

MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

April 2022

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Government Relations and Special Project – Tracey DeShields

State Policy Update

On April 11, 2022, the Maryland General Assembly adjourned the 2022 legislative session. There were 836 bills passed by both chambers and 243 bills were enacted. Governor Hogan vetoed 11 bills and the legislature overrode all the bills vetoed by the Governor before the General Assembly adjourned.

The Maryland Health Care Commission (MHCC) tracked a number of priority bills during the legislative session. Two bills were of primary importance to MHCC: *SB 253/HB 353 – Maryland Health Care Commission – User Fee Assessments* and *HB 213 – MHCC Health Information Exchange – Definition*. Both bills passed in the House and Senate. During the interim, MHCC will work on a number of issues related to the two MHCC bills passed this session as well as twelve (12) additional bills.

MHCC-related news coverage: selected articles and commentary

Legislation

Archie, A. “Maryland lawmakers expand who can perform abortions after overriding governor’s veto.” April 11, 2022. NPR. Available from: <https://www.npr.org/2022/04/11/1091967163/abortion-rights-health-insurance-larry-hogan-maryland-veto-fetus>

Health Facilities

The Office of Governor Larry Hogan. “Maryland cancer moonshot: Governor Hogan breaks ground on first-ever comprehensive cancer center in Prince George’s County.” April 7, 2022. Available from:

<https://governor.maryland.gov/2022/04/07/maryland-cancer-moonshot-governor-hogan-breaks-ground-on-first-ever-comprehensive-cancer-center-in-prince-georges-county/>

MedStar Health. “MedStar Southern Maryland Hospital Center welcomes new plastic and reconstructive surgeon.” Southern Maryland Chronicle. April 7, 2022. Available from:

<https://southernmarylandchronicle.com/2022/04/07/medstar-southern-maryland-hospital-center-welcomes-new-plastic-and-reconstructive-surgeon/>

Bean, M. “Maryland health system names chief medical officer.” Becker’s Hospital Review. April 12, 2022. Available from: <https://www.beckershospitalreview.com/hospital-executive-moves/maryland-health-system-names-chief-medical-officer.html>

Health Disparities and Health Equity

MedStar Health. “Health equity champion Karey Sutton, PhD, to join MedStar Health as head of health equity research.” State of Reform. April 8, 2022. Available from:

<https://stateofreform.com/featured/2022/04/health-equity-champion-karey-sutton-phd-to-join-medstar-health-as-head-of-health-equity-research/>

Ollove, M. “With implicit bias hurting patients, some states including Maryland, train doctors.” Maryland Matters. April 25, 2022. Available from: <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2022/04/25/with-implicit-bias-hurting-patients-some-states-including-maryland-train-doctors/>

Dickstein, R. “How healthy is Maryland compared to other parts of the country.” ABC 2 News. April 27, 2022. Available from: <https://www.wmar2news.com/news/local-news/how-healthy-is-maryland-compared-to-other-parts-of-the-country>

Behavioral Health

CBS Baltimore Staff. “Maryland has a new database to find mental health and substance abuse service.” April 7, 2022. CBS Baltimore. Available from: <https://baltimore.cbslocal.com/2022/04/07/maryland-has-a-new-database-to-find-mental-health-substance-abuse-services/>

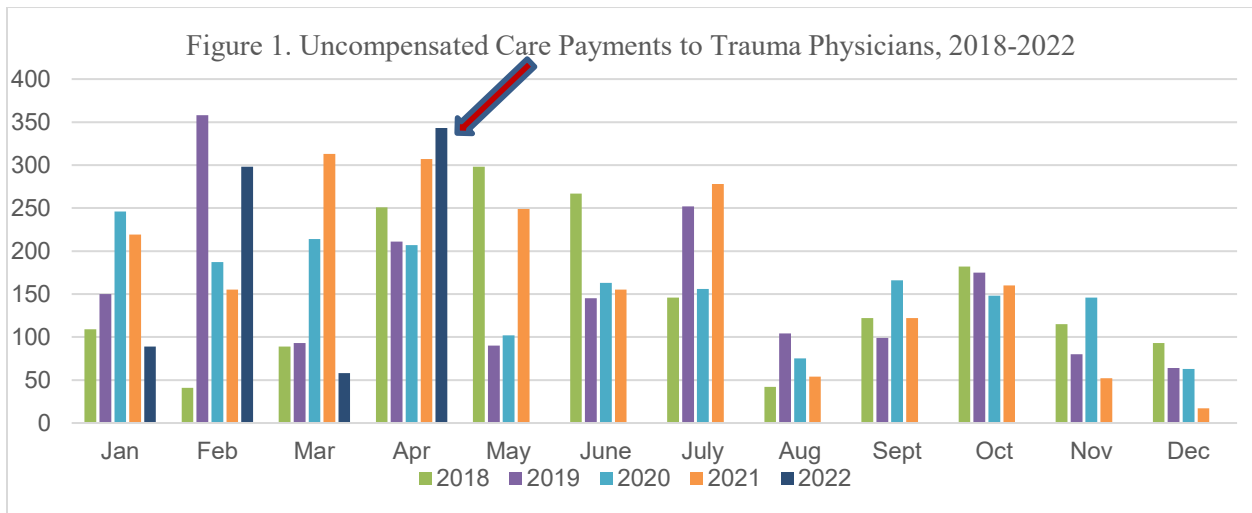
Cecil County Health Department. “State enhances search options for mental health and substance use services.” April 8, 2022. Available from: <https://cecilcountyhealth.org/state-enhances-search-options-for-mental-health-and-substance-use-services/>

