

2-27-09

## Legislative Activities

### Things to Watch:

Monday, March 2 -  
Senate Public Health &  
Welfare: Informational  
briefing on HIT/HIE and  
the American Recovery  
and Reinvestment Act  
(ARRA). Time: 1:30  
p.m., Statehouse,  
Room 136-N.

Tuesday, March 3, and  
Wednesday, March 4 -  
House Social Service  
Budget Committee:  
Budget hearing on  
KHPA, agency presenta-  
tion and public testi-  
mony. Time: 3:30 p.m.,  
Docking State Office  
Building, Room 786.

Tuesday, March 3, and  
Thursday, March 5 -  
House Aging and Long  
Term Care Committee:  
Appropriation for FY  
2010 through FY 2014,  
home and community-  
based services under  
DD, PD, FE, TBI and  
autism Medicaid waiv-  
ers and Tiny-K pro-  
grams. Time: 3:30 p.m.  
Docking State Office  
Building, Room 711.

Wednesday, March 4 -  
House Appropriations  
Committee: Overview of  
federal stimulus funds.  
Time: 9 a.m., Statehouse,  
Room 143-N.

## Kansas to Seek Stimulus Funds for “HITECH” Initiatives

Thanks to the recent passage of the federal stimulus package, a new acronym is about to enter the health policy vocabulary: HITECH. It stands for “Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health,” a provision of the stimulus bill that includes about \$19 billion to fund Health Information Technology and Exchange (HIT/HIE) projects throughout the country.

HIT and HIE have been a consistent focus of the Kansas Health Policy Authority’s long-term strategy for health reform in Kansas. Now, they’re about to become an even bigger focus as the agency begins to work on ways to draw down those new federal dollars for projects in Kansas.

“These new resources provide Kansas with a tremendous opportunity to build on the work that many people throughout the state have been participating in over the past few years,” said KHPA Executive Director Marcia Nielsen. “Indeed, Kansas is well positioned to craft a Kansas HITECH plan that can be used as the beginning of a grant proposal, with the goal of improving health care coordination and health outcomes in Kansas.”

Nielsen is a member of a statewide task force, led by Lt. Gov. Mark Parkinson, which is preparing for implementation of the stimulus package in Kansas. As part of that effort, KHPA will be working with stakeholders and other interested parties to set priorities and develop proposals for HIT and HIE projects that could qualify for federal HITECH funding.

KHPA is working with the Kansas Health Information Security and Privacy Collaboration (HISPC), the E-Health Advisory Council, the Medical Home Working Group, the Telemedicine/Telehealth Working Group and other interested parties to convene an all-stakeholders meeting to discuss potential HITECH projects for the state. The first all-stakeholders meeting is expected to be held in March. Additional details will be announced as plans are finalized.

The goal will be to use the HITECH dollars to advance health care coordination in Kansas and improve health outcomes. The goal of the steering committee will be to develop ways to use the HITECH dollars to advance health care coordination in the state and improve health outcomes.

Of the \$19 billion included under the HITECH provision, about \$2 billion will be made available to states in the form of competitive grants.

# KHPA Activity

Agency updates  
focused on KHPA  
stakeholders.

## Save the Dates:

**KHPA Board Finance and Audit Committee Meetings:**  
Meetings for 2009 will be held from 3:00 pm to 4:30 pm on the following dates (unless otherwise noted), alternating between EMBARQ and KHPA offices.

*Date:* Monday, March 9th (Board mtg March 17th) - EMBARQ\*

## Medical Home Stakeholders

**Medical Home All Stakeholders Meeting**

*Date:* March 11

*Time:* 2 - 4

*Location:* 900 SW Jackson Ave. Topeka, Ks. 9th Floor of the Landon State Office Bldg. KHPA Conference Room 9E and 9F

**Data Consortium**

*Date:* March 26

*Time:* 9 am- 12 pm

*Location:* Landon State Office Building, Room 106

## First Round of Stimulus Money Arrives; Governor Seeks Budget Amendments

The Kansas Medicaid program received \$71.5 million of new federal money this week as a result of the recently-passed federal stimulus package, officially known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

The funds represent additional reimbursement for expenses Kansas incurred in its Medicaid program dating back to Oct. 1, 2008.

"The importance of this money cannot be overstated," said Marcia Nielsen, Executive Director of the Kansas Health Policy Authority, the state agency that administers Medicaid in Kansas. "This is real money, and it is direct fiscal relief for the state of Kansas because it reimburses us for costs we've already incurred. This money, plus the money coming in future installments, reduces the amount of State General Fund money it will take to continue providing health coverage to low-income Kansans, including those who've been hardest hit by the economic downturn."

In response to the stimulus package, Gov. Kathleen Sebelius submitted a [revised budget proposal](#) to lawmakers this week that calls for using those funds to expand the State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP) and prevent deep budget cuts in Medicaid.

KHPA estimates Kansas will receive \$430 million in additional federal Medicaid funding through the stimulus package. That includes about \$200 million in State Fiscal Year 2010 - money that Gov. Sebelius noted will, "directly offset planned State General Fund expenditures."

Without the stimulus funds, KHPA have estimated the state would have to cut provider reimbursement rates by about 12 percent in order to meet budget reduction targets.

**NEW!** KHPA has updated its website. The site offers all the transparency you've come to expect from KHPA, but with a new look and more functionality, including drop-down lists and additional information about various KHPA programs. The link for the updated site will remain the same: <http://www.khpa.ks.gov/>.

For questions about or assistance with the KHPA website, please contact KHPA Communications Director Frances Breyne at 785-296-4731 or [fran.breyne@khpa.ks.gov](mailto:fran.breyne@khpa.ks.gov).

KHPA Pulse is a publication by the KHPA Communications Team distributed weekly during the legislative session. If you have questions or comments, contact the Public Information Officer Peter Hancock at 785/296.5603 or [peter.hancock@khpa.ks.gov](mailto:peter.hancock@khpa.ks.gov)

