



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

October 7, 2021

9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.

### **Meeting Attendance and Minutes**

**Commission Members Present:** Theodore W. Becker (Mayor of Lewes), David Roose, surrogate for Cabinet Secretary Rick Geisenberger (DOF), Dr. Roger Harrison (Nemours), Richard Heffron, Melissa Jones, Dr. Jan Lee (DHIN), Cabinet Secretary Molly Magarik (DHSS), Dr. Richard Margolis (DSCYF), Nick Moriello (Highmark), and Insurance Commissioner Trinidad Navarro (DOI)

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

**Commission Members Absent:** Cabinet Secretary Rick Geisenberger (DOF)

**Health Care Commission Staff:** Elisabeth Massa (Executive Director), Eschalla Clarke (Social Services Senior Administrator), and Latoya Wright (Manager Statistics and Research)

### **CALL TO ORDER**

Dr. Fan called the meeting to order at approximately 9:01 a.m. via WebEx. It was determined a quorum was present. Dr. Fan asked public attendees to virtually sign-in by placing their name and affiliation in the chat box or by sending their name and contact information to the DHCC Resource Account ([dhcc@delaware.gov](mailto:dhcc@delaware.gov)).

### **BOARD BUSINESS**

#### **ACTION ITEM: Approve September 2, 2021 meeting minutes**

Dr. Fan asked the commissioners to review the draft September 2, 2021 meeting minutes. There were no comments or changes. Ted Becker made a motion to approve, and Nick Moriello seconded. The motion to approve was unanimously accepted by all commissioners present. The approved minutes are available on the [DHCC website](#). Dr. Fan also stated that the WebEx Chat Box comments are captured in the minutes.

#### **Strategic Retreat Planning**

Dr. Fan announced the DHCC Retreat will be held on Friday, October 29 from 12 p.m. – 4 p.m. The theme for this year's Retreat is, "Moving Toward Thought Leadership." A working agenda was sent to

the commissioners in their advance meeting materials to review. The purpose of the Retreat is to reach agreement on future focus and priorities of the DHCC for the next year and create an action plan. She shared the tentative agenda for the meeting and asked the commissioners if there were any comments and if the commissioners wanted to add a 4th action item. Secretary Magarik commented that she thought the topics already on the agenda could be a full retreat within themselves and did not think a 4th action item was needed. Hearing no other comments, Dr. Fan said the final agenda will be sent the commissioners

Before moving on to Policy Development, Dr. Fan shared the Reinsurance Program presentation was being moved to another DHCC meeting because it was realized the October meeting agenda was too packed with other presentations.

## **POLICY DEVELOPMENT**

### **COVID Boosters and Flu Vaccinations**

Dr. Karyl Rattay, Director of the Division of Health, provided an updated on COVID-19 and the flu vaccine. Her presentation distinguished boosters from 3rd/additional doses and shared the CDC guidance on administering 3rd/additional doses and boosters.

#### Know The Difference - Third/Additional Doses Vs. Booster Doses

Third/ Additional doses	Booster doses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For people who have moderately to severely compromised immune systems<sup>1</sup> and who may not build the same level of immunity to a primary vaccine series compared to people who are not immunocompromised               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Providers should use clinical judgment and consider age 65+ and LTC residence to determine if patients are eligible due to being at a higher risk of immunosenescence<sup>2</sup>.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Authorized for Moderna &amp; Pfizer for administration 28 days following a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> <li>Not yet authorized for J&amp;J recipients</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>For people who have completed the primary vaccine series of Pfizer-BioNTech and intended to extend the protection offered by the vaccine</li> <li>Authorized for only a subset of individuals (as outlined in CDC guidelines) who have completed primary series of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine</li> <li>Authorized for administration 6 months or longer following a 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> <li>Not yet authorized for Moderna and J&amp;J recipients</li> </ul>
<p>Please be prepared and available to advise your patients on the correct course of action</p>	

1. CDC recommendation includes people who have been receiving active cancer treatment for tumors or cancers of the blood, have received an organ transplant and are taking medicine to suppress the immune system, received a stem cell transplant within the last 2 years or are taking medicine to suppress the immune system, moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency such as DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome, advanced or untreated HIV infection, or active treatment with high-dose corticosteroids or other drugs that may suppress your immune response. 2. Immunosenescence is the changes in the immune system associated with age and can increase risk of severe COVID for people 65+. For additional information see [CDC/ACIP documentation](#).

