

MINUTES
JOINT MEETING
HOUSE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE
SENATE HEALTH & WELFARE COMMITTEE

DATE: Friday, January 27, 2017

TIME: 8:00 AM to 10:00 AM

PLACE: Lincoln Auditorium

MEMBERS: Chairman Wood, Vice Chairman Packer, Representatives Hixon, Perry, Vander Woude, Redman, Gibbs, Blanksma, Hanks, Kingsley, Zollinger, Chew, Rubel (Green)

Chairman Heider, Vice Chairman Souza, Senators Martin, Lee, Harris(32), Anthon, Agenbroad, Foreman, Jordan(17)

**ABSENT/
EXCUSED:** Senators Martin, Harris(32), and Agenbroad

GUESTS: The sign in sheet will be retained in the committee secretary's office until the end of the session. Following the end of the session, the sign in sheet will be filed with the minutes in the Legislative Library.

Chairman Heider called the meeting to order at 8:01 a.m.

Kleeta Newby, KBM Transportation; **Amber Irish**, Early Birds and Blue Birds Transportation; **Beverly Hines**, Licensed Professional Counselor; and **Jenna Dewit**, Pathways of Idaho; and **Vanessa Johnson**, Director, Community Services to Access, testified **in opposition** to Veyo's current delivery practices for non-emergency medical transport (NEMT).

They stated clients suffer from no pick up, lengthy delayed pick ups, delivery to incorrect addresses or delayed deliveries due to driver personal stops. Clients are confused about the cause of the issues, missed appointments impact benefits, and change clinics, thinking it was the clinic's fault. One clinic noted eight drivers did not show up in one day and "no show" rates have increased from 12% to 22%. Decline in referrals has led to layoffs and business closure. The current system is understaffed, uneducated on mental health, and underfunded.

Josh Komenda, President, Veyo, testified **in support** of their current NEMT program service. He stated their current 1% complaint rate is in line with the previous contractor's record. Every complaint is investigated, with multiple interviews, to determine the cause and action. Veyo's transports were complicated by winter weather and road conditions. They are committed to Idaho communities, parents, participants, providers, and facilities.

Darren Thalley, White Tail Transportation, Priest River, testified **in support** of a return to the 2009 NEMT provider payment level of \$7.67. He explained the effects of the various contracts, which have led to the current level of \$6.25, resulting in the use of business assets and closures.

Doug Loertscher, Agency Owner; **Mary "M.C" Niland**, Witco; **Jennifer Zielinski**, Idaho Parents Unlimited; **Nicole Sherwood**, Community Professional; and **Joe Laden**, Job Coach and support at a Developmental Disabilities (DD) agency testified **in support** of improvements to the DD services.

They explained the need for improved application and processing methods beyond the current twelve-step process. A bottle-neck exists between the plan approval and funding. The DD services Medicaid rate has not been increased in twenty-one years, resulting in the loss of direct support professionals, leading to a lack of comprehensive mental health services and appropriate training by professionals. Optum must be evaluated where very limited out-patient services do not address the needs of these kids. Support was expressed for a cost study with brick model methodology. They shared concern regarding access, quality, and choices due to expected rate cuts and larger case loads.

Patrick and **Jessica Rachels** testified **in support** of educational legislation to insure women and their physicians have the most accurate and up-to-date information on Cytomegalovirus (CMV), which can pass to unborn children and cause disabilities.

Laura Scuri, Owner, Access Behavioral Health (BH) Services; **Dan Chadwick**, Ex-Chairman, Counties; and **Mike Berlin**, Idaho Alzheimer's Planning Group, testified **in support** of behavioral health care development.

There is a lack of providers, services, and code clarity. The solutions suggested were to improve law enforcement's ability to deal with the mentally ill in crisis situations, increase hospital bed availability, and to catalog provider assistance resources. Traditional psychiatric and long-term care facilities are no longer making their services available. Alzheimer's patients have behavioral issues and an increased falling risk, leading to access of care denial. Families are forced to take patients, and their Medicaid funds, to other states.

Don Hansen (Jack), Citizen; **Kiran Spees**, Citizen; and **Lauren Necochea**, Director, Idaho Voices for Children, testified **in support** of Medicaid expansion and changes. They said Medicaid rates are confusing, treatment needs improvement, and Idaho must not fall behind other states in this area.

Linda Anderson, Boise resident, interim working group on health care issues; **Mellie DeHaven**, Caldwell resident; **Cathy Deckies**, BSU School of Nursing Clinical Professor; **Russ Duke**, Director, Central District Health Department; and **Kara Kuntz**, Family & Geriatric Physician, testified in support of closing the insurance coverage GAP.

They recommend the State come up with an Idaho solution to leverage federal money to help this uninsured population. There needs to be a thirty-day notice from the State for coverage discontinuance, allowing time to find another form of coverage. Without insurance, a patient's health is effected. The Idaho Caregivers Alliance's Idaho Lifespan Family Caregiver Plan improves health outcomes.

Michelle Sterling, Boise resident, testified **in support** of additional crisis centers. She explained her son's significant health costs, the need to seek out-of-state treatment, the application process for the Katie Beckett Program, her frustration with the DHW programs for children in crisis.

Jessica Chilcott, Citizen, testified **in opposition** to the possible Affordable Care Act repeal without a replacement and the potential pre-existing conditions impact.

Ada Casazza, Resident, Senior citizen, testified **in opposition** to Medicare limitations, sharing her struggle to obtain necessary existing rheumatoid medication beyond those approved for her rare autoimmune illness and the \$26,000 subsequent annual cost not covered with Medicare.

Andra Wilson, Citizen, testified **in support** of privatized healthcare. Government promotion of general welfare needs to be passive.

Brian Hoyt, Citizen; and **Jenny Wilison**, Cathedral of the Rockies, testified **in support** of removing faith healer exemptions, which disregard a child's right to life.

Jenny Peterson, representing the Health Freedom Idaho and herself, testified **in support** of parental freedom to choose their physicians, whether to vaccinate or not, and their children's type of healing.

David DeHaas, Boise; and **Velleri Charles**, Health Freedom Idaho, testified **in support** of changes to the immunization exemption form. Vaccine injuries do happen and can result in death. Entry to day care preschool requires acknowledged statements of risk on the current form when statute allows parents to provide a signed statement to school officials.

Edwin Keener, Reverend, Boise, testified **in support** of using excess funds to assure every individual has the best health possible.

Ahniah Selene Summers, Citizen, testified **in opposition** to the current DHW equipment policy. There is no payment for interim equipment and recipients must put their lives on hold during the wait.

Robert Gerke, Pocatello, Chairman, Recovery Support Services Committee, testified **in support** of recidivism reduction through medical care continuation as received in the facilities through Medicaid expansion without waivers.

ADJOURN: There being no further business to come before the committees, the meeting was adjourned at 9:57 a.m.

Representative Wood
Chair

Irene Moore
Secretary