

**ALABAMA MEDICAID AGENCY**  
**Medical Care Advisory Committee**  
**MINUTES**

**November 21, 2024**

**Present:**

Commissioner Stephanie McGee Azar  
Monica Abron  
Lisa Alford  
Nancy Anderson  
Catrice Bullard  
Barry Cambron  
Melanie Cleveland  
Gretel Felton  
Travis Houser  
Beth Huckabee  
Nate Horsley  
Morissa Ladinsky, MD  
Stephanie Lindsay  
David McIntosh  
Paul McWhorter

Laura Marks  
Brian Massey  
Annette Mills  
Sheila Moody  
Bo Offord  
Marsha Raulerson, MD  
Christine Rembert  
Mason Tanaka  
Judy Thomas  
Darlene Traffanstedt, MD  
Dave White  
Catrice Williams  
Michael Williams  
Alexander Willis

**Call to Order/ Opening Remarks at 2:00pm:**

*Commissioner Stephanie McGee Azar* welcomed everyone to the meeting and opened with introductions. She began by providing an update on the budget submitted to the Executive Budget Office. It is anticipated that the Fiscal Year 2026 budget will have very minimal carryforward. Medicaid has completed the COVID Unwinding process. Enrollment was up to around 1,375,000 and is now around 1,100,000. Commissioner is proud of the job that Alabama has done in redetermining all eligibility. Gretel Felton pointed out that most of the loss in eligibility was due to children aging out of the program.

**Health Systems – Barry Cambron**

*Barry Cambron* began by providing an update on the Alabama Coordinated Health Networks (ACHN). This past September ended the first five-year contract of the ACHN, and the new contract began in October 2024. The new contract will place more emphasis on the maternal, medically complex, and general population with chronic conditions. An emphasis is also being put on identifying recipients with social determinates of health.

Some quality metrics of the participating PCP bonus system have been transformed. All three provider webinars provided in September are posted on the ACHN website. Dr. Travis Houser, Health Systems Director, and Catrice Williams, ACHN Director are available to answer any questions.

Barry also provided an update on the Consolidated Appropriations Act (CAA), also known as the Youth Involved Justice (JIY). This 2022 law requires the Agency to provide EPSDT and targeted case management (TCM) to the youth population in carceral facilities post adjudication. EPSDT services are to be provided 30 days prior to release or as soon as practical and case management services are to be provided 30 days pre and post release. A State Plan Amendment will be prepared to be submitted to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

Alabama Medicaid applied for the Transforming Maternal Health (TMaH) Grant through CMS. This is a ten-year, \$17 million grant designed to transform the payment and delivery system for the maternal population. Selections for the grant will be made around early December. Several stakeholders throughout the state are working with Medicaid on this grant.

In September, notices were sent out to recipients and providers regarding changes due to COVID-19 Unwinding, the result of the end of the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency. Further information and alerts are on the Medicaid website.

The Dental Stakeholders meeting has been reinstituted. The meetings occur every six months with representatives from oral health organizations throughout the state. The meetings are held as an avenue to share information about the dental program. The first meeting was held on October 4, 2024, and the next meeting is scheduled for April 2025. Medicaid is working to increase the number of dental providers in Alabama.

#### **Program Administration – Monica Abron**

*Monica Abron* provided an update on the public notice that was issued regarding the Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Rate Settings Rule. The purpose of the HCBS Rule is to ensure that the Agency is compliant with those settings. This rule also makes sure Medicaid delivers those services in non-institutional based settings. Medicaid has been working with the Department of Mental Health to ensure properties are being assessed correctly. Public comments for review have been posted and need to be provided to CMS by December 19, 2024.

#### **Open Forum**

*Dr. Marsha Raulerson* brought up the need for some Medicaid children to receive Accutane for severe skin diseases and wanted to know the progress for getting this approved. Commissioner Azar let her know that progress is being made. Data and analytics are being provided to the Commissioner and a decision has not been made yet.

*Dr. Travis Houser* provided an update on the Nurse Family Partnership (NFP). Since March 2024, NFP has expanded to four more counties to include Mobile, Escambia, Baldwin, and Conecuh. NFP is currently in twenty-eight counties in Alabama.

*Gretel Felton* alerted everyone to possible changes due to the federal benefit rate and federal poverty level are being changed at the end of the year.


*Dr. Morissa Ladinsky* with the University of Alabama Birmingham (UAB) asked if Alabama Medicaid has been notified by CMS or the Office of Gun Violence Prevention of available

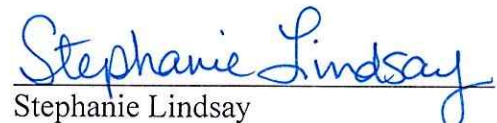
funding for reimbursing for firearm safety counseling. Commissioner Azar responded that we have not been notified, but will let her know if and when we are aware of any opportunities.

Commissioner Azar introduced Dr. Darlene Traffanstedt as the new Medicaid Director for Alabama Medicaid.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 2:29 pm.

  
Stephanie McGee Azar  
Commissioner

  
Stephanie Lindsay  
Recording Secretary