

MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

April 2020

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Government Relations and Special Projects- Megan Renfrew

Legislative Studies and related Activities

EMS Reimbursement for New Care Delivery Models. MHCC staff has been participating in the MHA-convened Stakeholder Innovation Group's subgroup on EMS models of care and payment reform. The work of this subgroup is postponed due to the pandemic.

University of Maryland Shore Medical Center in Chestertown & Models for Rural Health Care: HSCRC has met with the Shore Health System about payment changes for the hospital in Chestertown and HSCRC is working with the Shore Health System to ensure that communications with community stakeholders are clear and transparent.

State Policy Update

The Maryland General Assembly adjourned in mid-March. As of April 6, eighteen bills passed by the General Assembly have been signed into law, including several bills related to telehealth. MHCC staff will continue to monitor bills that have passed the General Assembly but not yet been signed into law and will provide updates in future months. The Governor has made a number of changes to policy in the past month by executive order, including changes to policies related to telehealth. All of the Governor's executive orders are available at <https://governor.maryland.gov/category/executive-orders/>.

MHCC-related news coverage: selected articles and commentary

Anderson, David, "Havre de Grace leaders note ER delays, prospect of coronavirus in making case to keep Harford Memorial Hospital open", The Aegis, March 4, 2020,

<https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/harford/aegis/cng-ag-hospital-alerts-0304-20200304-bgfrhj6flzhctmrd65ursbuafe-story.html>

Chason, Rachel et al., "Dozens of cases, and 10 deaths. Inside Maryland's worst coronavirus outbreak.", Washington Post, April 5, 2020, https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/maryland-news/pleasant-view-coronavirus-outbreak-carroll-county/2020/04/04/4a4bb2c2-7520-11ea-87da-77a8136c1a6d_story.html

-- "Construction underway at Mercy for acute care unit", WBALTV11, March 28, 2020,

<https://www.wbaltv.com/article/construction-mercy-medical-center-acute-care-unit-hospital-baltimore-maryland/31965397#>

Dance, Scott, et al., "Maryland reports first coronavirus death as cases surge and hospitals plan to add beds", Capital Gazette, March 18, 2020, <https://www.capitalgazette.com/coronavirus/bs-md-mercy-coronavirus-update-20200318-ur4ow37jbfe6xpkeoduugsfgfq-story.html>

Eichensehr, Morgan, "State regulators work to lighten financial burden of COVID-19 on Maryland hospitals", Baltimore Business Journal, April 1, 2020,

<https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2020/04/01/state-regulators-work-to-lighten-financial-burden.html>

Eichensehr, Morgan, "Six state hospitals adding 340 new beds in push to meet coronavirus demand", Baltimore Business Journal, March 31, 2020, <https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2020/03/31/six-state-hospitals-adding-340-new-beds-in-push-to.html>

Gilgore, Sara, "D.C.-area hospitals add more beds, and real estate, ahead of COVID-19 surge", Washington Business Journal, March 26, 2020, <https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2020/03/26/d-c-area-hospitals-add-more-beds-and-real-estate.html>

Iannetta, Jessica, "Mercy Medical Center plans \$12.5M addition to expand capacity for coronavirus patients", Baltimore Business Journal, March 18, 2020,

<https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/news/2020/03/18/mercy-medical-center-plans-12-5m-addition-to.html>

Jaime, Kristian, “AAMC celebrates new mental health hospital”, The Star Democrat, March 11, 2020, https://www.stardem.com/business/aamc-celebrates-new-mental-health-hospital/article_7bc1684c-bde5-5714-a5bf-41b3390d09e6.html

Lewis, Mike, “Meritus changes COVID-19 screening; plans \$12.5M hospital expansion”, Herald Mail Media, March 25, 2020, https://www.heraldmillmedia.com/instant/meritus-changes-covid--screening-plans-m-hospital-expansion/article_1c8b8e8e-6eef-11ea-8e88-7b7247ae970c.html

Price, Lilly, “Anne Arundel Medical Center to open new \$30M health care facility”, Capital Gazette, March 3, 2020, <https://www.baltimoresun.com/maryland/anne-arundel/ac-cn-anne-arundel-medical-center-j-ken-mcnew-family-medical-center-20200303-ckcnsoxfwncqvjy6gzrkwibfyu-story.html>

Spector, Candice, “Hogan expands telehealth coverage in response to virus”, Herald Media-Mail, April 4, 2020, https://www.heraldmillmedia.com/news/state/hogan-expands-telehealth-coverage-in-response-to-virus/article_075979b4-0800-51c3-b0fc-08cc4b9e0e4c.html

Wicklund, Eric, “Maryland Governor Signs New Telehealth Rules, Programs into Law”, mHealthIntelligence, April 4, 2020, <https://mhealthintelligence.com/news/maryland-governor-signs-new-telehealth-rules-programs-into-law>