Cohn, M. “Mental health and addiction providers face financial and staffing pressures: ‘Like a game of whack-a-mole’.” Medical Xpress. April 18, 2022. Available from: <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2022-04-mental-health-addiction-financial-staffing.html>

Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund

Uncompensated Care Processing

Trustmark Health Benefits, the third-party administrator (TPA) for the Trauma Fund, processed \$342,756.11 uncompensated care claims through April 2022.



MHCC Website: The MHCC website (<https://MHCC.maryland.gov>) had 2,724 users in the month of April 2022.

Wear The Cost

In April 2022, 628 users visited the site.

Maryland Quality Reporting

The Maryland Quality Reporting had 6,868 users, 7,947 sessions and 9,957 page views in April. The average session duration was 41 seconds. Website activity remained steady this month. But the bounce rate decreased 4.4%, indicating users are clicking on more than one page before exiting the site.

The site receives the most website referrals from MHCC’s homepage (30.9%). However, this month the website also had 19.7% of its referrals from Google advertisements associated with the Maryland Public Television campaign. Maryland 211 was next accounting for 2.2% of website traffic referrals.

Referrals from social media sites remain consistent. Facebook continues to be the primary social media referral source, accounting for 98.9% of all social referrals. Instagram Stories, Classmates, Dailymotion, and tiny URL are all new social referral sources and are directly related to the MPT campaign.

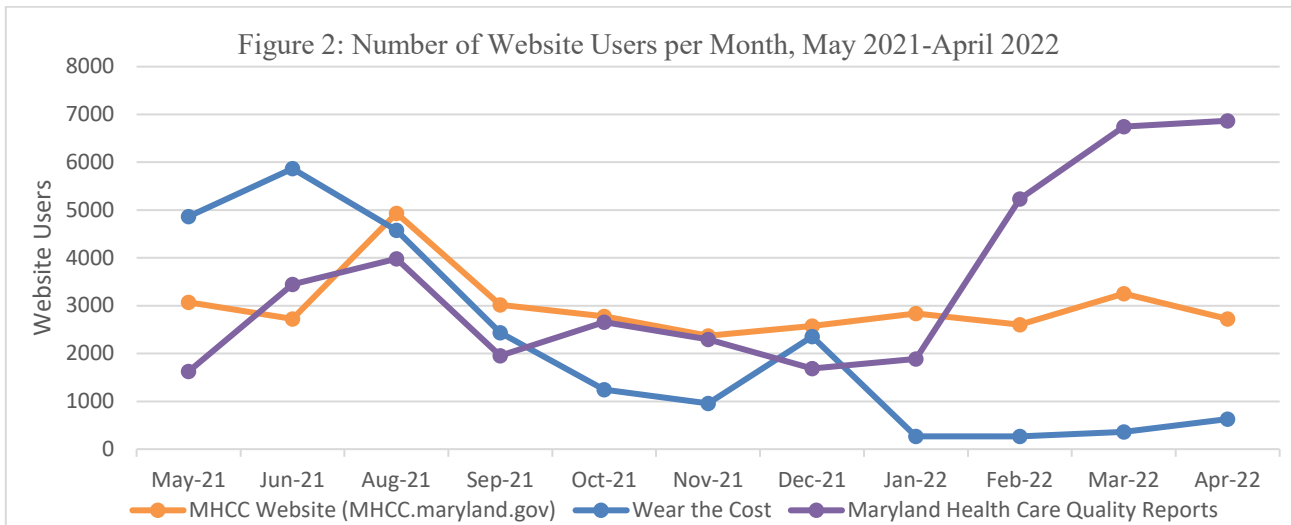


Figure 2 shows the number of website users over a 12-month period for each of the four websites maintained by Commission staff. Specific information about each website is below.

