

MARYLAND HEALTH CARE COMMISSION

UPDATE OF ACTIVITIES

June 2022

EXECUTIVE DIRECTION

Government Relations and Special Project – Tracey DeShields

State Policy Update

The Maryland Health Care Commission is working on projects related to bills passed during the 2022 legislative session. Interim projects focus on advanced care planning, palliative care services, behavioral health, assisted living, and healthcare data access and availability.

MHCC-related news coverage: selected articles and commentary

Health Facilities

Hooke, M. “LifeBridge Health unveils 32,000-sq ft. Center for Hope in Northwest Baltimore.” May 4, 2022. The Business Journals. Available from:

<https://www.bizjournals.com/baltimore/inno/stories/news/2022/05/04/lifebridge-center-for-hope-to-open-in-baltimore.html>

Bologna, G. “University of Maryland will be part of a new \$4.75 million center to explore virtual reality and medicine.” May 9, 2022. The Baltimore Sun. Available from: <https://www.baltimoresun.com/business/bs-bz-mixr-university-maryland-20220509-mac2edvp4fh7tgyxi4i6jyxndm-story.html>

Yahoo Finance. “MedStar Health to open renovated behavioral health unit in Prince George’s County.” May 10, 2022. Yahoo Finance. Available from: <https://www.yahoo.com/now/medstar-health-open-renovated-behavioral-180000046.html>

Weigel, B. “Maryland Board of Public Works approved transfer of Spring Grove Hospital Center to UMBC.” May 11, 2022. CBS Baltimore. Available from:

<https://baltimore.cbslocal.com/2022/05/11/maryland-board-of-public-works-approves-transfer-of-spring-grove-hospital-center-to-umbc/>

U.S. Department of Labor. “Federal court orders Maryland eldercare providers, owners to pay \$364K in back wages, damages to 132 underpaid workers.” May 11, 2022. Department of Labor. Available from:

<https://www.dol.gov/newsroom/releases/whd/whd20220509-2>

Office of Governor Larry Hogan. “Maryland cancer moonshot: Governor Hogan celebrates groundbreaking of Stoler Center for Advanced Medicine in Baltimore.” May 15, 2022. Maryland.gov. Available from:

<https://governor.maryland.gov/2022/05/13/maryland-cancer-moonshot-governor-hogan-celebrates-groundbreaking-of-stoler-center-for-advanced-medicine-in-baltimore/>

Office of Governor Larry Hogan. “Video Release: Governor Hogan celebrates ceremonial transfer of Spring Grove Hospital Center to University of Maryland, Baltimore County.” May 19, 2022. Maryland.gov.

Available from: <https://governor.maryland.gov/2022/05/18/video-release-governor-hogan-celebrates-ceremonial-transfer-of-spring-grove-hospital-center-to-university-of-maryland-baltimore-county/>

Southern Maryland News. “MedStar Health welcomes new plastic surgeon.” May 23, 2022. Southern Maryland News. Available from: https://www.somdnews.com/business/medstar-health-welcomes-new-plastic-surgeon/article_c9cc356e-900f-57b4-bfaa-5cefcc9a6964.html

Health Disparities and Health Equity

King, K. “University of Maryland Medical System removes race from decisions affecting birth options.” May 6, 2022. WTOP News. Available from: <https://wtop.com/maryland/2022/05/university-of-maryland-medical-system-removes-race-from-decisions-impacting-birth-options/>

Pasia, N. “Keynote: A conversation on health equity with Alan Weil.” May 12, 2022. State of Reform. Available from: <https://stateofreform.com/news/maryland/2022/05/keynote-a-conversation-on-health-equity-with-alan-weil/>

Nibber, D. “Howard launches transformative \$1.3 million program tackling maternal health disparities.” May 13, 2022. Conduit Street. Available from: <https://conduitstreet.mdcounties.org/2022/05/13/howard-launches-transformative-1-3-million-program-tackling-maternal-health-disparities/>

Skirble, R. “With ‘Healthy Babies Equity Act,’ Maryland will join other states that provide prenatal care regardless of immigration status.” May 26, 2022. Maryland Matters. Available from: <https://www.marylandmatters.org/2022/05/26/with-healthy-babies-equity-act-maryland-will-join-other-states-that-provide-prenatal-care-regardless-of-immigration-status/>

