergraduate work at the University, and then transfer to an articulation program with Arcadia.

Stephanie Trainer added that since behavioral health is becoming integrated into primary health, it's becoming more important to expand the workforce and this field should be considered as well.

Dr. Matt closed by adding that salary and competitiveness were two other areas that the Subcommittee that they are researching.

Dr. Matt's presentation is available on the [DHCC website](#)

Primary Care Reform Collaborative

Dr. Fan provided a summary of the most recent Primary Care Reform Collaborative meeting held on September 18. At the September meeting, Health Management Associates (HMA), the DHCC's PCRC vendor, gave a presentation on the Continuous Quality Investment (CQI) as a part of Delaware's primary care payment model. Having a CQI will drive practices so that they can do some practice transformation and be able to become more successful at other value-based care.

The Department of Insurance Office of Value Based Health Care Delivery (OVBHCD) reported that they are in the process of reviewing quarterly data templates that will assist in establishing projections for the upcoming year. Additional data is expected at the December meeting.

Dr. Fan also provided an overview of CMS' new voluntary state total cost of care model, the All-Payer Health Equity Approaches and Development (AHEAD) model. States can apply for funding for goals, including promotion of health equity, increased access to primary care, and lowering health care costs. Application period is expected to open soon.

The PCRC Subcommittee met on September 20. They are developing a list of stakeholders along with questions that would enable to PCRC to develop a Strategic Plan. The Subcommittee is also working with HMA to review primary cost containment models used by other states.

The next PCRC meeting is scheduled for December 11.

Dr. Fan asked if there were any questions. There were none. Dr. Fan's presentation is available on the [DHCC website](#).

PUBLIC COMMENT

Dr. Fan thanked Rich Heffron for his many years of service on the Delaware Health Care Commission. Mr. Heffron said a few words of thanks to Dr. Fan and the commission.

There was no public comment.

ADJOURN

The meeting adjourned at 10:36 a.m.

UPCOMING MEETING

The next DHCC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, November 2, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. The anchor location for the meeting:

The Chapel
Department of Health and Social Services
Herman Holloway Campus
1901 N. DuPont Highway, New Castle, DE 19720

No DHCC meeting is scheduled for December.

A new board member was nominated, Michael Quaranta. Dr Fan stated that hopefully he will be able to attend the retreat, otherwise he will meet everyone in January.

**Public Meeting Attendees
October 5, 2023
Public Meeting Attendees (Virtual)**

Alla Bonner El, BCBA	Charter Behavior Management / Delaware Association for Behavior Analysis
Bria Greenlee	302 Strategies
Brian Dorsey	Livanta LLC
Christina Bryan	DHA
Christina Farmer	DPH
Cristine Vogel	DOI

Christopher Otto MSN, RN	Delaware Nurses Association
David Bentz	DHSS
David Roose	Dept of Finance
Delaney McGonegal	MACHC
Eschalla Clark	DSAAPD
Janet Bailey	
Kate Smith	
Kristin Dwyer	Nemours
Lincoln Willis	
Lisa Gruss	Medical Society of Delaware
Lori Ann Rhoads	Medical Society of Delaware
Maggie Bent	Westside Health
Nichole Moxley	DPH
Nicole Freedman	Morris James
Nora Hoban	Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers
Omar Kahn MD	DHSA
Paula Roy	Roy Associates
Susan Jennette	DOI
Tim Gibbs	MPH Academy/DPHA
Tyler Blanchard	Aledade
Victoria Brennan	CGO
Wayne Smith	Smith Capitol Advisors
William Albanese	