

MINUTES
SENATE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE, AND LABOR
House Committee on Public Health, Welfare, and Labor
Meeting Jointly
Tuesday, September 6, 2022
10:00 AM
Room A, MAC
Little Rock, Arkansas

Committee members present: Senators Cecile Bledsoe, Chair, Scott Flippo, Vice-Chair, Ben Gilmore, Kim Hammer, Dan Sullivan, David Wallace; Representatives Jack Ladyman, Chair, Fred Allen, Mary Bentley, Joe Cloud, Bruce Coleman, Jim Dotson, Jon S. Eubanks, Justin Gonzales, Clint Penzo, Mark Perry, Aaron Pilkington, Jeff Wardlaw,

Other members present: Senator Trent Garner; Representatives Cameron Cooper, Bruce Cozart, Johnny Rye, Joy Springer

Senator Bledsoe called the meeting to order.

Approval of the July 5, 2022, Meeting Minutes [EXHIBIT C]

Senator Wallace made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Representative Bentley, and the motion passed.

The Lingering Effects of Long COVID-19

Naveen Patil, MD, Deputy State Health Officer and Infectious Disease Physician, Arkansas Department of Health (ADH), and Joe Thompson, MD, MPH, Director, Arkansas Center for Health Improvement, discussed the long term effects of COVID-19, including current hospitalization, death, and vaccination rates. They discussed the variants of COVID-19 and the risk profile for long COVID-19.

Arkansas Medicaid Formulary Requirements – Name Brand vs Generics – Response from PASSEs [EXHIBIT E]

Mr. Jack Hopkins, Manager, Government Relations and Operations, Arkansas Total Care, Centene; Mr. Cory Cox, Director, Community Relations, Care Source; Mr. Mitch Morris, Chief Executive Officer, Empower Healthcare Solutions; and Mr. Brad Nye Government Relations Director, State Affairs, Summit Community Care; discussed the Arkansas Medicaid formulary requirements regarding name brand versus generic drugs.

Review of the Arkansas Tobacco Settlement Commission (ATSC) Biennial Report 2020-2021 [Handout]

Mr. Matt Gilmore, Boards and Commissions Coordinator, ADH; Ms. Emily Lane, UCA, ATSC Evaluation Team; and Amy-Leigh Overton-McCoy, PhD, APRN, UAMS Centers on Aging; discussed the ATSC Biennial Evaluation Report. They discussed expanding quality of life for Arkansas seniors and the UAMS Center on Aging focus on community engagement.

Department of Human Services (DHS), Division of Medical Services, Review of Rule which renews the Living Choices Assisted Living (LCAL) waiver as required by §1915(c) of the Social Security Act. The five year renewal was approved January 19, 2022 [EXHIBIT G]

Mr. Mark White, Chief of Staff and Chief of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, DHS; Mr. John Finkbeiner, Assistant Director, Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services, DHS; and Mr. Jay Hill, Director, Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services, DHS; discussed the proposed rule which renews the Living Choices Assisted Living Waiver.

Senator Bledsoe stated that, without objection, this rule stands as reviewed.

Department of Human Services, Division of Medical Services, Review of Rule which renews the AR Choices in Homecare waiver as required by §1915(c) of the Social Security Act. The five year renewal was approved March 10, 2022 [EXHIBIT H]

Mr. Mark White, Chief of Staff and Chief of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, DHS; Mr. John Finkbeiner, Assistant Director, Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services, DHS; and Mr. Jay Hill, Director, Division of Aging, Adult, and Behavioral Health Services, DHS; discussed the proposed rule which renews the AR Choices in Homecare waiver.

Senator Bledsoe stated that, without objection, this rule stands as reviewed.

Department of Human Services, Division of Medical Services, Review of Rule which renews the Community and Employment Support Home and Community Based Services (CES HCBS) C waiver and its Provider-Led-Arkansas –Shared-Services Entity (PASSE) B waiver with the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) [EXHIBIT I]

Mr. Mark White, Chief of Staff and Chief of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, DHS; Ms. Melissa Weatherton, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, DHS; and Ms. Emily Pittman, Director of the Division of Medical Services, DHS; discussed the proposed rule which renews the CES HCBS waiver and its PASSE waiver with the CMS.

Senator Bledsoe stated that, without objection, this rule stands as reviewed.

Department of Human Services, Division of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), Review of Rule which amends the Community and Employment Supports (CES) 1915(c) Home and Community Based Waiver. This program allows children and adults to remain in their homes and communities rather than an institution. DDS is adding enough waiver slots over 3 years to service an additional 3204 people and added 200 more slots for children in foster care [EXHIBIT J]

Mr. Mark White, Chief of Staff and Chief of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, DHS; Ms. Melissa Weatherton, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, DHS; and Ms. Emily Pittman, Director of the Division of Medical Services, DHS; discussed the proposed rule which amends the CES 1915(c) Home and Community based waiver.

Senator Bledsoe stated that, without objection, this rule stands as reviewed.

Department of Human Services, Division of Medical Services, Review of Rule which amends Section 218.400 of the Hospice/Critical Access Hospital/End Stage Renal Disease Provider Manual to replace age 19 to age 4 for treatment service, with adequate safeguards, to address access issues and provides appropriate clinical treatment to children and adolescents presenting to or admitted to emergency rooms. This rule was approved as an Emergency Rule on July 17, 2022. [EXHIBIT K]

Mr. Mark White, Chief of Staff and Chief of Legislative and Intergovernmental Affairs, DHS; Ms. Melissa Weatherton, Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, DHS; and Ms. Emily Pittman, Director of the Division of Medical Services, DHS; discussed the proposed rule which amends Section 218.400 of the Hospice/Critical Access Hospital/End Stage Renal Disease Provider Manual.

Senator Bledsoe stated that, without objection, this rule stands as reviewed.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m.