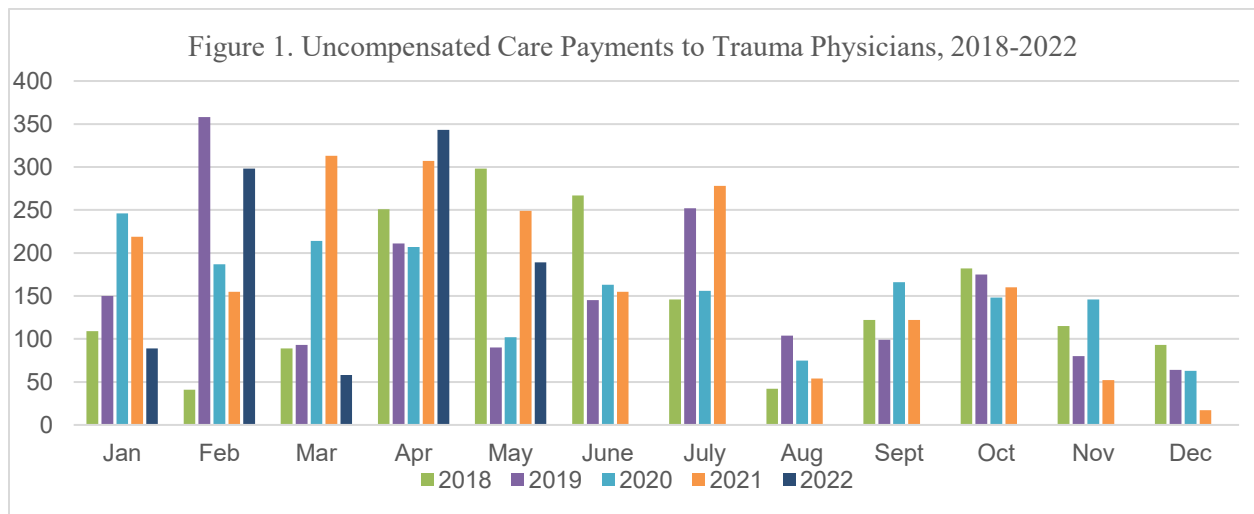
Cybersecurity

Witte, B. “Gov. Hogan signs bills to shore up Maryland’s cybersecurity.” May 12, 2022. CBS Baltimore. Available from: <https://baltimore.cbslocal.com/2022/05/12/maryland-governor-hogan-cybersecurity-legislation/>

Maryland Trauma Physician Services Fund

Uncompensated Care Processing

Trustmark Health Benefits, the third-party administrator (TPA) for the Trauma Fund, processed \$188,946.74 uncompensated care claims through May 2022.



MHCC Website: The MHCC website (<https://MHCC.maryland.gov>) had 2,888 users in the month of May 2022.

Wear The Cost

In April 2022, 218 users visited the site.

Maryland Quality Reporting

The Maryland Quality Reporting had 7,649 users, 8,782 sessions and 11,011 pageviews in May. The average session duration was 40 seconds. Website activity metrics increased about 10% this month but the bounce rate remained consistent at 85.0%.

The site receives the most website referrals from MHCC’s homepage (32.1%). However, this month the website had 13.8% of its referrals from the Google advertisements associated with the Maryland Public Television campaign. Maryland State Archives was next accounting for 2.0% of website traffic referrals.

Referrals from social media sites remain consistent. Facebook continues to be the primary social media referral source, accounting for 99.2% of all social referrals. Instagram Stories, BuzzFeed, Dailymotion and Tagged are all new social referral sources and are likely related to the MPT campaign.