CENTER FOR ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Cost and Quality Analysis – Shankar Mesta

No update reported this month.

APCD Public Reporting and Data Release – Mahlet ‘Mahi’ Nigatu

No update reported this month.

Special Projects – Janet Ennis

Requests for Mandate Analysis

Staff received a request from the Senate Finance and the House Health and Government Operations Committees to evaluate three proposed mandates that failed during this year’s legislative session. Consistent with Insurance Article §15-1501, it is their practice to have MHCC assess the social, medical, and financial impacts of a proposed mandated health insurance service or coverage before approving legislation to adopt the new mandate. The requested evaluations relate to the following failed bills:

- (1) SB 634 - requiring coverage of home test kits for sexually transmitted diseases
- (2) HB 142 - revising the current coverage of in vitro fertilization; and
- (3) SB 725/HB 974 - Health Insurance - Physical Therapy - Copayments, Coinsurance, and Deductibles

MHCC staff is drafting RFPs under the State’s small procurement regulations for actuarial consulting services to conduct each analysis, also allowed under Insurance Article §15-1501, to carry out the statutory provisions. The first RFP for an actuarial consultant to evaluate SB 634, requiring coverage of home test kits for sexually transmitted diseases, is expected to be released later this month. Staff will draft the remaining two RFPs by early next month. Staff anticipates that each actuarial analysis will be complete by mid-Fall of

2022 and presented to the Commission for approval. Each actuarial report is due to the Legislature by the end of the year.

CENTER FOR HEALTH CARE FACILITIES PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Acute Care Policy and Planning – Eileen Fleck

Certificates of Conformance

On March 11, 2022, a new schedule for applications for Certificates of Conformance was published in the *Maryland Register*. A Certificate of Conformance is required to establish elective or emergency percutaneous coronary intervention (PCI) services program at a hospital. The deadline for filing a letter of intent is August 26, 2022, and the deadline for filing an application is October 7, 2022.

On April 21, 2022, the Commission authorized the provision of elective PCI at MedStar Franklin Square Hospital (Baltimore County) [Docket No. 21-03-CC033].

Long Term Care Policy and Planning – Linda Cole

Minimum Data Set (MDS) and Long-Term Care (LTC) Survey

The Commission has developed an updated Request for Proposals for the provision of data management and analysis services related to MDS, a federal patient-level data set for nursing homes, and MHCC's annual LTC survey data set. The Department of General Services has completed its review. The RFP will be posted and a Pre-Proposal meeting will be scheduled during May.

Hospice Data

The FY 2021 Maryland Hospice Survey is underway with Part I surveys due by May 16, 2022.

Long Term Care Facility and Program Data

Staff is completing final review and edits of the FY 2021 survey data set in preparation for development of occupancy and payer source reports.

Certificate of Need – Wynnee Hawk

CONs Denied

Hope Health Systems (Baltimore County) – Docket No. 20-03-2444

Establish a 16-bed psychiatric hospital for children and adolescents at 1726 Whitehead Road in Woodlawn (Baltimore County).

Estimated Cost: \$1,500,000

Emergency CONs – Extension of Validity

Confirmation of Extension of Emergency Certificates of Need – One-Year Extension of the Validity of Hospital Emergency Certificates of Need Scheduled to Expire April 30, 2022

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

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

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

UM Laurel Regional Hospital – (Prince George's County) – Docket No. EM-H20-16-004

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

Peninsula Regional Medical Center – (Wicomico County) – Docket No. EM-H20-22-007
AHC White Oak Medical Center – (Montgomery County) – Docket No. EM-H20-15-009
Holy Cross Hospital of Silver Spring – (Montgomery County) – Docket No. EM-H20-15-018
Anne Arundel Medical Center – (Anne Arundel County) – Docket No. EM-H20-02-26
Anne Arundel Medical Center – (Anne Arundel County) – Docket No. EM-H20-02-27
Baltimore Convention Center – (Baltimore City) – Docket No. EM-H20-24-028 –
AHC Fort Washington Medical Center – (Prince George’s County) – Docket No. EM-H20-16-029
Carroll Hospital – (Carroll County) – Docket No. EM-H20-06-031 –
UM Harford Memorial Hospital- (Harford County) – Docket No. EM-H20-12-033
UM Upper Chesapeake Medical Center – (Harford County) – Docket No. EM-H20-12-034
AHC Washington Adventist Hospital – (Montgomery County) – Docket No. EM-H20-15-036
Sinai Hospital of Baltimore – (Baltimore City) – Docket No. EM-H20-24-37
University of Maryland Medical Center – (Baltimore City) – Docket No. EM-H20-24-038
UM Laurel Regional Hospital – (Prince George’s County) – Docket No. EM-H20-16-039
AHC Washington Adventist Hospital – (Montgomery County) – Docket No. EM-H20-15-041
Any Maryland Acute General Hospital – Docket No. EM-H20-FH