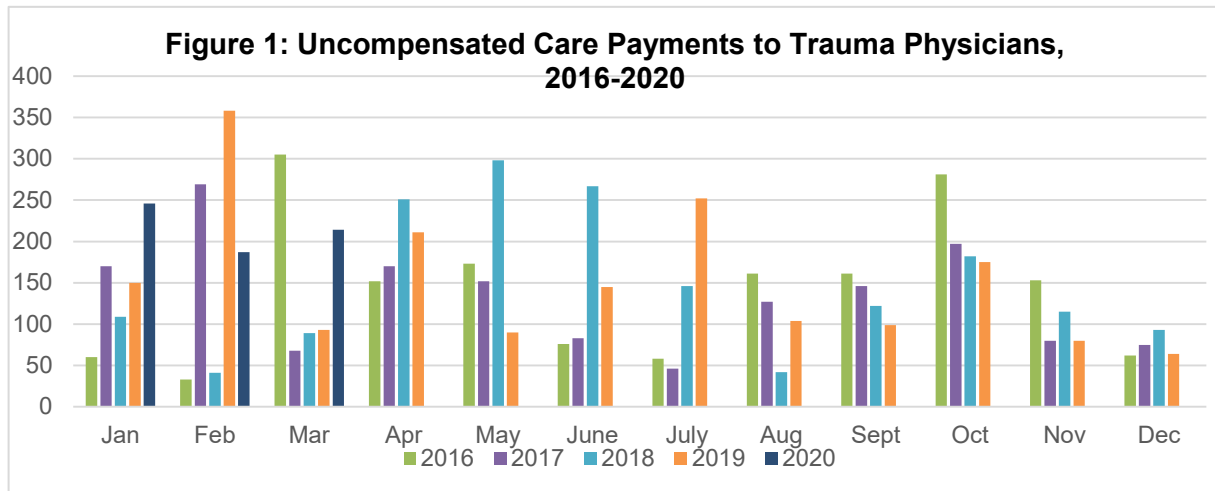
Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund – Richard Proctor

Uncompensated Care Processing

Trustmark Health Benefits (formerly CoreSource, Inc.), the third party administrator (TPA) for the Trauma Fund processed \$241,305 for uncompensated care claims during March 2020.

Primary Adult Resource Center (PARC)

Staff processed the final payment (in the amount of \$611,175) as required by House Bill 607 (2019), Maryland Trauma Fund - State Primary Adult Resource Center -Reimbursement of On-Call and Standby Costs.



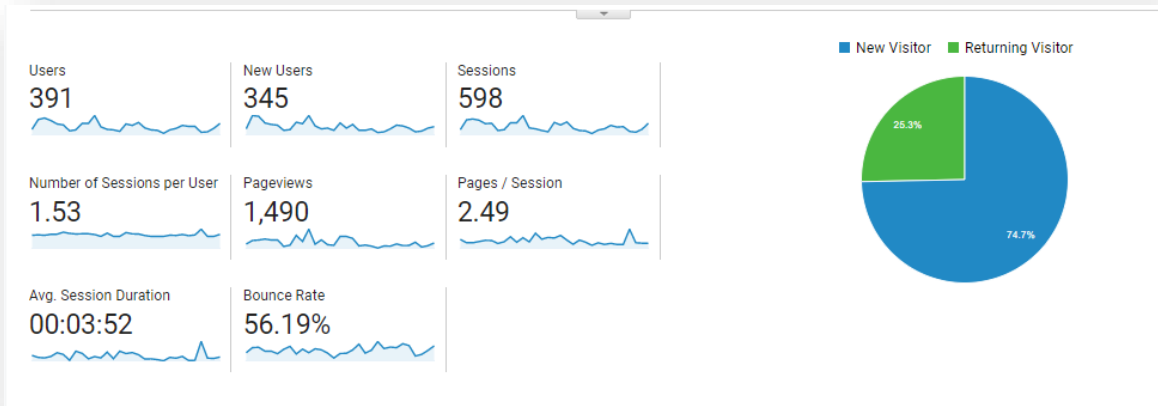
Internet Utilization – Contributors: Valerie Wooding, Julie Deppe and Sametria McCammon

This section of the update describes traffic to the MHCC, the Maryland Health Care Quality Reports, and the Wear the Cost websites.