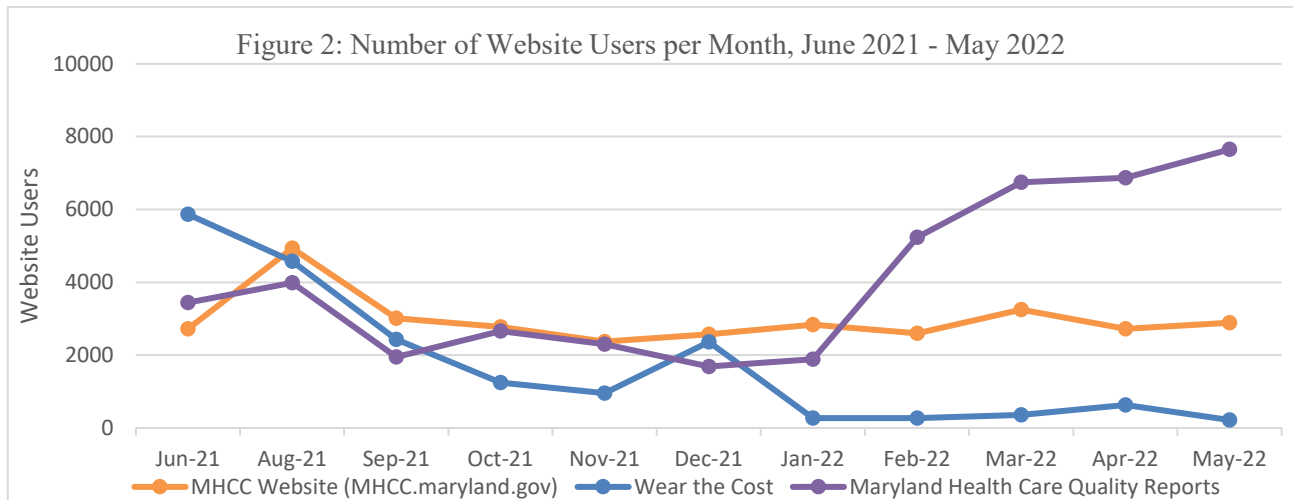


Figure 2 shows the number of website users over a 12-month period for each of the four websites maintained by Commission staff. Specific information about each website is below.

CENTER FOR ANALYSIS AND INFORMATION SYSTEMS

Cost and Quality Analysis – Shankar Mesta

MCDB Data Submission Status, Payor Compliance, and Technical Support

All payors submitted complete clean Q1 2022 data as of end of May 2022.

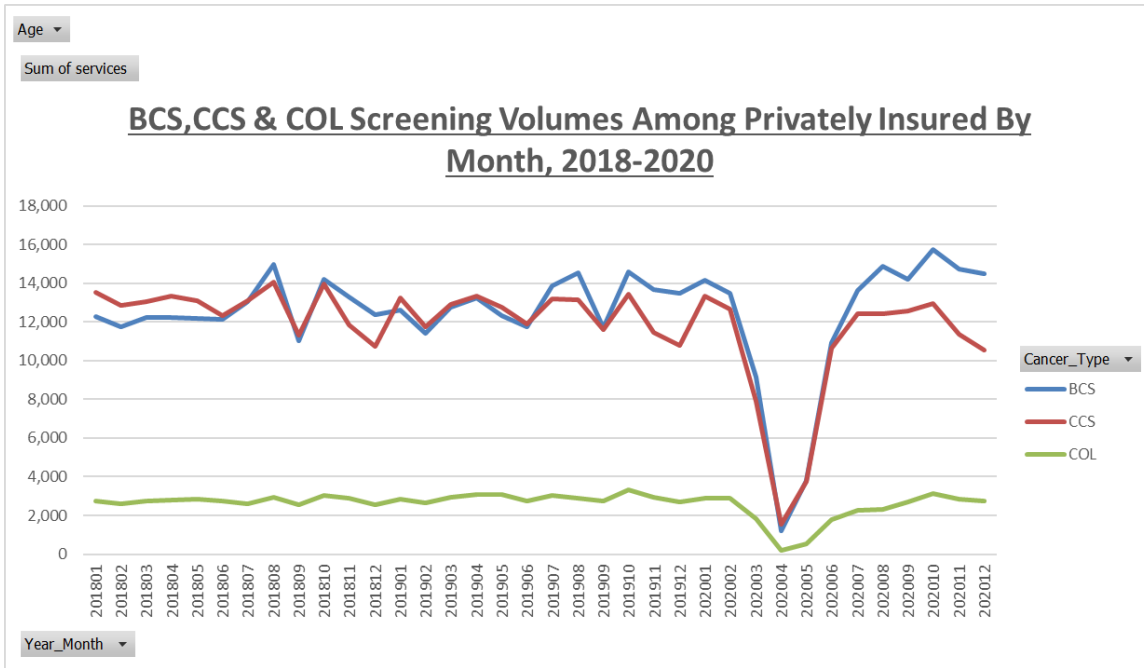
All thirty-three payors’ Q1 2022 data successfully passed the Tier 3 data quality validation checks. To facilitate data submission, MHCC staff and Onpoint staff sent weekly reminders to payors to submit clean 2022 Q1 data before deadline of 05/31/2022.

Center for Cancer Prevention and Control (CCPC) Data Request

CAIS staff created a cancer screening trend analysis for Center for Cancer Prevention and Control (CCPC) staff. The trend analysis showed the volumes of screening claims among privately insured members for breast cancer (BCS), cervical cancer (CCS), and colorectal cancer (COL) from 2018 to 2020 to establish the impact of COVID-19. The CCPC staff wanted to know if the cancer screening numbers for BCS, CCS, and COL recovered to pre-pandemic levels.

