

MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

December 2021

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Government Relations and Special Project – Tracey DeShields

State Policy Update

The 2022 legislature is scheduled to begin on January 12, 2022 and will adjourn on April 11, 2022. In 2021, the Health and Government Operations (HGO) Committee asked MHCC to convene an Advance Directives Workgroup to develop recommendations on possible compromise legislation for the 2022 legislative session. The Advance Directives Workgroup had four meetings. The workgroup produced a report with recommendations for the General Assembly.

MHCC-related news coverage: selected articles and commentary

Health Facilities

El-Bayoumi, J. “To save our healthcare system, we must think beyond doctors and nurses.” The Hill. December 6, 2021. Available from: <https://thehill.com/opinion/healthcare/584076-to-save-our-healthcare-system-we-must-think-beyond-doctors-and-nurses>

McMinn, T. “Maryland hospitals directed to update emergency capacity plans.” Cumberland Times-News. December 12, 2021. Available from: https://www.times-news.com/news/local_news/maryland-hospitals-directed-to-update-emergency-capacity-plans/article_8825f4d6-5a02-11ec-a0fc-276e8d36af30.html

MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital. “MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center retains NICHE ‘Exemplar’ status.” Southern Maryland Chronicle. December 17, 2021. Available from: <https://southernmarylandchronicle.com/2021/12/17/medstar-southern-maryland-hospital-center-retains-niche-exemplar-status/>

UM Medical System. “UM UCH announces new president and chief executive officer.” UM Medical System. December 6, 2021. Available from: <https://www.umms.org/uch/news/2021/um-uch-announces-new-president-and-chief-executive-officer>

Health Disparities and Health Equity

Lewis, N. “Johns Hopkins hosts competition to address health disparities.” Local WDMV. December 2, 2021. Available from: <https://www.localdvm.com/news/maryland/johns-hopkins-hosts-competition-to-address-health-disparities/>

Pasia, N. “‘What is the price of a life?’ The path ahead for health equity in Maryland and beyond.” State of Reform. December 16, 2021. Available from: <https://stateofreform.com/news/maryland/2021/12/what-is-the-price-of-a-life-the-path-ahead-for-health-equity-in-maryland-and-beyond/>

Telehealth

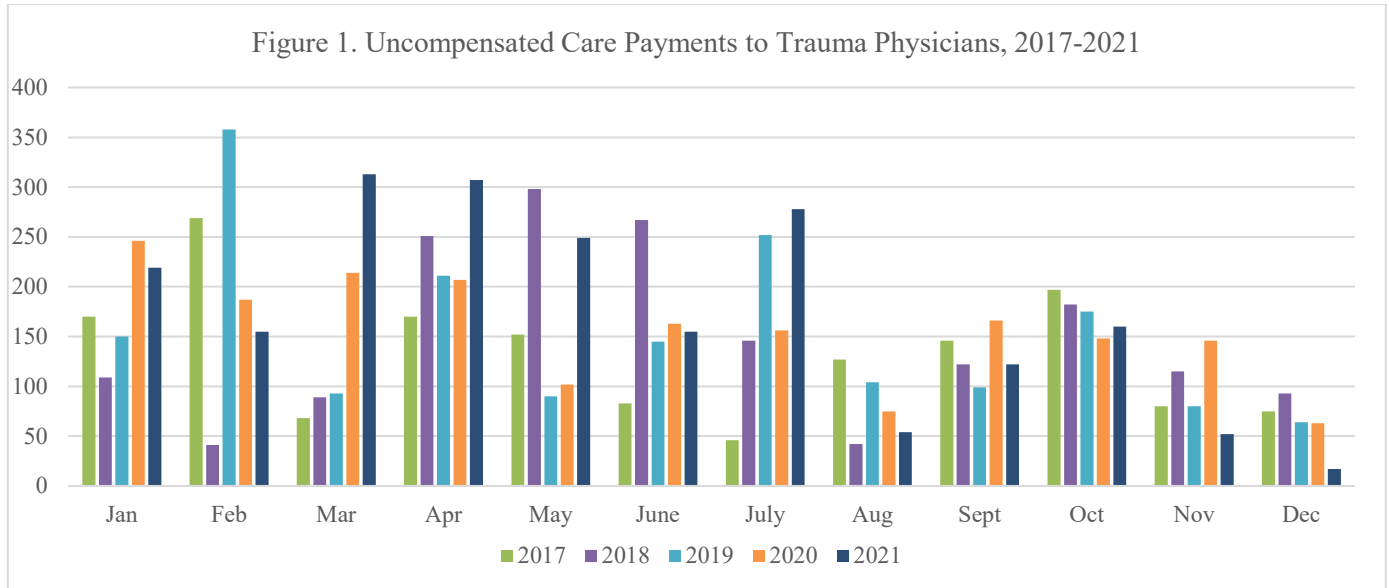
Pasia, N. “Leaders want long-term telehealth and workforce support in Maryland.” State of Reform. December 1, 2021. Available from: <https://stateofreform.com/news/maryland/2021/12/leaders-want-long-term-telehealth-and-workforce-support-in-maryland/>