Internet Activities

MHCC Website

Figure 2: Visits to MHCC Website

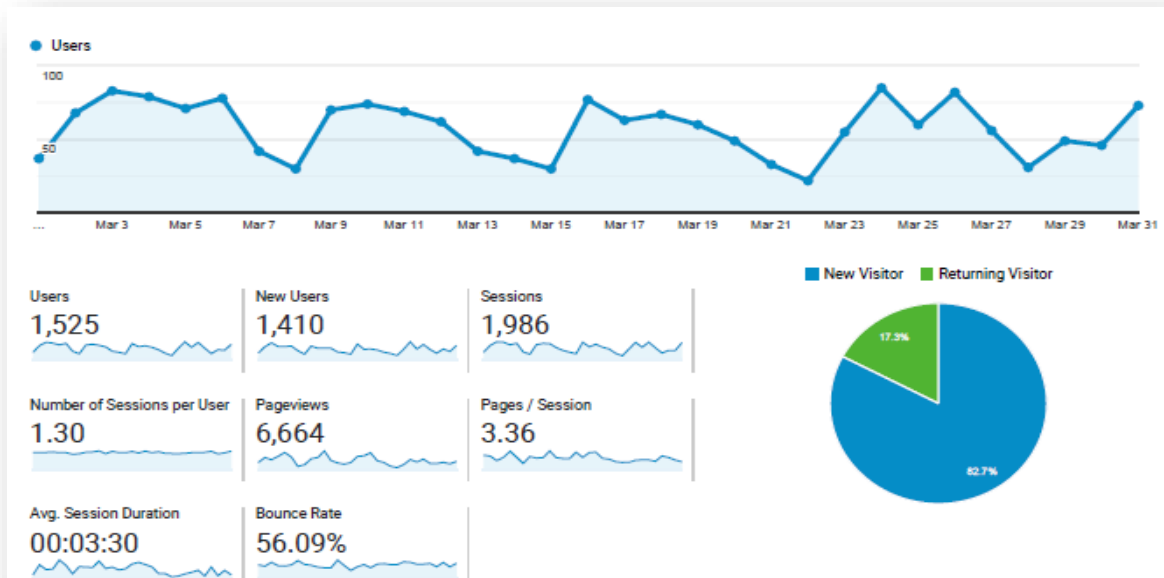


- As shown in the chart above, the number of sessions to the **MHCC website** for March 2020 was 598, and of these, there were 345 new users. The average time on the site was 4:00 minutes. The bounce rate of 56% is the percentage of visitors that see only one page during a visit to the website and is included in the percentage rate of both unique and returning visitor categories. Bounce rate is the percentage of visitors that see only one page during a visit to the site.
- Typically, visitors to the MHCC website arrive directly, by entering an MHCC URL or referencing our saved URL, via a search engine such as Google, or from a referral through another State site. Visitors who arrive directly are typically aware of MHCC, but visitors arriving via search engines and referrals are more likely to be new users.
- The highest referral source was from the mhcc.maryland.gov. Other government agencies include dhmh.maryland.gov and hsrc.state.md.us. Among the most common search keywords in March were: “Maryland Health Care Commission,” “assisted living facilities,” “home-based care” and “home health care agencies.”

Maryland Health Care Quality Reports

The Maryland Health Care Quality Reports (MHCQR) website saw a slight decrease in overall website activity for the month of March but activity remains higher than historic averages. There were 1,525 users in March compared to 1,856 users in February, a decrease of 18%. There were 6,664 page views in March compared to 8,939 in February, a 25% decrease. The percentage of returning visitors increased slightly (17% in March compared to 14% in February). The average time spent on the site was 3.30 minutes which is on trend with the historical average time on the site of 3.47 minutes. The bounce rate was 56% which indicates moderate user interest once they get to the site.

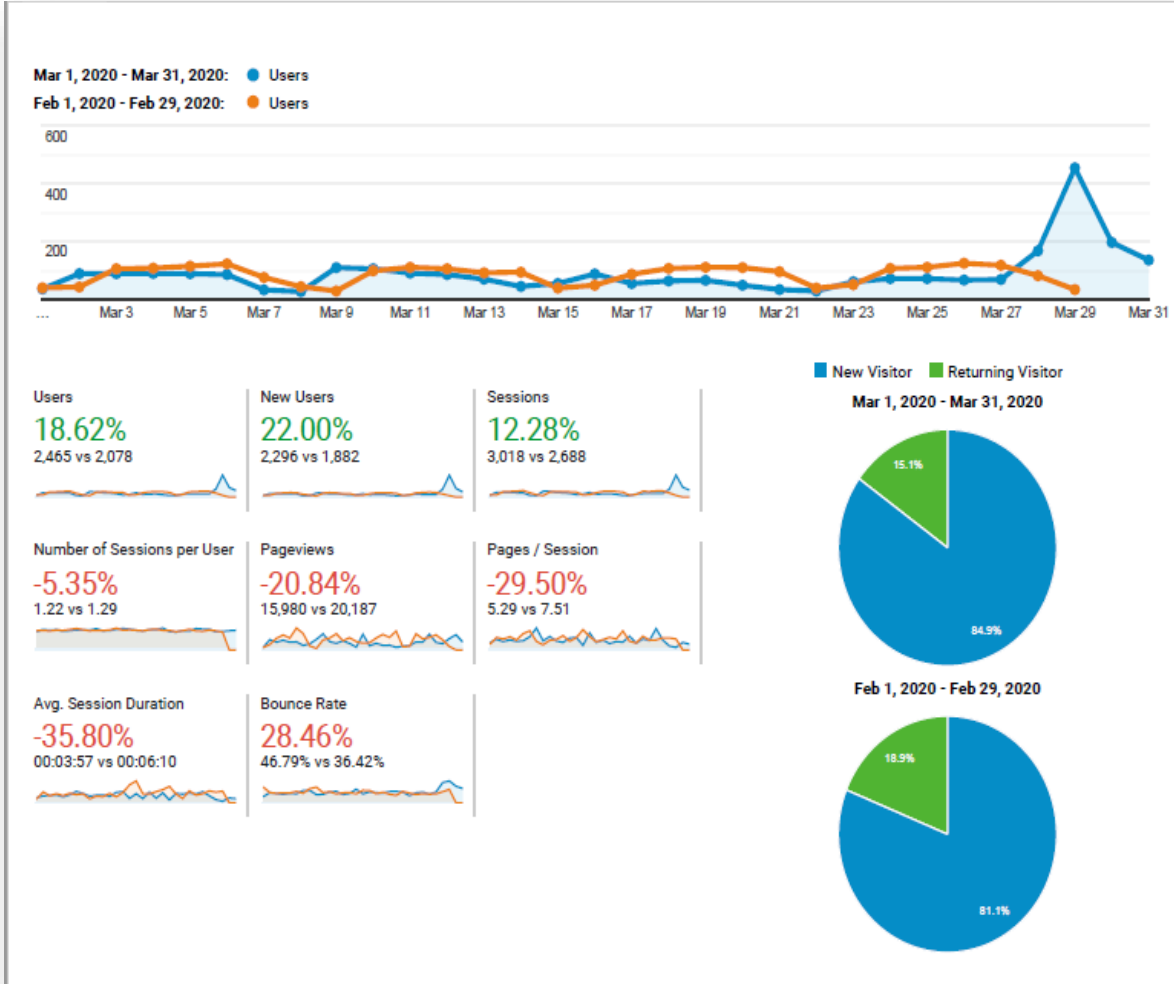
Figure 3: Visits to Health Care Quality Reports Site