Changes to Approved CONs

St. Joseph Medical Center – (Baltimore County) – Docket No. 18-03-2415

The original project, as approved, included the conversion of the operating room (OR) designated by SJMC as OR 11 into support space at the end of Phase 5, the final phase of project implementation. The approved change retains OR 11 as a general purpose OR.

Estimated Cost: \$500,000

CON Letters of Intent

Encompass Health – (Prince George’s County)

Add 10 acute rehabilitation beds (acquired) to the approved 60-bed special rehabilitation hospital under construction in Bowie.

SurgCenter at National Harbor, LLC d/b/a Harborside Surgery Center - (Prince George’s County)

Establish a freestanding ambulatory surgical facility (FASF) with three operating rooms at 251 National Harbor Boulevard, Suite 200, in Oxon Hill.

Board of Child Care – (Baltimore County)

Establish a four-bed residential treatment center for adolescents at 3300 Gaither Road, in Baltimore (Baltimore County).

Pre-Application Conferences

Encompass Health – (Prince George’s County)

April 13, 2022

SurgCenter at National Harbor, LLC d/b/a Harborside Surgery Center - (Prince George’s County)

April 13, 2022

CON Applications Filed

Elizabeth Cooney Home Care, Inc. – (Lower Eastern Shore) - Matter No., 22-R4-2453

Establish a home health agency authorized to serve Dorchester, Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties.

Clarkview Surgery Center – (Baltimore County) – Matter No. 22-03-2454

Establish a FASF with three operating rooms at 1427 Clarkview Road, Suite 300, in Baltimore (Baltimore County).

Requests for Changes in Approved CONs or Approved Exemptions from CON Review Filed

Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospital of Southern Maryland – (Prince George’s County) – Docket No. 18-16-2423

Encompass seeks a second increase in its approved cost for establishment of a special rehabilitation hospital. Estimated Cost Increase: \$6,301,380, yielding a total project cost of \$50,094,586.

University of Maryland Laurel Medical Center – (Prince George’s County) – Docket No. 18-16-EX002

This freestanding medical center seeks changes in the design of the FMF, expanding through the addition of 7,888 square feet, to be used for outpatient services and shell space.

Estimated Cost Increase: \$7,600,000, yielding a total project cost of \$60,825,855.

Request for Exemption from CON Review Filed

CommuniCare Health Services – (Prince George’s County) - D.N. 22-16-EX014

Add 37 comprehensive care facility (CCF) beds to Forestville Healthcare Center in Forestville. The expansion is proposed in conjunction with the permanent delicensure of 37 CCF beds at Clinton HealthCare Center in Clinton.

Estimated Cost: \$31,143,408

Determinations of Coverage

• **Ambulatory Surgery Centers**

Clearway Surgery Center of Elkton, LLC – (Cecil County)

Establish an ambulatory surgery center (ASC-P) with two non-sterile procedure rooms at 101 Chesapeake Boulevard, Suite C-2, in Elkton.

Clearway Surgery Center of Largo, LLC – (Prince George’s County)

Establish an ASC-P with two non-sterile procedure rooms at 950 Harry S Truman Drive, North Suite 130, in Largo.

Ambulatory Surgery Center for Pelvic Neuro Science – (Baltimore County)

Renovations to an ASC adding a corridor and two bays for pre/post-operative space at the facility located at 1447 York Road, Suite 406, in Lutherville.

Washington Vascular Specialists of Baltimore, LLC – (Baltimore City)

Establish an ASC-P with three non-sterile procedure rooms at 351 West Camden Street, Suite 201, in Baltimore City.