Vaidya, A. “Telehealth use among Medicare patients skyrocketed 63-fold last year.” mHealth Intelligence. December 6, 2021. Available from: <https://mhealthintelligence.com/news/telehealth-use-among-medicare-patients-skyrocketed-63-fold-last-year>

Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund

Uncompensated Care Processing

Trustmark Health Benefits, the third-party administrator (TPA) for the Trauma Fund, processed \$17,630.63 uncompensated care claims through December 2021.



MHCC Website: The MHCC website (<https://MHCC.maryland.gov>) had 2,575 users in the month of December 2021.

Wear The Cost

In December 2021, 2,358 users visited the site.

Maryland Quality Reporting

The Maryland Quality Reporting had 1,688 users, 32,344 sessions and 3,852 pageviews in December. The average session duration was 1 minute and 59 seconds, a 17.0 % increase from November.

The site receives the most website referrals from MHCC's homepage (62.9%).

Facebook continues to be the primary referral social media source, accounting for 70.6% of all social referrals and Twitter was the second highest source of social media referrals for the month, accounting for 17.7% of referrals. LinkedIn provided the least social media referrals accounting for 11.8% of referrals.

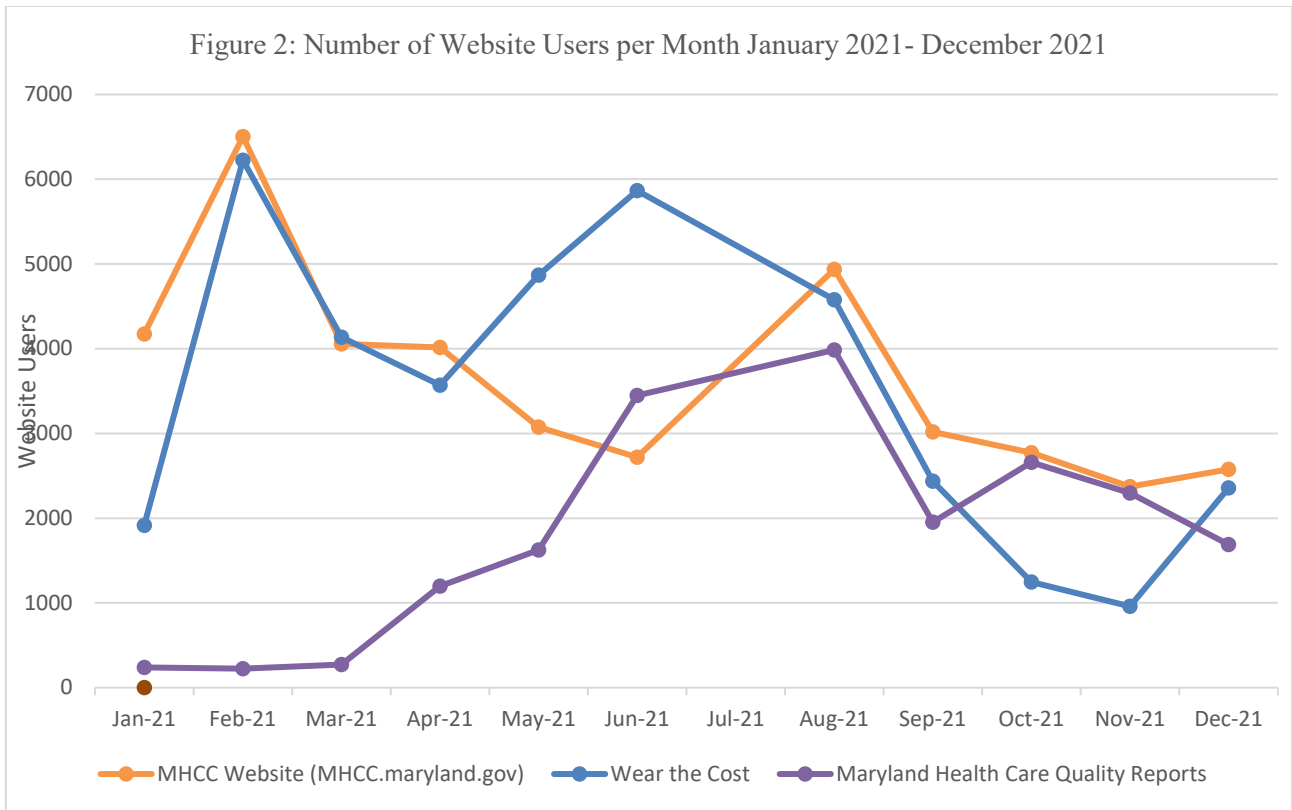


Figure 2 shows the number of website users over a 12-month period for each of the four websites maintained by Commission staff. Specific information about each website is below.

CENTER FOR ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Cost and Quality Analysis – Shankar Mesta

MCDB Data Submission Status, Payor Compliance, and Technical Support

All reporting payors have completed registration and encryption certification with Onpoint, the new MCDB data vendor. Onpoint notified the data submitters that the Claims Data Manager for the Maryland APCD, Onpoint Claim Data Manager (CDM), was available for them to start submitting Q4 2021 data.