Consumer Guide to Long Term Care

The Consumer Guide to Long Term Care website had 2,296 new users in March, representing a significant increase of 22% in new user traffic compared to February. Of the 2,078 total visitors to the website in February, 15% returned to the site in March. The period of March 28 – March 31 saw a spike in traffic due to the COVID-19 outbreak at the Pleasant View Nursing Home of Mt. Airy. The average time spent on the site in March decreased to 3.6 minutes in duration, which is much lower than the historical average time spent on the site of 5.0 minutes. The page view rate also decreased compared to the previous month, with an average of 5.3 pages per session. The bounce rate shows a significant increase to 47%; however the high bounce rate can be attributed to user searches for two specific nursing facilities this month. Bounce rates for other six most frequently accessed pages range from 16%-32%, which indicates strong interest in the website. Staff will continue to monitor this increase in bounce rate. Further discussion is found in the Center for Quality Measurement and Reporting section.

Figure 4: Visits to Consumer Guide to Long Term Care



CENTER FOR ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

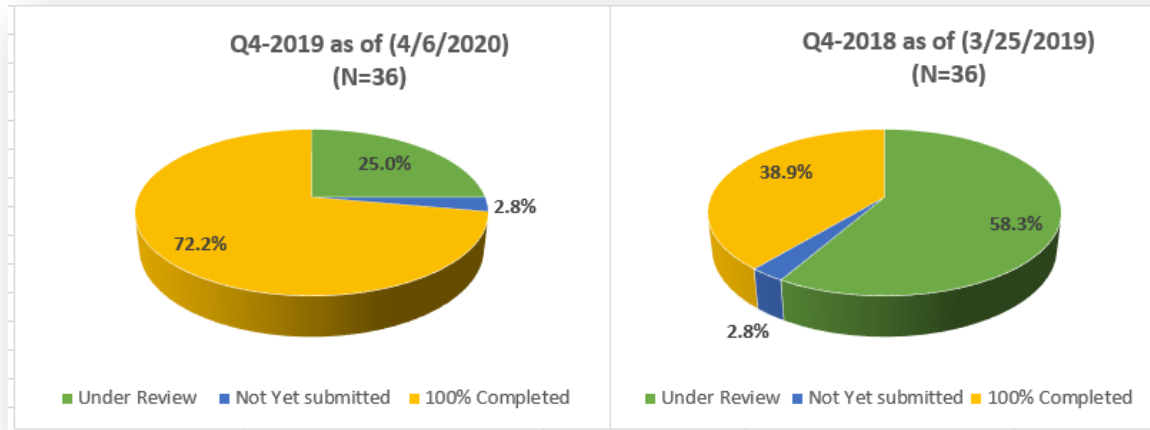
Cost and Quality Analysis– Shankar Mesta

MCDB Data Submission Status, Payor Compliance, and Technical Support

The number of payors that submitted complete clean data loads in Q4 2019 almost doubled compared to the previous year Q4 2018 submissions.

26 (72%) of the Q4 2019 payor data successfully passed the Tier 3 data quality validation check, compared to 39% during Q4 2018. 9 (25%) of the data submissions are under review. Staff expects to complete the review within the next few weeks. This progress is due to continued collaboration between contractor staff and payor representatives.

Figure 5: Payer Submission to the APCD for Services Performed in Quarter 3 of 2018 and 2019



2018 Privately Insured Report Updates

During the quality assurance review of the draft 2018 privately insured report, MHCC staff found that 2018 annual spend values were significantly understated when compared to 2018 reference values from HCCI and national health expenditure reports. Staff discovered that dental claims and dental only enrollees were inadvertently included in the data, thus contributing to the understated annual spend values. The contractor has fixed the issue and is recreating the report exhibits. MHCC staff plans to present the highlights from this updated 2018 privately insured report at the May Commission meeting.

CENTER FOR HEALTH CARE FACILITIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Acute Care Policy and Planning – Eileen Fleck

State Health Plan: COMAR 10.24.07

A meeting of the Psychiatric Services Work Group was held on March 17, 2020. A draft summary of this meeting will be posted on MHCC’s web site in April. The pace of work on the State Health Plan Chapter has slowed due to COVID-19 pandemic. Staff intends to schedule the next meeting in May.