Source: CDC Weekly Key Messages, Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic, September 1, 2021

Dr. Rattay shared that as of yesterday, October 6, Delaware had about 17,000 individuals (1.7% of the population) received a 3rd or booster dose, most over age 65 and the vaccinations are happening mostly in pharmacies.

Commissioner Navarro asked Dr. Rattay to clarify when the vaccines were being reviewed by the FDA. Dr. Rattay confirmed the meeting dates are October 14 (Moderna) and October 15 (J&J)

Nick Moriello asked Dr. Rattay if she could speak to the actual shot itself – the 3rd shot verses booster shot. Dr. Rattay said right now the vaccine is identical for Pfizer and Moderna 3rd doses, it's the same dose and quantity to be administered. For the Pfizer booster it is the same quantity. We are expecting likely that Moderna will be half the dose for the booster. She acknowledged this makes it more

complicated for vaccine providers. They are finding really good response to half the dose of Moderna with less side effects.

Dr. Fan shared it is a real heavy lift educating all providers at all levels on different dosages, etc.

Dr. Rattay scanned the WebEx Chat box and answered Yvette Santiago's question about when the FDA will review the pediatric vaccine. Dr. Rattay was pretty sure is October 28, but said she would have to check to confirm.

**From the WebEx Chat Box:**

from Yvette Santiago to everyone  
can you share the date again when they're meeting on the peds vax? thx. YS

from Yvette Santiago  
thankyou!

Dr. Rattay next shared an update on the flu vaccine. One can get a vaccine, visit [de.gov/getmyvaccine](https://de.gov/getmyvaccine). Also, October is the month we kick off flu season. There have not been any cases as of yet and do not know what to expect, but planning for the worst given last year was such a light year and people are gathering for events again and less mask wearing.

Secretary Magarik asked Dr. Rattay to comment if people could get their boosters and flu vaccinations at the same time or should it be separated. Dr. Rattay shared that the CDC has said the COVID and flu vaccinations can be given at the same time.

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

**From the WebEx Chat Box:**

from Magarik, Molly (DHSS)  
<https://de.gov/getmyvaccine>

from Clarke, Eschalla (DHSS)  
Dr. Rattay - I heard there is a COVID pill that will be released soon if not already, is that accurate? If so, is there a benefit to the vaccine vs. pill?

from Steven Costantino  
vaccine -prevention /pill -treatment

**Diversity and Equity in Health Care Policy**

Commissioner Dr. Roger Harrison presented on diversity and equity in health care policy. He started by first sharing that he wanted to set some context to the conversation and by no means is this an exhaustive review or addressing of the issues related.

His presentation started by sharing data on how America's demographics are rapidly changing. In 2020, the 18 and under population became a majority of non-white in America. Future projections in the year 2045 forecast America will no longer be a majority of white population and in the year 2065, white will account for around 46% of the population.

Dr. Harrison shared snapshots of the ethnic and racial diversity of the workforce (physician, dentist, advanced nursing, physician assistant). He shared highlights from national healthcare quality and disparities reports and overall quality of care by state. Dr. Harrison also highlighted articles, editorials, and journal articles about structural racism and health inequities. He spoke about implicit racial and ethnic bias in healthcare professionals. Dr. Harrison shared how to reduce implicit bias on care teams and also Nemours Behavioral Health Strategy. His presentation concluded with diversity and equity, what's required?

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

Dr. Fan thanked Dr. Harrison for his presentation and setting the conversation for the DHCC Strategic Retreat.

Commissioner Navarro thanked Dr. Harrison for an excellent presentation. He shared that as the Insurance Commissioner, he serves on the NEIC (National Association of Insurance Commissioners) race and equity inclusion committee. They are looking at several workstreams right now that impact people of color – credit scores, zip code data, etc. He also spoke about bias in computer programming and also how diverse we are and how proud we should be.

**From the WebEx Chat Box:**

from Clarke, Eschalla (DHSS)

Thank you for an excellent presentation Dr. Harrison!

from John Dodd

Dr. Harrison was very insightful

from Magarik, Molly (DHSS)

Wonderful presentation, thank you so much for your time and energy

from Richard Holaday

Very enlightening and thought-provoking presentation!! Will Dr Harrison's contact information be shared?

from John Dodd

The past data reflects the past history of bias is built into the BIG Data use so "de-racisming" the data is essential.

from Roger Harrison

[roger.harrison@nemours.org](mailto:roger.harrison@nemours.org)

from Richard Holaday  
Thank you Dr Harrison!

from Roger Harrison  
You are welcome!

from Roger Harrison  
Pleasure to be here!