CENTER FOR HEALTH CARE FACILITIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Acute Care Policy and Planning – Eileen Fleck

Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI)

Advanta Government Services was contracted by MHCC to analyze Maryland hospital data included in the American College of Cardiology’s National Cardiovascular Data Registry for “CathPCI.” The analysis, delivered in December 2021, covered data for calendar years 2015 through 2019 with the primary purpose of

evaluating the impact of PCI volume on inpatient mortality and acute kidney injuries. A secondary objective was the evaluation of the method used by MHCC for calculating confidence intervals for PCI-related mortality rates and acute kidney injury rates. MHCC's Cardiac Services Advisory Group will meet on January 18, 2022 to discuss the AGS analysis. The conclusions and recommendations of the work will be shared with the Commission following this meeting.

Follow-up on PCI Certificates of On-Going Performance

At the December 16, 2021 Commission Meeting, Eileen Fleck, Chief of Acute Care Policy and Planning, updated the Commission on compliance with conditions placed on Certificates of On-Going Performance issued to Maryland hospital PCI programs in 2020 and 2021.

Long-Term Care Policy and Planning – Linda Cole

Minimum Data Set (MDS) and the MHCC Long-Term Care Annual Survey

The Commission's contract with Hilltop Institute at University of Maryland-Baltimore County for analysis of MDS, a federal nursing home data base, and MHCC's survey data set for nursing homes expired earlier this year. An updated Request for Proposals (RFP) has been developed in order to identify and contract with a new vendor. A draft RFP was submitted to the Procurement Review Group within the Maryland Department of Health for review at its December 21, 2021 meeting.

