
KHPA Consumer Advisory Council Meeting
December 21, 2007, Landon State Office Building, Topeka KS
Minutes

KHPA Consumer Advisory Council Members Present:

- Peggy Johnson William Bruning, Chair
- Dr. Timothy Davis
- Corrie Edwards
- Mitzi McFatrigh
- Alvin Penner
- Teresa Schwab
- Nancy Soeken
- David Wilson

KHPA Consumer Advisory Council Members Not Available for Meeting:

- Dr. Jane Adams
- Theola Cooper
- Shannon Jones
- Bruce Linhos
- Rocky Nichols
- Dinell Stuckey
- Maury Thompson

KHPA Staff Participants:

- Dr. Marcia J. Nielsen, Executive Director
- Tracy Russell, Director of Government Affairs

Welcome by Peggy Johnsons, Consumer Advisory Council Chair

Chair Johnson opened the meeting, welcomed members, the public, and KHPA staff. All Council members and KHPA staff participants introduced themselves.

Overview of 2007 KHPA Board Recommendations for Kansas Health Reform – Dr. Marcia Nielsen

Dr. Nielsen reviewed the participant handouts: (1) a PowerPoint slide presentation on the KHPA Board recommendations for health reform delivered to the Kansas legislature and the Governor on November 1, 2007, (2) an updated Executive Summary Report of the KHPA Board Recommendations, and (3) a 2008 Hope Health Calendar as a token of KHPA's gratitude for each member's participation in the Advisory Council. A new updated report of the recommendations, which provides more precise estimates of the reform policies, is now available on our website at www.khpa.ks.gov. Also noted was that the reform package pays for itself entirely for the first five years. The November 1 meeting with the Joint Health Policy Oversight Committee

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concluded with Committee Chair Jim Barnett asking for a motion, which Speaker Neufeld made, to introduce all 21 recommendations into bill and was unanimously supported by the committee. Dr. Nielsen indicated that this response reflected the hard work put into the health reform proposal by all of the Advisory Councils, and input from Kansans at the 22-city Listening Tour. A second meeting with the Joint Oversight Committee on December 13th asked the KHPA to split up the bill in order to separate the recommendations by topic. Currently, the KHPA is working with the office for Revisers of Statutes, drafters and amenders of legislative language, to put together the health reform bills.

As requested by Council members, Dr. Nielsen went through the presentation she gave on November 1st to the Joint Committee on Health Policy Oversight. This presentation is available on the legislative page of our website at: <http://www.khpa.ks.gov/LegislativeInformation/default.htm>. Below are the 21 recommendations:

Promoting Personal Responsibility

- Transparency for consumers: Health Care Cost & Quality Transparency Project
- Promote health literacy

Promoting Medical Homes

- Define medical home
- Increase Medicaid provider reimbursement for prevention/primary care
- Implement statewide Community Health Record
- Promote insurance card standardization

Paying for Prevention

- Increase tobacco user fee
- Statewide ban on smoking in public places
- Partner with community organizations
- Include Commissioner of Education on KHPA Board
- Collect information on health/fitness of Kansas school children
- Promote healthy food choices in schools
- Increase physical education and fitness in schools
- Wellness grant program for small businesses
- Healthier food options for state employees
- Provide dental care for pregnant women
- Improve tobacco cessation within Medicaid
- Expand cancer screenings

Provide and Protect Affordable Health Insurance

- Expand the premium assistance program to include childless adults up to 100% FPL
- Cover more kids through aggressive marketing and outreach to enroll children already eligible for public health insurance programs
- Increase affordable coverage for solo business owners and other small businesses
 - Voluntary health insurance clearinghouse with similar functions of Human Resource departments (e.g., evaluate and compare health insurance products)
 - Encourage widespread use of Section 125 plans (small employers can use pre-tax dollars for purchasing health insurance for their employees)
 - Reinsurance to stabilize premiums for very small businesses
 - Offer health insurance products targeted at young adults (ages 19-25)
 - Require health insurance companies to continue coverage of dependents through age 25
 - Pilot projects for small business health insurance innovation

Dialog with Council Members

Council members expressed concerned about whether there has been resistance to Medical Homes. Although there has been some confusion with the description of the Medical Home concept, there has been general support for Medical Homes. Nationally, the medical community has been adopting this concept as the new standard of care. Defining Medical Homes has been a collaborative process and the policy recommendation is to have legislative language that will identify “defining Medical Homes” as a high priority. The KHPA is currently working on public education of this concept. Once Medical Homes have been defined,

Kansas can move towards rewarding providers with higher reimbursement rates when they practice more coordinated care that leads to better health outcomes

Council members also asked for more information on the health transparency and health information policy options; it was explained that the Data Consortium is currently thinking through processes to better share health and health care information with consumers and what information will be shared (e.g., costs, quality, etc.). In addition, pilot programs are ongoing that allow for better exchange of health information among providers in order to better manage their patients' health conditions.

Concern was expressed about whether Kansas legislators will support the recommendation for a statewide smoking ban and the increased tobacco user fee. The goal of the health reform proposals is to improve the health of all Kansans and given the effect of smoking on health and health care (the #1 preventable cause of death in Kansas), the KHPA Board believes this ban and an increased tobacco user fee is necessary for improving both the health care system and health in general. The increased tobacco user fee is recommended to be tied to health reform and there has been recent movement towards increasing this tax from legislators and Kansans, which is why the KHPA Board did not recommend an increase in a statewide general sales tax. Based on our best projections, all 21 health reform recommendations can be covered in full through the tobacco tax and increased federal matching.

Next Steps, Dr. Marcia Nielsen

Dr. Nielsen reviewed the future roles of the Advisory Councils which could include public support for health reform. Dr. Nielsen noted that a letter in support of the recommendations from individuals or organizations would be very helpful. This will allow KHPA and legislators to see who does support the recommendations.

Support letters should be addressed to the Governor, Senator Barnett, and to Dr. Nielsen at the KHPA. Please send these letters to Tara Hacker, Manager of Policy and Research Communications, either by mail or email (tara.hacker@khp.ks.gov) by January 7, 2008; Dr. Nielsen will distribute them to the Governor and legislators. Letters can be mailed to the following address:

Suite 900N, Landon State Office Building
900 SW Jackson Street
Topeka, KS 66612

Dr. Nielsen mentioned that it is a critical time for moving forward and there needs to be public support for these health reform proposals. Grassroots movements are needed in order to inform policymakers of what Kansas consumers, businesses, providers, and organizations support. One Council member described how AARP has gathered 700 seniors to go to Topeka during the legislative session; it was suggested that other health reform advocates do some grassroots lobbying. Dr. Nielsen indicated that KHPA has hired an Outreach Coordinator to start in January to provide weekly updates to Council members on the legislative process, especially as it relates to the health reform proposals.

Adjournment

Next Meeting: No meetings scheduled at this time. Dr. Nielsen does expect to reconvene the Councils at least once, if not two or three times during the 2008 legislative session. Members will be notified of upcoming meetings either by email or by phone.