Certificates of Ongoing Performance

MHCC issued a guidance document explaining that certain standards for a Certificate of Ongoing Performance will be waived for cardiac surgery and percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) programs during Maryland’s declared state of emergency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This bulletin was sent to hospital CEOs at hospitals with cardiac surgery or PCI programs and has been posted on MHCC’s web site. MHCC staff also notified members of its standing Cardiac Services Advisory Committee and managers of the data registries used by cardiac surgery and PCI programs.

https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hcfs/hcfs_cardiacare/documents/MHCC%20bulletin_cardiac_covid_19_20200331.pdf

Long Term Care Policy and Planning – Linda Cole

Minimum Data Set (MDS)

In March, staff reviewed and approved the data documentation, user guide, and long term care design plan completed by the Hilltop Institute, MHCC's contract MDS consultant. Staff provided updated population data to Hilltop in order to update routine tables. MHCC convened a meeting with Hilltop on March 2, 2020 to discuss a modification to the current contract to identify approaches to more efficiently complete the required tasks during the contract's final year.

Annual Survey of Hospices

The FY 2019 Maryland Hospice Survey was available for online data entry during March with Part I of the survey due by April 13, 2020. Staff is reviewing surveys and providing technical assistance as needed. MHCC staff considers requests for survey extensions on a case-by-case basis.

COVID-19 Emergency

During the past month, the staff has participated in development of policy guidance for long-term care facilities during the COVID-19 emergency, including guidance for nursing homes seeking emergency Certificates of Need to change their bed capacity. This guidance was distributed on April 3, 2020. (https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hcfs/hcfs_con/documents/Emergency%20CON/guidance_for_CCFs_emergency_CON.pdf).

Certificate of Need – Kevin McDonald

CON's Approved

Baltimore Detox Center – (Baltimore County) – Docket No. 18-03-2419

Establish a new 24 bed Track One alcohol and drug abuse intermediate care facility services in Woodlawn.

Approved Cost: \$585,982

Emergency CON's approved – COVID-19 Response

Mercy Medical Center – (Baltimore City) – Docket No. EM-H20-24-001

Add 32 medical/surgical/gynecological/addictions (MSGA) beds by fitting out shell space. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 18 and confirmed by the Commission on March 19, 2020. The project is anticipated to require 70 to 75 days to complete.

Approved Cost: \$12,500,000

Meritus Medical Center – (Washington County) – Docket No. EM-H20-21-002

Add 20 MSGA beds in new construction. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 21 (revised on April 2) and confirmed by the Commission on April 3, 2020. The project is anticipated to require four months to complete.

Approved Cost: \$12,500,000

Meritus Medical Center – (Washington County) – Docket No. EM-H20-21-003

Add five MSGA beds by renovating office space. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 21 and confirmed by the Commission on April 3, 2020. The project is anticipated to require 30 days to complete.

Approved Cost: \$240,000

Dimensions Health Corporation d/b/a University of Maryland (UM) Capital Region Health – (Prince George's County) – Docket No. EM-H20-16-004

Add 135 MSGA beds to the bed capacity of UM Prince George's Hospital Center by renovating space at the former UM Laurel Regional Hospital, the current site of a freestanding medical facility. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 22 and confirmed by the Commission on April 3, 2020. The project is anticipated to require 30 days to complete.

Approved Cost: \$7,000,000

Frederick Health Hospital – (Frederick County) – Docket No. EM-H20-10-006

Add 114 MSGA beds by renovating a building used as a hospital business center that is adjacent to the hospital. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 26 and confirmed by the Commission on April 3, 2020. The project is anticipated to require 30 days to complete.

Approved Cost: \$2,500,000

Northwest Hospital Center – (Baltimore County) – Docket No. EM-H20-03-005

Add 20 MSGA beds by renovating space formerly used for a comprehensive care facility (CCF) unit. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 27 and confirmed by the Commission on April 3, 2020. The project is anticipated to require a few days to complete.

Approved Cost: \$500,000

Peninsula Regional Medical Center – (Wicomico County) – Docket No. EM-H20-22-007

Add 56 MSGA beds by renovating space used as conference and office space and a former pediatric unit. The project was approved by the Executive Director on March 27 and confirmed by the Commission on April 3, 2020. The project is anticipated to require 30 days to complete.

Approved Cost: \$3,825,000

Change in an Approved CON

Brinton Woods Health Care Center – (Carroll County) – Docket No. 18-06-2422

Authorization of an increase in the approved cost of the relocation of a CCF.

Additional expenditure approved: \$2,338,640 yielding a total approved project cost of \$17,176,140.

CONs Withdrawn

Lorien Nursing & Rehabilitation Center-Columbia – (Howard County) – Docket No. 18-13-2418

Addition of 40 CCF beds.

Approved Cost: \$1,287,000

CON's Relinquished

FutureCare-Homewood – (Baltimore City) – Docket No. 17-24-2396

Addition of 30 CCF beds.

Approved Cost: \$6,799,182

Bayada Hospice – (Prince George's County) – Docket No. 16-16-2383

Establish a general hospice program in Prince George's County.

Approved Cost: \$131,000

CON Letters of Intent

Hillhaven Nursing & Rehabilitation Center – (Prince George's County)

Addition of 32 CCF beds at the facility located at 3210 Powder Mill Road, in Adelphi.

Crescent Cities Nursing & Rehabilitation Center – (Prince George's County)

Addition of 32 CCF beds at the facility located at 4409 East-West Highway, in Riverdale.

Pre-Application Conference

Hillhaven Nursing & Rehabilitation Center – (Prince George's County) and Crescent Cities Nursing & Rehabilitation Center – (Prince George's County)

March 18, 2020

First Use Approvals

Anne Arundel Mental Health Hospital – (Anne Arundel County) – Docket No. 16-02-2375

Establishment of a 16-bed special psychiatric hospital.