Special Chronic Hospital Bed Occupancy Reports

MHCC staff developed two chronic hospital bed occupancy reports. The report titled "Use of Special Hospital Chronic Beds: Maryland, FY 2021" includes data on the number of licensed chronic hospital beds, patient days, discharges, average length of stay ("days"), and average annual bed occupancy for both the five private and two state-operated chronic hospitals. The second report, showing a three-year trend of average annual bed occupancy rates, is titled "Average Annual Chronic Hospital Occupancy Rates by Jurisdiction and Facility: Maryland, Fiscal Years 2019–2021." Both reports were published in the December 17, 2021 issue of the *Maryland Register*, and can be found on the Commission's website at the links:

Use of Special Hospital Chronic Beds: Maryland, FY 2021:

https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hcfs/hcfs_hospital/documents/acute_care/chcf_chronic_hospital_use_rates_fy21_20211217.pdf

Average Annual Chronic Hospital Occupancy Rates by Jurisdiction and Facility: Maryland, FY 2019-2021:

https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/hcfs/hcfs_hospital/documents/acute_care/chcf_chronic_hospital_occupancy_fy19_21_20211217.pdf

Certificate of Need – Wynnee Hawk

CON Letters of Intent

Avenues Recovery Center of Maryland (Calvert)

Establish a Track One Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Intermediate Care Facility with 20 beds to be located at 125 Fairground Road, in Prince Frederick.

First Use Approvals

Adventist Rehabilitation Hospital of Maryland, Inc. (Montgomery) – Docket No. 18-15-2428

Relocation of a 42-bed special rehabilitation hospital from the former campus of Adventist HealthCare (AHC) Washington Adventist Hospital at 7600 Carroll Avenue in Takoma Park to the campus of AHC White Oak Medical Center at 11890 Healing Way in Silver Spring

Final Cost: \$22,544,375

Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Salisbury (Wicomico) – Docket No. 18-22-2435

Addition of 10 beds to this special rehabilitation hospital.

Final Cost: \$5,717,015

Determinations of Coverage

- **Ambulatory Surgery Centers**

Advanced Surgical Center of Maryland, LLC - (Prince George's)

Changes to initial August 2021 determination to establish an ambulatory surgery center (ASC) with two sterile operating rooms and one non-sterile procedure room to be located at 4395 Nicole Drive in Lanham.

Clearway Surgery Center of Bethesda, LLC - (Montgomery)

Establish an ASC with one non-sterile procedure room to be located at 6410 Rockledge Drive, Suite 400 in Bethesda.

Monocacy Surgery Center, LLC – (Frederick)

Addition of plastic surgery (Guy Cappuccino, M.D.) at this ASC in Frederick.

- **Acquisition/Change of Ownership**

Metropolitan Medical Partners, LLC d/b/a Surgery Center of Chevy Chase (Montgomery)

Acquisition of the ownership interest of Surgical Center Development #4 LLC in this ambulatory surgical facility (34.55%) by USP Maryland, Inc.

Annapolis Endoscopy Center, LLC (Anne Arundel), Cascades Endoscopy Center, LLC (Howard), and Olney Endoscopy Center, LLC (Montgomery)

Change in ownership of these three ASCs. Post-transaction, the owner is identified as Cumbria Capital MSO, LLC.

Fifteen ASCs owned, in part, by Surgical Center Development #3 LLC or Surgical Center Development #4 LLC

The interest of these two entities in the following 15 ASCs was acquired by USP Maryland, Inc.

Advanced Surgical Center of Maryland, LLC (Prince George's)

Bel Air Surgery Center, LLC (Harford)

Bethesda Chevy Chase Surgical Center, LLC (Montgomery)

Harbor Heights Surgery Center, LLC (Montgomery)

Lutherville Surgery Center, LLC d/b/a SurgCenter of Towson, (Baltimore County)

Maryland Specialty Surgery Center, LLC (Anne Arundel)

Piney Orchard Surgery Center, LLC (Anne Arundel)

Potomac View Surgery Center, LLC (Prince George's)

Prince Frederick Surgery Center, LLC (Calvert)

Riva Road Surgery Center, LLC (Anne Arundel)

Rockville Surgical Suites, LLC (Montgomery)

SurgCenter of Greenbelt, LLC (Prince George's)

SurgCenter of Northern Baltimore, LLC – (Baltimore County)

SurgCenter of Silver Spring, LLC – (Montgomery)

Surgery Specialty Center of Mid-Atlantic, LLC (Montgomery)

