

**MINUTES OF THE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**

June 20, 2007 – 9:00 a.m. – Room W020 House Building

Members Present:

Sen. D. Chris Buttars, Senate Chair
Rep. Paul Ray, House Chair
Sen. Allen M. Christensen
Sen. Jon J. Greiner
Sen. Scott D. McCoy
Rep. John Dougall
Rep. Jack R. Draxler
Rep. Julie Fisher
Rep. David Litvack
Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove
Rep. Rosalind J. McGee
Rep. Phil Riesen
Rep. Stephen E. Sandstrom

Members Absent:

Rep. Wayne A. Harper

Staff Present:

Mr. Mark D. Andrews, Policy Analyst
Ms. Catherine J. Dupont, Associate General Counsel
Mr. Thomas R. Vaughn, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Joy L. Miller, Legislative Secretary

Note: A list of others present, a copy of related materials, and an audio recording of the meeting can be found at www.le.utah.gov.

1. Committee Business

Chair Buttars called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.

MOTION: Sen. Christensen moved to approve the minutes of the May 16, 2007 meeting. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Buttars, Sen. McCoy, Rep. Draxler, and Rep. Sandstrom were absent for the vote.

2. Expansion of Gold Medal Schools Program

Ms. Ladene Larsen, Director, Bureau of Health Promotion, UDOH (Utah Department of Health), gave a presentation on Gold Medal Schools, schools committed to changing their health environment. She noted that with state and federal funding UDOH provides \$609,000 for the program. Intermountain Health Care will continue providing annual grants of \$300,000 to the program through 2009. Ms. Larsen distributed "Gold Medal Schools: A Tradition of Health in All Utah Schools" and "Tipping the Scales Toward a Healthier Population."

Ms. Sarah Rigby, Gold Medal Schools Program Coordinator, UDOH, indicated that many schools receive private funding from business partners or the Parent Teacher Association.

3. Health Insurance for Morbid Obesity Surgery

Mr. Jeff Haaga, Coalition (Utah Obesity Coalition), distributed a folder of information from the Coalition regarding morbid obesity and its effects. He discussed 2008 General Session draft legislation, "Obesity Health Insurance Coverage" which was distributed to the Committee. The bill would require certain health insurers to offer morbid obesity coverage. He stated the bill does not require employers or individuals to purchase morbid obesity coverage and establishes certain eligibility criteria for the coverage.

Mr. Joe Nadglowski, President/CEO, OAC (Obesity Action Coalition), said prevention and intervention

are the keys in the battle of obesity. Approximately \$400 million per year is spent in Utah combating obesity related diseases. Mr. Nadglowski said the OAC urges the Committee to ensure access to treatments available for morbid obesity, including bariatric surgery.

Dr. Steven C. Simper, Bariatric Surgeon, Rocky Mountain Associated Physicians, explained that bariatric surgery not only assists with weight loss, it also produces profound metabolic changes. He discussed the difficulty of overcoming obesity and the prejudice obese people face. Dr. Simper spoke in favor of the draft legislation.

Ms. Genevieve Winegar, bariatric postoperative patient, showed a DVD of her transition from a morbidly obese youth to a normal weight person. She stressed how having gastric bypass surgery has changed her life.

Ms. Colleen Cook, President/CEO, Bariatric Support Centers International, explained that the bariatric community has established an outstanding support system for surgery patients. She encouraged the Legislature to help improve access to the surgical intervention.

Mr. Kelly Atkinson, Utah Health Insurance Association, distributed "Coverage in Utah Morbid Obesity Surgery." He noted that in Utah only 10 percent of the insured population under ERISA-exempt plans has coverage for morbid obesity. He noted the importance of prevention and personal responsibility and indicated that every time something is added to insurance coverage, it becomes more costly and results in a drop in the proportion of the population covered by insurance.

4. Cost Data for Risk-adjusted Episodes of Care

Dr. David Sundwall, UDOH, gave a presentation on what UDOH has done to implement 2007 General Session H.B. 9, "Health Care Cost and Quality Data." He distributed a booklet, "A Time to Heal" to the Committee. Dr. Sundwall indicated the panel required by H.B. 9 has been set up and the Health Data Plan is in the process of being established. The program needed to collect and use the data is estimated to cost \$1 million per year.

Mr. Dennis Kunimura, PEHP (Public Employees Health Program), demonstrated for the Committee the software PEHP uses to access information and to generate various reports such as hospital comparisons, member costs based on conditions, and individual case management.

The Committee discussed the lack of reporting of hospital acquired infections. Dr. Sundwall said that the state epidemiologist does not think it is a good idea to require the reporting of hospital acquired infections and Mr. Barry Nangle, UDOH, noted that hospitals that do the best job of tracking infections are concerned that they will look the worst.

Mr. David Gessel, Utah Hospital Association, reported that Utah hospitals have a task force looking at hospital acquired infections and are working to develop a voluntary protocol for dealing with central-line infections.

5. Other Business / Adjourn

Rep. Ray reminded the Committee of the following reports that were included in the mailing packet:

Minutes of the Health and Human Services Interim Committee
June 20, 2007
Page 3

- Utah Drug Board Program Annual Report
- Annual Low and Moderate Income Housing Report
- Disability Determination Services Advisory Council Annual Report 2006-07.

MOTION: Rep. Fisher moved to adjourn. The motion passed unanimously. Sen. Buttars, Sen. McCoy, Rep. Draxler, and Rep. Sandstrom were absent for the vote.

Rep. Ray adjourned the meeting at 11:30 a.m.