Approved Cost: \$28,285,558

Determinations of Coverage

• **Ambulatory Surgery Centers**

The ASC at Waugh Chapel, Inc. – (Prince George’s County)

Establish a physician outpatient surgery center (POSC) with one sterile operating room to be located at 4000 Mitchellville Road, A-400, in Bowie.

Annapolis ENT Surgical Center, LLC – (Anne Arundel County)

Establish an ambulatory surgery center with two sterile operating rooms and two non-sterile procedure rooms to be located at 2002 Medical Parkway, Suite 150, Sajak Pavilion, in Annapolis.

• **Ambulatory Surgery Centers – Notification of Temporary Suspension of Operations Related to the COVID-19 Emergency**

MedStar Endoscopy Center at Lutherville – March 18, 2020

North Baltimore Surgery Center – March 18, 2020

MedStar Surgery Center at Timonium, LLC – March 19, 2020

Prince Frederick Surgery Center – March 20, 2020

Riva Road Surgery Center, LLC – March 20, 2020

SurgCenter of Glen Burnie, LLC – March 20, 2020

Leonardtwn Surgery Center – March 23, 2020

Monocacy Surgery Center, LLC – March 23, 2020

Surgical Center of Greater Annapolis – March 23, 2020

Timonium Surgery Center, LLC – March 23, 2020

Harford County Ambulatory Surgery Center – March 24, 2020

SurgCenter of Bel Air, LLC – March 24, 2020

• **Acquisition/Change of Ownership**

Autumn Lake Healthcare at Chestertown – (Kent County)

Acquisition of the Chestertown Operator, LLC d/b/a Autumn Lake Healthcare at Chestertown by Chestertown MD Opco LLC. Autumn Lake Healthcare at Chestertown currently owns the land, building, and related assets, including the CON “bed rights,” and the assets relating to the operation of the facility. Chestertown MD Opco LLC will acquire the building in which the facility operates, the real estate, the CON “bed rights,” and assets relating to the operation of the SNF. There will be no changes to staffing, services or bed complement.

Purchase Price: \$11,283,018.87

Autumn Lake Healthcare at Denton – (Caroline County)

Acquisition of the Denton Operator, LLC d/b/a Autumn Lake Healthcare at Denton by Denton MD Opco LLC. Autumn Lake Healthcare at Denton currently owns the land, building, and related assets, including the CON “bed rights,” and the assets relating to the operation of the facility. Denton MD Opco LLC will acquire the building in which the facility operates, the real estate, the CON “bed rights,” and assets relating to the operation of the SNF. There will be no changes to staffing, services or bed complement.

Purchase Price: \$12,264,150.94

Hartley Hall Nursing & Rehabilitation Center – (Worcester County)

Acquisition of the Hartley Hall Operator, LLC d/b/a Hartley Hall Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (Hartley Hall) by Pocomoke City MD Opco LLC. Hartley Hall currently owns the land, building, and related assets, including the CON “bed rights,” and the assets relating to the operation of the facility. Pocomoke City MD Opco LLC will acquire the building in which the facility operates, the real estate, the CON “bed rights,” and assets relating to the operation of the SNF. There will be no changes to staffing, services or bed complement.

Purchase Price: \$8,952,830.19

• **Licensure**

- **Delicensure of Bed Capacity or a Health Care Facility**

Signature Healthcare at Mallard Bay – (Dorchester County)

Temporary delicensure of 25 CCF beds leaving a total of 135 beds.

Chesapeake Shores – (St. Mary’s County)

Temporary delicensure of eight CCF beds leaving a total of 117 beds.

Other

CareSouth HHA Holdings of Virginia d/b/a Encompass Health Home Health – (Baltimore County)

Relocation of office from 10451 Mill Run Circle, Suite 400 Owings Mills to 11155 Dolfield Boulevard, Suite 116, Owings Mills.

Guidance on Emergency Certificates of Need for Hospitals

MHCC posted guidance for hospitals requesting emergency Certificates of Need to change their bed capacity in response to Maryland’s declared COVID-19 state of emergency on March 21, 2020.

https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hcfs/hcfs_con/documents/Emergency%20CON/guidance_for_hospitral_emergency_CON.pdf

CENTER FOR HEALTH INFORMATION & INNOVATIVE CARE DELIVERY

Health Information Technology Division – Nikki Majewski, Division Chief

Telehealth – Ambulatory Practice Guidance

MHCC staff developed telehealth guidance documents to inform providers about measures taken by Medicare, Maryland Medicaid, and commercial payers to broaden telehealth coverage and reimbursement in response to COVID-19. The documents also feature general guidance on telehealth and provider tips for making the most of their telehealth interactions with remote patients. Planning is underway to develop additional resource materials to broaden telehealth adoption and use.

School-Based Telehealth Webinar

Promotional activities continue for a three-part webinar series, *Using Telehealth in School Health Services*. The series overviews how telehealth can be leveraged in school health services and includes key policy considerations for program development. The Maryland Association of School Health Nurses provided guidance in developing the series. Continuing education credits are available from the Maryland Nurses Association through November 2020.