North Oaks Partnership d/b/a Autumn Ridge at North Oaks and The Chestnut Partnership d/b/a Chestnut Green Health Center at Blakehurst (Baltimore County)

Acquisition of two comprehensive care facilities (or nursing homes). Autumn Ridge at North Oaks and Chestnut Green Health Center at Blakehurst, comprehensive care facilities (CCFs or nursing homes) are being acquired by LCS Holding Company, LLC through acquisition of the continuing care retirement communities (North Oaks and Blakehurst, respectively). The current owner of the CCFs, through intermediary entities, is Life Care Companies, LLC

Pleasant View Nursing Home (Carroll)

Acquisition of this CCF by CommuniCare-related entities, OHI Asset (MD) Mount Airy LLC, and Old National Leasing Co LLC. Currently the land and building are owned by Jackson, Jackson, & Tabler Limited

Partnership, while the bed rights are owned by Pleasant View Nursing Home of Mt. Airy, which also operates the facility.

HomeCentris Home Health, LLC – (Baltimore County)

Acquisition of HomeCentris Home Health, LLC (HomeCentris), a home health agency, by TMS-CJ Holdings, LLC. The HHA is owned by HomeCentris Healthcare, LLC. It serves Baltimore County.

Notices of Acquisition/Change of Ownership for Comprehensive Care Facilities (Nursing Homes)

Pleasant View Nursing Home (Carroll)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property – Jackson, Jackson & Tabler Limited Partnership

Owner of the Bed Rights and Operator – Pleasant View Nursing Home of Mt. Airy

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property and beds rights: OHI Asset (MD) Mount Airy, LLC

Operator of the facility: Old National Leasing Co, LLC CommuniCare

Purchase Price: \$8,000,00

Acknowledgement of this acquisition by MHHC has been communicated.

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 104 beds and is located at 4101 Baltimore National Pike in Mt Airy.

The facility was fined twice in 2020 by Medicare for failure to prevent spread of COVID-19 infections.

CCFs operated by entities associated with the persons acquiring Pleasant View Nursing Home have below average or poor ratings (composite scores of one or two stars out of five) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System, both in and outside of Maryland. In Maryland ten facilities out of seventeen operated by the acquiring entity are below two stars. In addition, three Maryland facilities operated by the acquiring entity have been flagged by CMS for abuse of patients. Although the acquiring entities have met the notification requirements for an acquisition, it is notable that the track record of the persons acquiring this CCF would probably fail to meet the requirements for docketing of a CON application to establish or expand a CCF under the State Health Plan Quality Rating standard [COMAR 10.24.20.05A(8)].

Ravenwood Nursing Care Center (Washington)

Transaction: Acquisition of the Assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property, bed rights, and operator of the facility: Diakon Lutheran Senior Living, Maryland, LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property and beds rights: 1183 Luther Drive, LLC

Operator of the facility: Creekside SNF Operating Company, LLC

Purchase Price: \$15,850,000

Acknowledgement pending.

Additional information: Pending. Additional information has been requested by MHCC.

Frederick Health and Rehabilitation Center (Frederick)

Transaction: Acquisition of operations

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: GPH Frederick LLC

Owner of bed rights and operator: North Place Operating Company

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: GPH Frederick LLC

Owner of bed rights: Frederick Health and Rehabilitation, LLC

Operator: Frederick Health and Rehabilitation, LLC

Acknowledgement pending.

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 120 beds and is located at 30 North Place, in Frederick. Real property is not changing hands. The entity that holds the lease and operates the CCF will change.

Commission staff notes that CCFs operated by persons associated with the new operating entity have below average or poor ratings (composite scores of one or two stars out of five) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System, outside of Maryland. In addition, one facility operated by the acquiring entity has been flagged by CMS as a Special Focus Facility. (The agency Special Focus Facility initiatives give heightened scrutiny to nursing homes that have a history of poor performance or repeated violations of state and federal health and safety rules). Although the acquiring entity has met the notification requirements for an acquisition, it is notable that the track record of the persons acquiring this CCF would probably fail to meet the requirements for docketing of a CON application to establish or expand a CCF under the State Health Plan Quality Rating standard [COMAR 10.24.20.05A(8)].

