

**MINUTES OF THE
HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES INTERIM COMMITTEE**
Wednesday, August 15, 2012 – 2:00 p.m. – Room 20 House Building

Members Present:

Rep. Paul Ray, House Chair
Sen. Patricia W. Jones
Sen. Stuart C. Reid
Sen. Luz Robles
Rep. Tim M. Cosgrove
Rep. Daniel McCay
Rep. Dean Sanpei
Rep. Evan J. Vickers
Rep. Christine F. Watkins

Members Absent:

Sen. Allen M. Christensen, Senate Chair
Sen. Mark B. Madsen
Rep. Bradley M. Daw
Rep. Wayne A. Harper
Rep. Ronda Rudd Menlove

Staff Present:

Mr. Mark D. Andrews, Policy Analyst
Ms. Cathy Dupont, Associate General Counsel
Ms. RuthAnne Frost, Associate General Counsel
Ms. Lori Rammell, 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 Ray called the meeting to order at 2:36 p.m. Rep. Daw and Rep. Menlove were excused.

Lacking a quorum, the minutes of the June 20, 2012, meeting were not considered for approval.

2. Medicaid—Promoting Wellness

Mr. Michael Hales, Utah Department of Health, discussed the department's six approaches to promote wellness among Medicaid enrollees.

First, he described the department's smoking cessation program for pregnant mothers. He discussed the costs to the Medicaid program for births to mothers who smoke during pregnancy. He stated that the department now offers smoking cessation counseling and pharmaceuticals to pregnant women. He reported that 26 percent of the women who participated in the program quit smoking, and another 22 percent reduced their smoking.

Second, Mr. Hales discussed CHEC (Child Health Evaluation and Care), a childhood preventive care program that provides immunizations and well child checkups.

Third, he explained the Emergency Department Diversion Program, which involves contacting Medicaid patients who go to the emergency department for other than emergency care and informing them regarding other options and resources available to them.

Fourth, he said that beginning January 1, 2013, the department will begin using an accountable care organization that is expected to incentivize managed care contractors to provide the most appropriate care at the lowest cost possible.

Fifth, he explained how national HEDIS (Healthcare Effectiveness Data and Information Set) data

collected each year allow the department to compare Medicaid managed care plans with commercial insurance plans on over 70 quality measures.

Sixth, Mr. Hales explained that the department is working to improve chlamydia screening rates among both Medicaid and non-Medicaid populations.

Mr. Hales took questions from the committee.

Ms. Judi Hilman, Executive Director, Utah Health Policy Project, distributed “Wellness and Prevention in Medicaid: Carrots = Better than Sticks” and discussed the importance of focusing on Utah’s smoking cessation programs and the resulting Medicaid cost savings. She suggested highlighting smoking cessation programs right at Medicaid enrollment. She also emphasized community based cessation programs and encouraged more funding for smoking cessation programs. She suggested that good metrics help in comparing program results. Ms. Hilman took questions from the committee.

Chair Ray said that he filed a bill during the 2012 General Session that would have required a copay for Medicaid enrollees who smoke unless they enrolled in a smoking cessation program. He suggested that those who join a cessation program could have the copay waived. He indicated that he would like to see people encouraged and given rewards for good health behaviors.

3. Adoption—Parental Rights of Biological Fathers

Rep. Watkins presented 2013 General Session draft legislation “Adoption Amendments” (2013FL-0102/008), which relates to notice and consent required before adoption of a child.

Mr. Wesley D. Hutchins, Attorney, The Hutchins Law Firm, and representative of Utah Council for Ethical Adoption Practices, spoke in favor of Rep. Watkins’s legislation. He distributed a document outlining what he sees as the three major problems he believes the bill attempts to address: 1) there should be a means of notifying a biological father who lives outside of Utah of a pending adoption proceeding; 2) fraud should be eliminated as a defense to an adoptive placement; and 3) nonresident mothers “forum shopping” in Utah, due to the state’s lack of biological father protections, should be reduced or eliminated. He stated that as many as 50 percent of the state’s adoption placements are by nonresident birth mothers. He discussed pending cases in the state involving adoptions contested by biological fathers.

Committee discussion followed and included a discussion of why the bill failed in the House during the last session and the differences between this version of the bill and the version proposed during the 2012 General Session.

Rep. Watkins indicated that she would like to come back to the committee in the future for further discussion of this bill.

4. Adjourn

MOTION: Sen. Robles moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously with Rep. Vickers and Sen. Reid absent for the vote.

Chair Ray adjourned the meeting at 4:25 p.m.