• **Acquisition/Change of Ownership**

Acquisition of an ownership interest in six ASCs

The equity interest of Chesapeake Eye Care Intermediary I, LLC (a wholly owned subsidiary of Chesapeake Eye Care Holdco, LLC, and a parent entity of the subject ASC) of six ASCs by Vision Innovation Partners Borrower, LLC. The ASCs are:

Chesapeake Eye Surgery Center, LLC – (Anne Arundel County)

Bergman Eye Surgery Center d/b/a Physicians Surgery Center – (Washington County)

Baltimore Eye Surgical Center – (Baltimore County)

Carroll County Eye Surgery Center – (Carroll County)
Maryland Eye Surgery Center d/b/a The Surgery Center – (Calvert County)
Columbia Surgical Institute – (Howard County)

Heritage Harbor Health & Rehabilitation – (Anne Arundel County)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 2700 South Haven Road Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV Annapolis LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

Patuxent River Health & Rehabilitation – (Prince George’s County)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 14200 Laurel Park Drive Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV Laurel LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

Summit Park Health & Rehabilitation – (Baltimore County)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 1502 Frederick Road Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV Catonsville LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

Overlea Health & Rehabilitation – (Baltimore City)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 6116 Belair Road Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV Baltimore LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

Glen Burnie Health & Rehabilitation – (Anne Arundel County)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 7355 Furnace Branch East Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV Glen Burnie LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

Arcola Health & Rehabilitation – (Montgomery County)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 901 Arcola Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV Silver Spring LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

North Arundel Health & Rehabilitation – (Anne Arundel County)

Acquisition of the operations of this CCF by 313 Hospital Drive Opco LLC. Ownership of the land, building, bed rights, and related assets by SMV North Arundel LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$0

Bethesda Health & Rehabilitation – (Montgomery County)

Acquisition of the operations and bed rights of this CCF by Bethesda SNF Operator, LLC. Ownership of the real property and improvements by SMV Bethesda, LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$2,000,000

Forest Hill Health & Rehabilitation – (Harford County)

Acquisition of the operations and bed rights of this CCF by Forest Hill SNF Operator, LLC. Ownership of the real property and improvements by SMV Forest Hill, LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$2,125,000

Bel Air Health & Rehabilitation – (Harford County)

Acquisition of the operations and bed rights of this CCF by Bel Air SNF Operator, LLC. Ownership of the real property and improvements by SMV Bel Air, LLC will not change.
Purchase Price: \$2,125,000

Capital Projects

Sinai Hospital of Baltimore – (Baltimore City)

Expansion and renovation of the Emergency Department (ED).

Estimated Project Cost: \$50,000,000

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

Sacred Heart Home – (Prince George’s County)

Temporary delicensure of 58 CCF beds.

- **Other**

The Lutheran Village at Miller’s Grant, Inc. – (Howard County)

Addition of 12 CCF beds under the exclusion from CON for continuing care retirement communities (CCRCs).

Twelve excluded beds were previously acknowledged by MHCC for this CCRC.

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

Carriage Hill Bethesda (Comprehensive Care Facility) - (Montgomery County)

Transaction: Change of operator through lease

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Carriage Hill Bethesda, LLC

Owner of bed rights: Carriage Hill Bethesda, LLC

Operator: Carriage Hill Bethesda, Inc.

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: Carriage Hill Bethesda, LLC

Owner of bed rights: Carriage Hill Bethesda, LLC

Operator: Carriage Hill Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$0

Additional information: The 108-bed facility is located at 5215 West Cedar Lane, in Bethesda. The facility is currently rated five stars which is above average (composite scores of above three stars out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System utilizing data from the most recent quarterly refresh on February 23, 2022. The facility does not have a Memorandum of Understanding with Medicaid. This acquisition is anticipated to close on June 1, 2022.

Commission staff notes that the only other facility operated by the entity associated with the person who will operate Carriage Hill Bethesda is Falls Church Opco LLC, d/b/a Vierra Falls Church, which is located at 2100 Powhatan Street in Falls Church, Virginia. Falls Church Opco LLC is owned by Derek Vucich who purchased the facility in August of 2021. The facility was previously operated as Powhatan Nursing Home. The facility is licensed by the Virginia Department of Health as a nursing home with the capacity for 160 beds and Mr. Vucich is in the process of applying for both Medicare and Medicaid certification. The facility currently does not report information on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website.

Bethesda Health and Rehabilitation (Montgomery County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: SMV Bethesda LLC

Owner of bed rights: SSC Bethesda Operating Company LLC

Operator: SSC Bethesda Operating Company LLC
POST-TRANSACTION
Owner of the real property: SMV Bethesda LLC
Owner of bed rights: Bethesda SNF Operator LLC
Operator: Bethesda SNF Operator LLC
Purchase price: \$2,000,000

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 195 beds and is located at 5721 Grosvenor Lane, in Bethesda. The facility is currently rated three stars which is average (composite scores of three stars out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System utilizing data from the most recent quarterly refresh on March 30, 2022. The facility has no Memorandum of Understanding with Medicaid.

Commission staff notes that the CCFs affiliated with the persons acquiring operation of the facility (Chaim Frankel and Menashe Frankel) have an average overall rating of 3.75 stars which is better than average (composite scores of three stars or above out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System. The acquiring entity is affiliated with four other CCFs in Maryland under the name Sterling Care.