Montgomery Village Health Care Center – (Montgomery County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: 19301 Watkins Mill Road, LLC

Owner of bed rights and operator of the CCF: 19301 Watkins Mill Road Operating Company

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property and bed rights: Montgomery Realty, LLC

Operator: Montgomery Operator, LLC d/b/a Montgomery Village Care Center

Purchase price: \$38,000,000

Acknowledgement pending.

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 147 beds and is located at 19301 Watkins Mill Road in Gaithersburg.

Facilities operated by the entity associated with the persons acquiring Montgomery Village Health Care Center have below average or poor ratings (composite scores of one or two stars out of five) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System. Two are outside of Maryland, and one is in Maryland. Although the acquiring entity has met the notification requirements for an acquisition, it is notable that the track record of the persons acquiring this CCF would probably fail to meet the requirements for docketing of a CON application to establish or expand a CCF under the State Health Plan Quality Rating standard [COMAR 10.24.20.05A(8)].

The entity associated with the persons acquiring Montgomery Village Health Care Center owns five nursing homes in New Jersey. All have average or better ratings: Five-Star (3); Four-Star (1); and Three-Star (1). The entity owns four centers in Michigan and one in Maryland. In Michigan, half have average or better ratings. The other two have a Two-Star rating and a One-Star rating. The Maryland facility has a below average, Two-Star rating.

CENTER FOR HEALTH INFORMATION & INNOVATIVE CARE DELIVERY

Health Information Technology Division – Nikki Majewski, Division Chief

Telehealth Study

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) is pretesting the provider survey with select provider types; pretesting will occur through January. Staff completed drafting the NORC Data Use Agreement (“agreement”) for commercial and Medicaid claims from the All-Payer Claims Data Base. The Maryland Department of Health (MDH) is reviewing the agreement to ensure that it includes appropriate data access controls and security safeguards. In addition, a consumer recruitment focus group flyer was developed. Recommendations on coverage and reimbursement for audio-video and audio-only are due to the Senate Finance Committee and House Health and Government Operations Committee by December 1, 2022.

Electronic Prescribing - Controlled Dangerous Substances

Several options were provided to MDH for defining a low volume of prescriptions for controlled dangerous substances (CDS), as required by Senate Bill 166 and House Bill 512, *Drugs and Devices – Electronic Prescriptions – Controlled Dangerous Substances* (Chapters 229 and 230, 2020 Laws of Maryland). The law requires MDH to adopt regulations for issuance of a low volume waiver in collaboration with the Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC). A one-year waiver application was posted on MDH’s website; CDS prescribers may seek a waiver for economic hardship, technology limitations, or any other exceptional circumstances.

Patient Generated Health Data

A consumer flyer was developed overviewing privacy and security considerations when using wearable technology (e.g., smartwatches) to track, analyze, and transmit personal health-related data. Development of a provider flyer is progressing; the flyer will explain risks associated with patient generated health data (PGHD) and best practices for implementing the use of PGHD into care delivery.

Health Equity

Planning is underway to use Area Deprivation Index (ADI) data to inform opportunities to expand health information technology (health IT) initiatives. Activities will target locations in the State with higher ADI scores. ADI is a publicly available composite score constructed from socioeconomic components (e.g., income, poverty, education) based on the census block group.

Hospital Assessment

Drafting of survey questions continues for the 2022 *Hospital Health Information Technology Assessment*. The survey will assess perceived value of health IT in helping to improve care delivery, health equity, and patient satisfaction. Several questions will be added to the survey to assess hospital planning and use of PGHD, collection of social determinants of health data, and activities for mitigating cyber risk. Pretesting the survey will take place in January.

Nursing Home Assessment

Development of an insights brief (“brief”) is proceeding that highlights key findings from interviews with select nursing homes on the value of health IT in supporting care transitions. Select data on health IT obtained through MHCC’s 2021 *Annual Long Term Care Survey* (“survey”) and national data will be included in the brief. Research continues to identify key health IT questions to include in the 2022 survey.