Blockchain

Planning is underway to convene a *Blockchain Roundtable Discussion* (roundtable) to explore potential opportunities for blockchain technology in Maryland. Participants will share perspectives on use cases, proof of concepts, and potential applications as well as risk and control considerations. Key takeaways will inform an information brief highlighting opportunities for advancing blockchain.

Home Health and Hospice Care

Data analysis has commenced on home health agency (HHA) and hospice provider (HP) responses to a health IT adoption questionnaire. MHCC staff invited HHAs and HPs to complete an online questionnaire to assess diffusion of electronic health records (EHRs), health information exchange (HIE), and telehealth. The findings will be used to develop strategies aimed at increasing use of health IT by HHAs and HPs. An information brief is targeted for release this summer.

Health IT Value Assessment Scan

Staff is analyzing ambulatory practice responses to an environmental scan on perceptions of health IT. Practices were invited to share their viewpoints regarding how health IT enhances quality of care and increases efficiency in care delivery. Findings will be used to develop initiatives aimed at optimizing health IT in practices. An information brief is targeted for release this summer.

Telehealth Grants

Planning activities are underway to develop a grant announcement for use of telehealth in rural areas of the State. An external review panel continues to evaluate proposals submitted in response to the *Announcement for Grant Applications: Advancing Telehealth in Nursing Homes*. Charles County Public Schools (CCPS) was granted a two-month extension of their teletherapy grant, which was scheduled to conclude in July 2020. Support was provided to the University of Maryland Quality Care Network as they review data to identify lessons learned and program outcomes for medication-related services delivered using telehealth through a grant which ended in 2019.

Electronic Data Interchange

Payers are working on the 2019 Electronic Data Interchange Progress Report. Payers with premiums that exceed \$1 million and select specialty payers are required by regulation (COMAR 10. 25.09) to report census level data on administrative transactions by June 30. A total of 41 payers are required to submit a report. MHCC staff continues to provide technical assistance to payers on completing the report.

Innovative Care Delivery Division – Melanie Cavaliere, Division Chief

Dental Health IT

Data gathering concluded for the online health IT adoption questionnaire for dental practices on the use of EHRs and HIE. The Maryland State Dental Association (MSDA), Maryland Academy of General Dentistry, and University of Maryland School of Dentistry Alumni Board assisted in disseminating the online questionnaire. Findings will inform strategies aimed at increasing health IT adoption in dental practices. The MSDA accepted MHCC staff's educational symposium abstract for the fall Chesapeake Dental Conference.

Privacy and Security Regulations

Best and final offers were received from three vendors in response to the Request for Proposal to modernize COMAR 10.25.18, *Health Information Exchanges: Privacy and Security of Protected Health Information* regulations. The contractor will propose amendments that align the regulations with the change in law of the definition of an HIE (Chapter 657, 2018) and federal HIE privacy policies. The selected contractor is anticipated to be considered by the Maryland Board of Public Works in May.

Telehealth Readiness Assessment Tool

The web-based *Telehealth Readiness Assessment Tool* was finalized. Staff worked with the contractor, RTI International, to complete user testing and modifications to the tool. The tool is interactive and assists practices in determining their readiness to adopt or expand their use of telehealth. Practices can assess readiness across five telehealth readiness concepts: core readiness, financial considerations, operations, staff engagement, and patient readiness.

Care Management Focus Group

A subgroup of the Care Management Focus Group provided best practices and implementation tips for establishing care management in a practice. Information from the focus group is used in the development of resource tools related to care management program readiness, identifying care manager responsibilities, and determining minimum qualifications for a care manager.

Learning Symposiums

Preparations are underway for the *Innovative Care Symposium* event with HSCRC, Johns Hopkins Medicine, MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society, and CareFirst. Planning for the April podiatric webinar on

the Merit-based Incentive Payment System (MIPS) is progressing. The webinar will provide podiatrists with information that can enhance their performance and reimbursement in the MIPS program.

MDPCP Advisory Council

MHCC awarded a small contract to Discern Health (Discern) to provide support to the Maryland Primary Care Program Advisory Council (Council). Discern will develop a recommendation report from the Council's Innovative Practice Alternatives and Practice Reporting subgroups. Findings from the reports will be considered by the Council for inclusion in the draft annual report to the Secretary of Health.

Management Service Organizations

Development commenced for an *Announcement for Grant Applications: Expanding Telehealth Adoption in Ambulatory Practices*. State Designated Management Service Organizations (MSOs) will be eligible to receive grant funds to provide practices support in their adoption and use of telehealth. An award announcement in April is anticipated. Existing law (Chapter 689, 2009) requires MHCC to State designate one or more MSOs. These organizations provide practices with health IT adoption and use support. Staff is evaluating responses from its MSO questionnaire regarding market perception of the State designation.

CENTER FOR QUALITY MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

The Maryland Health Care Quality Reports (MHCQR) website

MHCQR Website Redesign

Staff continues to work with Advanta Government Services (AGS), the website contractor, to redesign the website's functionality, usability, and overall appeal. The first phase of the redesign effort is focused on the full integration of our Long Term Care Guide and our Quick Compare features into a more uniform and comprehensive *Quality Reports* consumer site. The Long Term Care Guide site predates the *Quality Reports* website and its redesign requires a significant amount of reprogramming and database restructuring to enhance and modernize the functionality of the site. We are making good progress in transitioning this work from an in-house web-development function to the contractor.