Bel Air Health and Rehabilitation (Harford County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets
CURRENT
Owner of the real property: SMV Bel Air LLC
Owner of bed rights: SSC Belair Operating Company LLC
Operator: SSC Bel Air Operating Company LLC
POST-TRANSACTION
Owner of the real property: SMV Bel Air LLC
Owner of bed rights: Bel Air SNF Operator LLC
Operator: Bel Air SNF Operator LLC
Purchase price: \$2,125,000

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 155 beds and is located at 410 East McPhail Road, in Bel Air. The facility is currently rated one star which is below average (composite scores of less than three stars out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System utilizing data from the most recent quarterly refresh on March 30, 2022. The facility has no Memorandum of Understanding with Medicaid.

Commission staff notes that the CCFs affiliated with the persons acquiring operation of the facility (Chaim Frankel and Menashe Frankel) have an average overall rating of 3.75 stars which is better than average (composite scores of three stars or above out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System. The acquiring entity is affiliated with four other CCFs in Maryland under the name Sterling Care.

Forest Hill Health and Rehabilitation (Harford County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets
CURRENT
Owner of the real property: SMV Forest Hill LLC
Owner of bed rights: SSC Forest Hill Operating Company LLC
Operator: SSC Forest Hill Operating Company LLC
POST-TRANSACTION
Owner of the real property: SMV Forest Hill LLC
Owner of bed rights: Forest Hill SNF Operator LLC
Operator: Forest Hill SNF Operator LLC
Purchase price: \$2,125,000

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 156 beds and is located at 109 Forest Valley Drive in Forest Hill. The facility is currently rated three stars which is average (composite scores of three stars out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System utilizing data from the most recent quarterly refresh on March 30, 2022. The facility is in compliance with its Memorandum of Understanding with Medicaid.

Commission staff notes that the CCFs affiliated with the persons acquiring operation of the facility (Chaim Frankel and Menashe Frankel) have an average overall rating of 3.75 stars which is better than average (composite scores of three stars or above out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System. The acquiring entity is affiliated with four other CCFs in Maryland under the name Sterling Care.

St. Joseph's Nursing Home (Baltimore County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, Inc.

Owner of bed rights: Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, Inc.

Operator: Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, Inc.

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: St. Joseph's Nursing Home, Inc.

Owner of bed rights: St. Joseph's Nursing Home, Inc.

Operator: St. Joseph's Nursing Home, Inc.

Purchase price: \$1.00

Additional information: The CCF has a bed capacity of 44 beds and is located at 1222 Tugwell Drive in Catonsville. The facility is currently rated five stars which is above average (composite scores of three stars or higher out of five stars) on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System utilizing data from the most recent quarterly refresh on April 27, 2022.

Commission staff notes that St. Joseph's Nursing Home is not in compliance with its Memorandum of Understanding with Medicaid (MOU). Although the facility has met the notification requirements for an acquisition, its current MOU performance falls below the required percentage and would probably fail to meet the requirements under the State Health Plan General Standards Medical Assistance Participation [COMAR 10.24.20.05A(2)].

CENTER FOR HEALTH INFORMATION & INNOVATIVE CARE DELIVERY

Health Information Technology Division – Nikki Majewski, Division Chief

Telehealth Study

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) completed 80 telehealth consumer interviews with English and Spanish speaking consumers. The provider telehealth survey closed; analysis of over 900 responses is underway. Billing codes for the claims analysis was provided by private payers. A final report with recommendations on telehealth coverage and payment is due by December 1, 2022 to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and Government Operations Committee.

Patient Generated Health Data

Several stakeholders were invited to comment on a draft Request for Information (RFI) on innovative use cases that integrate patient generated health data (PGHD), such as wearables, with an electronic health record (EHR) system. The RFI will be used to inform strategies aimed at integrating PGHD data into provider workflows for population health, chronic disease management, and overall patient health and wellness.

Hospital Assessment

An analysis of data collected via the *2022 Hospital Health Information Technology Survey* (survey) is underway. All acute care hospitals responded to the survey, which assesses use of EHRs, health information exchange (HIE), telehealth, social determinants of health (SDOH) technology, electronic advance directives, and cybersecurity controls. Findings help identify emerging health IT trends and related policy matters that inform diffusion strategies across the State.

Federally Qualified Health Centers Environmental Scan

A *Health Information Technology Questionnaire* (questionnaire) was distributed to Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) organizations. The questionnaire inquires about use of health IT across FQHC delivery sites. Findings will inform education and awareness initiatives.