Cybersecurity Webinar

Presenters have been identified and a promotional flyer developed for a February ambulatory practices cybersecurity webinar. The webinar will highlight cybercrime risks and best practices, and key considerations when assessing cyber-liability insurance. An application for continuing medical education credits was submitted to MedChi, the Maryland State Medical Society (MedChi); a decision is anticipated by the end of January.

Electronic Data Interchange

Development of the 2022 Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) Progress Report is underway. COMAR 10.25.09, *Requirements for Payers to Designate Electronic Health Networks*, requires payers with a premium volume of \$1 million or more to submit census-related data on administrative health care transactions annually by June 30th. The EDI Progress Reports will be distributed to about 40 payers in March.

Innovative Care Delivery Division – Melanie Cavaliere, Division Chief

Advanced Care Delivery

Maryland Primary Care Program Advisory Council

The Maryland Primary Care Program (MDPCP) Program Management Office (PMO) submitted a Track 3 proposal to the Center for Medicare & Medicaid Innovation (CMMI). The MDPCP is a key initiative under the Total Cost of Care Model that provides funding and support for the delivery of advanced primary care. The PMO submitted a Track 3 framework to CMMI in the winter of 2021; CMMI requested increased alignment with Primary Care First. Model alignment continued throughout the year and included staff guidance and input from the Advisory Council.

Practice Transformation Grant Activities

Practices that applied to participate in the *Advancing Practice Transformation in Ambulatory Practices* program (approximately 75 practices) were requested to complete the Transforming Clinical Practice Initiative Readiness Assessment (“assessment”). The assessment was developed by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to identify where practices are on the practice transformation continuum. The grantee, MedChi Care Transformation Organization, in consultation with staff will select participating practices.

Practice Transformation Network

Planning activities are advancing for a practice roundtable (“roundtable”) event to discuss the CMS Practice Transformation Network (PTN) initiative (2016–2019) impact on care delivery and participation in value-based care (VBC) delivery models. Nearly 75 percent of primary care practices that participated in the PTN are currently in a VBC delivery model. Findings will be used to inform practice transformation initiatives. The roundtable is targeted to occur in January.

Health Equity Study

Practice recruitment activities are advancing for a telehealth health equity study in collaboration with the Maryland Center for Health Equity at the University of Maryland, School of Public Health. The purpose of the study is to engage primary care providers in select communities to share their experience using telehealth to treat Black and Hispanic populations during the COVID-19 public health emergency.

Learning Networks

Staff convened an ambulatory provider webinar, in collaboration with the Health Services Cost Review Commission and MedChi. This was the second webinar in a three-part Innovative Care Symposium series (“series”). The webinar focused on strategies for team-based care. Planning is progressing for the final webinar in January, which will focus on VBC delivery models.

Health Information Exchange Division – Alana Sutherland, Division Chief

Privacy and Security Regulations

The Health Information Exchange (HIE) Policy Board (“workgroup”) continued deliberations on draft modifications to COMAR 10.25.18, *Health Information Exchanges: Privacy and Security of Protected Health*

Information, (“regulations”) proposed by Post & Schell, P.C (“contractor”). Sections .06 through .12 of the regulations are under review by the workgroup. The workgroup is scheduled to reconvene in January.

Consumer Consent Management

Testing is progressing on a CRISP consumer consent management utility (CMU) interface developed with input from three HIEs operating in Maryland. Findings will be used to enhance the interface to support a centralized method for consumers to opt-out and back into HIE. Testing is anticipated to conclude in January. Development of the CMU is required under Chapter 798 (House Bill 1375) *Health Information Exchanges – Electronic Health Information – Sharing and Disclosure* of the 2021 Laws of Maryland.

HIE Roundtable Symposium

Draft discussion topics for a virtual three-part HIE roundtable (roundtable) event were reviewed with select national state health IT leaders. The roundtables are being developed in collaboration with Civitas Networks for Health, a national HIE association. The first roundtable that is scheduled in January will focus on leading HIE policy issues and opportunities to advance HIE.