## **UPDATES**

### **Marketplace**

Commissioner Navarro provided a Marketplace update. He spoke about the special enrollment period for 2021 between February and August, Delaware saw 5,882 residents enroll in coverage. Despite a lot of residents having special enrollment opportunities in 2020 due to life circumstances, this is still more than double the same period in 2020. It is nearly 3 times the amount of enrollees in this period of 2019. The average Delawarean's savings was \$78 a month, higher than the national average of \$67 per month. In total, Delaware saved \$1.2 million in premium costs with the American Rescue Plan's assistance.

Commissioner Navarro shared DOI announced that \$8.4 million in rebates will be going back to Marketplace policyholders this year. This is a result of the Medical Loss Ratio – or MLR – calculation. 20,857 individual policyholders will receive rebates, with the average rebate being \$405.

Highmark remains the sole health insurer offering plans on Delaware's Health Insurance Marketplace for 2022, offering 12 plans for individuals and families and two dental insurers. Open enrollment begins November 1 and has been extended by the Biden-Harris Administration through January 15, 2022.

Dr. Fan inquired if Westside received navigator funding this year. Commissioner Navarro confirmed Westside received expanded funding from the Biden-Harris Administration.

Secretary Magarik shared DHSS is looking at what resources are available for marketing purposes and exploring adding marketing to DHSS base budget.

Nick Moriello echoed this is the most stable the Marketplace has ever been and encouraged those who do or do not have plans to look again and review options that are available.

Secretary Magarik shared there are many coverage options available.

### **From the WebEx Chat Box**

from Lolita Lopez to everyone: 10:29 AM

Westside is very excited to expand our capacity and presence statewide to do this work. Happy to partner in any way with other community providers.

## **DIDER**

Ted Becker, DHCC commissioner and DIDER liaison, shared an update on DIDER and their recent board meeting held September 15. He shared demographics of the new ChristianaCare residents in general practice and oral surgery. Other highlights – The State’s dental director has been working with the Department of Education on the state surveillance and will start screenings in January and February. DIDER is working with the Division of Public Health and the University of Delaware on a dental capacity study. Dr. Rafetto, DIDER chair, created an internal board survey and a summary of the findings will be shared at the DHCC Strategic Retreat. Two board members also recently retired from DIDER (Dr. Zucker and Dr. Matthews). DIDER also discussed how to create a stronger dental presence in Delaware. Mr. Becker shared how Beebe CEO, Dr. Tam, has been so successful with recruiting new physicians. DIDER is exploring reaching out to him to see if he could be a consultant to DIDER. Finally, the DIDER board discussed inviting the Lt. Governor to their January meeting.

## **ADJOURN**

Before adjourning, Dr. Fan shared SB 120, the primary care bill, was signed by Governor Carney on October 1 at the Medical Society of Delaware. The Collaborative will be resuming meetings when the Governor appointments are made.

Dr. Fan asked if the commissioners had any additional comments. Nick Moriello shared Medicare annual enrollment period starts on October 15 – December 7. Commissioner Navarro highlighted DOI has a Medicare Assistance Bureau to help residents sign up for Medicare.

Dr. Fan asked if there was any public comment. Hearing none, the meeting was adjourned. The next DHCC meeting will be held on November 4, 2021 from 9 a.m. – 11 a.m.

### **Public Meeting Attendees October 7, 2021**

Lori Ann Rhoads	Medical Society of Delaware
Frank Pyle	Department of Insurance
David Roose	Department of Finance
Steven Costantino	DHSS
Richard Holladay	DHSS
Kathy Collison	DHSS
Leslie Palladino	Impact Life
Nina Figueroa	Department of Human Resources
Susan Jennette	DOI
Pamela Gardner	Delaware Health Sciences Alliance
Brian Olson	La Red Health Center
Christina Crooks Bryan	Delaware Healthcare Association
Lincoln Willis	Willis Group LLC
Nicole Freedman	Morris James
Yvette Santiago	Nemours
Mollie Poland	Nemours

Mary Fenimore  
Chris Otto  
Cheryl Heiks  
Lolita Lopez  
Delaney McGonegal  
Shamonda Braithwaite  
Nora Hoban  
Sherman Townsend  
Randil Munson  
Joanne Landry  
Pam Price  
Paul Roy  
John Dodd  
Kimberly Clawson  
Victoria Brennan  
Valeria Coverdale

Medical Society of Delaware  
Delaware Nurses Association  
Delaware Health Care Facilities Association  
Westside Family Healthcare  
Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers  
Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers  
Mid-Atlantic Association of Community Health Centers  
DIMER  
Randil Munson Consulting LLC  
Highmark  
Highmark