Webinars

Planning is underway for a behavioral health provider webinar that will focus on best practices regarding access to and delivery of audio-visual and audio-only services to underserved communities. Planning continues for a three-part cybersecurity series (series). The series will feature presentations from cybersecurity professionals and highlight key considerations for small practices to prevent, detect, and mitigate cyber threats and attacks.

Electronic Data Interchange

Data collection of payers 2022 *Electronic Data Interchange Progress Report* (report) is progressing. Payers with a premium volume of \$1 million or more annually are required by COMAR 10.25.09, *Requirements for Payers to Designate Electronic Health Networks*, to report census data on administrative health care transactions by June 30th. Approximately 35 payers are required to submit a report.

Preauthorization Regulations

Draft amendments to COMAR 10.25.17, *Benchmarks for Preauthorization of Health Care Services*, were released for informal public comment. The amendments reduce administrative activities for payers seeking a waiver, among other things. The proposed amendments are anticipated to be presented to MHCC Commissioners in June.

Innovative Care Delivery Division – Melanie Cavaliere, Division Chief

Advanced Care Delivery

Primary Care Study

Development of a draft Request for Proposal (RFP) is underway to identify a contractor to complete a primary care study to inform workgroup activities required by SB 734, *Maryland Health Care Commission - Primary Care Report and Workgroup*. The legislation includes a requirement for MHCC to convene a workgroup to identify ways to improve the quality of access to primary care services, with special attention to increasing health care equity, reducing health care disparities, and avoiding increased costs to patients and the health care system.

MDPCP Tutorial

Preparations are nearing completion for the recording of an educational tutorial (tutorial) on the Maryland Primary Care Program (MDPCP). Staff is collaborating with the MDPCP Program Management Office on the

tutorial. The web-based tutorial comprises nine standalone modules that highlight benefits to providers and consumers, care delivery requirements, and payment design. Modules are designed as standalone sessions that can be sequenced according to user preference.

Practice Transformation Grant Activities

Workflow redesign planning is advancing for 39 practices in the *Advancing Practice Transformation in Ambulatory Practices* program. The grantee, MedChi Care Transformation Organization (CTO), is working in collaboration with staff to complete an initial practice workflow for practices based on their practice assessment. The CTO will discuss workflow redesign recommendations with practices in May.

Practice Roundtable

Planning is underway for a virtual practice health equity roundtable (roundtable) in May. Roundtable participants will discuss development of health equity best practice guidance materials to address key challenges in the medical neighborhood. Additional roundtable meetings are targeted throughout the spring.

Patient Reported Outcome Measures

Staff convened a patient reported outcome (PRO) measures practice panel (panel). The virtual panel discussed the use of PRO measures in care delivery, and various practice education and awareness building resources. The panel includes payers, providers, consumers, and NCQA. Takeaways from the panel will inform strategies aimed at building practice awareness of PRO measures. The panel is scheduled to convene several times throughout the spring.

Learning Networks

Promotional activities are underway for a webinar focused on increasing practice awareness of community-based care management resources and SDOH. The event is intended to help practices identify local resources to support care delivery and help practices address SDOH needs. The event is targeted to occur in May.

Health Information Exchange Division – Alana Sutherland, Division Chief

Privacy and Security Regulations

The HIE Policy Board (workgroup) considered changes proposed by Post & Schell, P.C (contractor) to COMAR 10.25.18, *Health Information Exchanges: Privacy and Security of Protected Health Information*, section 11, Requirements for Accessing, Using, or Disclosing of Data Through an HIE in an Emergency, and section 12, Requirements for Providing Health Care Consumers Electronic Access to Their Health Information. Staff competitively selected the contractor in August 2020 to assist in modernizing the regulations.

Consumer Consent Management

Discussions continue with several registered HIEs in Maryland that are participating in a consumer consent management utility (CMU) pilot. Collective Medical is testing the CMU interface with CRISP. Chapter 798 of the 2021 LOM (House Bill 1375), *Health Information Exchanges – Electronic Health Information – Sharing and Disclosure*, requires CRISP to develop a CMU that provides consumers with a centralized web-based process for opting out or back into data sharing through HIEs.

HIE Roundtable

The final virtual roundtable (roundtable) in a four-part series was convened in collaboration with Civitas Networks for Health and the Association for Health IT State Leaders. The roundtable included national HIEs and state health IT leaders who discussed opportunities, challenges, and proposed solutions that will inform development of a *Health Data Utility (HDU) Framework – A Guide for Implementation*. HDUs provide regional and statewide health information exchange services for clinical and public health purposes.

