
KHPA Provider Advisory Council Meeting
December 12, 2007, Landon State Office Building, Topeka KS
Minutes

KHPA Provider Advisory Council Members Present:

- Janet Williams, Chair
- Janis Goedeke (on behalf of Elaine Schwartz)
- Dr. Kevin Hoppock
- Randy Peterson
- Tony Wellever
- Linda Wright

KHPA Provider Advisory Council Members Not Available for Meeting:

- Susan Bumsted
- Dr. K. Allen A. Greiner
- David Johnson
- Terry Lambert
- William Mahoney
- Dr. Richard Meidinger
- Dr. Bert Oettmeier
- Brandon Smith-Ziph
- Peter Stern

KHPA Staff Participants:

- Dr. Marcia J. Nielsen, Executive Director
- Dr. Barb Langner, Policy Director

Welcome by Dr. Marcia J. Nielsen, Executive Director

KHPA Executive Director, Dr. Nielsen, opened the meeting, welcomed members, the public, and KHPA staff. Council members, including Chair Williams and KHPA staff participants, introduced themselves.

Discussion by Dr. Nielsen, Overview of 2007 KHPA Board Recommendations for Kansas Health Reform

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. Dr. Nielsen also described the process that the KHPA Board and the independent contractor, SchrammRaleigh, went through in order to complete the economic modeling for the health insurance component of the health reform recommendations. The KHPA Board chose to propose sound policy to the legislature while being pragmatic and realistic about setting achievable goals.

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The KHPA health reform recommendations focus on public health strategies that promote personal responsibility for healthy behaviors, medical homes to better coordinate and manage care, and payment for prevention in order to improve health outcomes and drive down long term health care costs. The 2007 health reform proposals are financed with a 50 cent user fee on cigarettes and a 10 percent increase on other tobacco products. Funds from the tobacco fees will be put into an interest bearing trust fund and earmarked specifically to fund the health reform proposals. If these user fees are implemented in 2009, all 21 health reform recommendations can be financed in their entirety for the first five years.

The November 1 meeting with the Joint Health Policy Oversight Committee concluded with Committee Chair Jim Barnett asking for a motion, which Speaker Neufeld made, to introduce all 21 recommendations as a single 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.

Dialog with Council Members

Advisory Council Chair, Janet Williams, who attended the November 1 meeting, was impressed with the package and how well it was received by the Oversight Committee. She also was impressed by how each of the three Council recommendations fit together.

Council members also mentioned some legislative opposition to the tobacco tax and there was some concern about its sustainability as a revenue source if it successfully reduces smoking rates. As noted by Dr. Nielsen, research indicates that raising tobacco taxes does indeed have long-term financial viability.

Another member was interested in whether the Premium Assistance program would be reimbursing providers at Medicaid rates. The KHPA has not estimated these rates in order to let the marketplace determine policies and prices; however, it was noted that it would be very difficult to put together an extensive provider network if Medicaid rates are used. At this time, it is premature to estimate how much premium assistance will cost.

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. These 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
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Both Dr. Nielsen, and Dr. Barb Langner, Policy Director for KHPA, 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.

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.