CENTER FOR QUALITY MEASUREMENT AND REPORTING

The Maryland Quality Reporting (MQR) website

MQR Website Updates

Staff continue to work with Advanta Government Services (AGS), the website contractor, to update the newly redesigned website. Routine updates and maintenance are ongoing. A major update occurred in December and included refreshed data for hospitals, nursing homes, health plans, and home health agencies. The Long-Term Care Planning Toolkit is now live and includes guides, checklists, and other resources to assist consumers with long term care planning. The private side of the website, primarily used as a communication and data submission tool for providers, was also updated to include relevant information and resources regarding the upcoming Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) data collection initiative.

MQR Website Traffic

Staff monitors traffic to the consumer site using Google Analytics software. Website traffic was lower in December (2,296 users) compared to the previous month (1,688 users). This follows historical trends, as website traffic tends to decrease around the holidays. The most frequently viewed topics on the MQR site include assisted living, nursing homes, and hospital price transparency. Traffic to the site is presented graphically under the Executive Direction section of this update.

MQR Website Promotion

Promotion of the MQR website is a Center priority. There were approximately 70 social media posts in December. Topics included National Influenza Vaccination Week, National Handwashing Awareness Week, and general promotional posts for the MQR website. These topics generally 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 MQR website. Staff also promote the MQR website using additional social media platforms such as LinkedIn and NextDoor.

Staff also continue to work with Maryland Public Television (MPT) to develop promotional options for increasing public awareness of the MQR website. A 30-second video advertisement has been finalized and will be used for the upcoming promotional campaign.

Hospital Quality Initiatives – Courtney Carta

HCAHPS Data Collection

Patient satisfaction measures across Maryland hospitals have remained historically lower than national averages. Starting in January 2022, MHCC will require acute care hospitals to begin submitting detailed Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) data. This will allow for a more thorough analysis of potential differences in patient satisfaction across race, ethnicity, and service lines (e.g., maternity, surgical, medical). The initial round of data collection is underway.

Long Term Care and Health Plan Quality Initiatives—Stacy Howes

Long Term Care Planning Guide

HB599 was passed in Spring 2021, and it required MHCC to create a Long-Term Care Planning Guide for Maryland residents. The Quality Reporting website has been updated with a new section entitled Long Term Care Planning Toolkit. It includes multiple planning guides and checklists for long term care settings, advance directives information, and a financial calculator. The Long-Term Care Planning Guide will be completed in brochure and PDF formats and posted as part of the Toolkit in January. The Guide will be available in English and in Spanish.

Assisted Living and Nursing Home Utilization Data

Using data collected by the Health Planning and Development Center (for assisted living facilities) and data provided directly by nursing homes (Minimum Data Set), utilization tables were constructed to understand the race, gender, and age distribution of residents throughout the state. Tables were posted on the provider side of the Quality Reporting site and the main MHCC site.

Nursing Home Family Experience of Care Survey

Data collection is ongoing and should be complete in January.

Nursing Home and Assisted Living Influenza Vaccination Survey

No new updates. Data collection is ongoing for nursing homes and assisted living facilities.

Hospice and Home Health Influenza Vaccination Survey

No new updates. Data collection is ongoing for hospice and home health agencies.

Health Plan Quality Initiative

The new Request for Proposals is complete and should be posted in January.

Outpatient Quality Initiative—Mariama Gondo

Outpatient Quality Initiative

No new updates.

Health Disparities Initiative

In response to House Bill 309/Senate Bill 565, the Commission worked in collaboration with the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (OMHHD) to submit a report to the legislature in December 2021. Staff drafted, tested, and administered a questionnaire to collect basic descriptive information on MDH programs and activities that serve vulnerable populations. The questionnaire will be used to develop an inventory of programs and services for vulnerable populations. Staff submitted the draft report for senior leadership review last month. Staff has also been invited to share findings of the report with the new Health Equity Commission on January 11th. Staff received information on over 400 programs across the state. Most programs serve vulnerable populations directly, while about 5% serve all Marylanders regardless of demographic characteristics. Staff continues to collaborate with the OMHHD on this project.