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 website. Routine updates and maintenance are ongoing. The private side of the website, primarily used as a communication and data submission tool for providers, was most recently updated to include relevant information and resources regarding the upcoming Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS) cardiac surgery data collection initiative. Staff continues to respond to consumer inquiries received via the quality reports email.

MQR Website Traffic

Staff monitors traffic to the consumer site using Google Analytics software. Website traffic was slightly higher in April (6,868 users) compared to the March (6,749 users). The number of users continues to remain high as a result of the MPT advertising campaign (discussed below in the MQR Website Promotion section). 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 80 social media posts in April. Topics included National Minority Health Month, National Public Health Week, National Healthcare Decisions Day, 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 continues to work with Maryland Public Television (MPT) on a promotional campaign to increase public awareness of the MQR website. Digital, social media, and print advertising began in early February and will continue through August. The second of three flights of the television/radio media campaign launched in late April and will continue through mid-May. The ad airs during commercial breaks on various national news shows on CNN (e.g., Anderson Cooper 360), Fox Network (e.g., Fox and Friends), and MSNBC (e.g., Morning Joe). This portion of the campaign has shown early success; since the campaign began in February, the number of users to the site has increased significantly. Historically there are approximately 2,000 visitors to the site per month but there have been more than 18,000 visits to the site in February, March, and April alone.

Hospital Quality Initiatives – Courtney Carta

Hospital Discharge Planner Webinar Series

Hospital discharge planners, social workers, and care managers are a vital part of smooth transition to the next level of care after a patient leaves the hospital. Staff hosted a webinar geared toward care management teams for all acute care hospitals in the state. The goal of the webinar was to increase awareness of the Maryland Quality Reporting website and to demonstrate how users can navigate and access the many resources available to them. There were approximately 40 participants and staff received excellent feedback. Staff plan to host these webinars regularly to ensure that care management teams are aware of resources and can successfully use and share resources both internally and with patients and their families.

Healthcare Associated Infections

All Maryland acute care hospitals are required to report certain healthcare associated infections to the CDC's National Healthcare Safety Network (NHSN). MHCC publicly reports this data annually on the MHCQR consumer website. Historically the validation and reporting process was staggered but staff has streamlined the process and will report all infection types at once. Staff are preparing for public reporting of CY2021 data which will include all required infection types: central line associated bloodstream infections (CLABSI), catheter associated urinary tract infections, Clostridium difficile (c. diff), and Methicillin-Resistant Staphylococcus Aureus (MRSA), and surgical site infections (SSI). The public reporting process will continue throughout May and the results will be posted on the MHCQR website in July.

Long Term Care and Health Plan Quality Initiatives—Stacy Howes

Nursing Home Family Experience of Care Survey

Data for the 2021 administration are being tabulated and will be available within the next few weeks.

Health Care Worker Influenza Vaccination Survey (Nursing Homes, Assisted Living, Home Health, and Hospice)

Data collection for the 2021-2022 flu season ended on March 31. Data reporting began on April 4 and will continue through May 20 (hospice and home health) or May 27 (nursing homes and assisted living facilities). The nursing home and assisted living survey portal and programming was enhanced by IT staff to improve user experience. Feedback from facilities has been positive.

Department of Aging Collaboration

CQMR staff met with Maryland Access Point Coordinators on April 21 and the Veteran's Home and Community Directed Care Coordinators on May 2 for an educational webinar about our Maryland Quality Reporting website and our multiple resources.

Health Plan Quality Initiatives

Data collection for the 2021 calendar year is ongoing, and the pre-proposal conference for a new RFP was held on April 15 and was successful.

Hospice Resource Development

Staff created a new hospice brochure aimed at African Americans in Maryland. The brochure will be distributed to libraries, hospital discharge planners, and hospices throughout the state.

Outpatient Quality Initiative—Mariama Gondo

Outpatient Quality Initiative

Staff continues to prepare for the launch of the 2021 freestanding ambulatory surgical facility survey in the fall of this year.

Health Disparities Initiative

In response to House Bill 309/Senate Bill 565 from the 2021 legislative session, the Commission staff worked in collaboration with the Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities (OMHHD) to collect data and develop a report on the status of MDH activities designed to address the needs of vulnerable populations in Maryland. The report was shared with MDH for their review. Staff continues to work on establishing a catalog (inventory) of the responses provided by various MDH programs. The summaries have been drafted and sent to each respondent so they can provide any additional feedback they may have.

Staff is also working on updates to the health disparities section of the Quality Reporting website, to highlight specific conditions that disproportionately impact minority populations. The feature will include resources and information for these various conditions.

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