MHCQR website sees steady website traffic

Staff continues to monitor traffic to the site using Google Analytics software. Though there was a decrease in March traffic, the site continues to see heavy traffic compared to historical trends. For the month of March, the site had 1,525 users and 6,664 views. Traffic to the site is presented graphically under the Executive Direction section of this update.

Consumer Guide to Long Term Care Website

15,980 page views of the Consumer Guide to Long Term Care website in March

The Pleasant View Nursing Home of Mt. Airy received a significant amount of publicity in response to an outbreak of Coronavirus cases at the facility. The March analytics reflect a large increase of users viewing page for the Pleasant View nursing home). Between March 27 and March 31 there were 841 page views for this facility, compared to five page views during the entire month of February. New users account for 85% of the web site traffic in March, with 2,296 new users visiting the long term care site. This represents a 22% increase in new users compared to February. Return users accounted for 15% of the website traffic, which is 3% lower than the norm. The Services Search Engine is the most frequently accessed section of the Consumer Guide. Assisted living facility searches have the highest volume of page views (3,987 or 25%), followed by nursing home search page views (2,240 or 14%), home health agency search page views (963 or 6%), and adult medical day care search page views (607 or 4%). Page views of the Pleasant View of Mt. Airy profile accounted for 5% of the total March page views. Traffic to the site is presented graphically under the Executive Direction section of this update.

Website Promotion: Approximately 65 social media posts initiated in March

Promotion of the MHCQR website is a Center priority. Staff published approximately 65 social media posts in March. Topics included National Colorectal Awareness Month, coronavirus resources, and general MHCQR website marketing posts. These topics coincide with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services National Health Observances or other important health related events, and are designed to link readers back to the MHCQR website.

Hospital Quality Initiatives – Courtney Carta

Hospital Reporting

CMS recently issued guidance to hospitals regarding quality reporting programs. The guidance extends data submission deadlines and makes the submission of October 2019 to June 2020 data optional. This includes quality measures, patient satisfaction, healthcare associated infections, and other measures required in CMS payment programs. MHCC staff communicated this information to Maryland hospitals and staff continues to monitor CMS communication channels for additional updates.

Healthcare Associated Infections

Public reporting for CY2019 healthcare associated infections (HAI) was underway prior to the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, to minimize provider burden during this period, MHCC has suspended HAI public reporting in alignment with CMS and CDC guidelines.

Specialized Cardiac Services Data

All Maryland hospitals that provide PCI services are required to participate in the ACC NCDR CathPCI data registries and report quarterly data and outcome reports to the Commission in accordance with established timelines. In alignment with ACC guidelines, data collection for Q4 2019 is postponed until further notice due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The next quarterly cardiac data coordinator’s meeting is tentatively scheduled for May 12, 2020 but may be postponed due to the pandemic.

Long Term Care Quality Initiative—Stacy Howes

Nursing Home Family Experience of Care Survey

Data collection for the 2019 survey was completed in mid-December. The Spanish-language option was offered again this year, and two participants completed the survey in Spanish. Staff is discussing the addition of an online version of the survey to supplement the paper version beginning with the 2020 survey. The state and individual facility reports were distributed to facilities at the end of January. Results of the survey were posted to the Consumer Guide to Long Term Care in March and shared with commissioners at the March meeting. Staff has begun identifying the highest performing homes in order to provide “best practices” information to nursing homes.

Health Plan Quality Initiative

AGS (the website contractor) received health plan quality data for 2019, and the results were posted on the Quality website in November. For 2020, health plans began data reporting on the NCQA Health Organization Questionnaire in early January, and the first clinical reports are due in the spring.

Consumer Guide to Long Term Care

The Nursing Home Resident Characteristics portion of the Consumer Guide to Long Term Care was updated using the Minimum Data Set for the first quarter of 2019. The Governor’s directives regarding nursing home safety during COVID-19 have been added to the website. Staff continues to provide information and resources directly to consumers who contact the office with questions about long term care facilities and services.

Nursing Home and Assisted Living Influenza Vaccination Survey

The launch of the annual Influenza Vaccination Survey is postponed in an effort to reduce the data collection and reporting burden on long term care providers responding to the COVID-19 pandemic. MHCC staff communicated this information to Maryland nursing homes. CMS recently issued guidance to providers and clinicians regarding quality reporting programs. The guidance makes submission of 4Q2019 to 2Q2020 data optional.

Outpatient Quality Initiative—Mariama Gondo

Transitioning Freestanding Ambulatory Surgical Facility (FASF) Annual Survey Administration

MHCC staff has postponed the CY2018 and CY2019 survey roll-out due to the COVID-19 pandemic. MHCC staff posted this information on the Commission's website. Staff continues to work collaboratively to finalize testing of the newly redesigned ASF Survey. Staff developed an instructional guide to assist the facilities in completing the survey and held a webinar on March 17 to review new survey specifications and functionality.

Freestanding Ambulatory Surgery Facility (FASF) Capacity Survey for COVID-19

At the request of Dennis Schrader, Director of the Consolidated Surge Command, staff and the Maryland Ambulatory Surgery Association (MASA) developed a survey of FASFs to assess the physical and staffing capacity of the facilities to support alternative models for treating patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. MHCC released the survey late last month, and the preliminary results have been forwarded to the MDH ASC Repurposing workgroup for review.