The cancer screening trend showed that BCS and COL volumes returned to the pre-pandemic level by 2020, while CCS volume was lower than expected. This finding was similar to a study conducted by [Epic Health Research Network](#).

In the upcoming months, the CAIS staff will update the trend analysis with 2021 data to show how cancer screenings rebounded in 2021.



Non- Fee-for-Service Expenses data collection

CAIS staff started preliminary work to incorporate data on value-based arrangements into the Maryland Medical Care Data Base (MCDB) Data Submission Manual for 2023. The goal is to collect Non-Fee-for-Service Medical Expenses data collection process that includes information on both one-sided and two-sided incentive programs as per HB 1148/SB 834.

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

No update reported this month

Special Projects – Janet Ennis

Requests for Mandate Analysis

Staff received formal letters of 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 – Health Insurance – Home Test Kits for Sexually Transmitted Diseases – Required Coverage
- (2) HB 142 – Health Insurance – Coverage of In Vitro Fertilization – Revisions
- (3) SB 725/HB 974 – Health Insurance – Physical Therapy – Copayments, Coinsurance, and Deductibles

MHCC staff is drafting small procurement bid boards for actuarial consulting services to conduct each analysis, also allowed under Insurance Article §15-1501, to carry out the statutory provisions. The first bid board for an

actuarial consultant to evaluate SB 634, which requires coverage of home test kits for sexually transmitted diseases, was posted on May 18th and bids are due by June 10, 2022. Staff drafted the remaining two bid boards which should be posted by mid-June. 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

Cardiac Services Research – Percutaneous Coronary Intervention (PCI) Services

The MHCC Cardiac Services Advisory Committee met on May 17, 2022 to discuss an analysis performed by Advanta Government Services (AGS) on Maryland hospitals' registered PCI data (submitted by the hospitals to the American College of Cardiology's CathPCI data registry). The analysis built on AGS' initial investigation of the relationship between program volume and performance, focused on the relationship between STEMI PCI procedural volume and mortality certain patient characteristics that affected risk and area-based social determinants of health index called the area deprivation index (ADI) a measure developed by Dr. Amy Kind and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health.

The ADI is a composite measure derived from 17 variables that are arrayed across four domains: education, income/employment, housing, and household characteristics. The ADI is typically calculated on small homogeneous neighborhoods, typically census tracts, using multiple years of the American Community Survey. This analysis calculated ADI over ZIP codes due to the lack of patient addresses in the CathPCI data registry. The analysis is available on the MHCC website at the following link.

https://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/home/workgroups/documents/cardiac/con_csac_report_area_dep_stemi_pci_20220517.pdf. Information on the development of the ADI is available at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine website <https://www.neighborhoodatlas.medicine.wisc.edu/>

Long Term Care Policy and Planning – Linda Cole

State Health Plan-Hospice Work Group

Internal staff work has been done in preparation for resumption of meetings of the Hospice Work Group, which were suspended during the pandemic. The group will discuss proposals for updating the State Health Plan (SHP) chapter of regulation for general hospice projects, COMAR 10.24.13, last updated in 2013 and designated as a high priority among SHP updates needed.

Survey Status Update

Submission of Part I of the FY 2021 Maryland Hospice Survey was nearly completed by the May 16, 2022, deadline for the survey request. Five providers have received extensions.

Final updates to the 2020 Long-Term Care Survey data set were completed. The data is available on the Commission website via the public use data set portal. Staff provided this data set to the Center for Quality Reporting for use on the Maryland Quality Reporting website. Staff is finalizing the reports for the *Maryland Register* to be posted later this month.

Final review and edits of the 2020 Home Health Survey data set are being completed in preparation for development of utilization tables and other reports.

Certificate of Need - Wynnee Hawk

Emergency CON Issued and Confirmed

UM Capital Region Medical Center – (Prince George’s County) – Docket No. EM-H22-16-043

Add bed capacity, on a temporary basis, by converting 16 observation beds to medical/surgical/gynecological/addictions (MSGA) beds. The MSGA beds may be used as general medical/surgical beds or intensive care unit beds. The project timeline is 60 days.
Estimated Cost: \$100,000.

Approved Changes to an Approved CON

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

Approval of an increase in the approved expenditure for the establishment of a 60-bed special rehabilitation hospital in Bowie. The increase is \$6,701,380, in cash equity, bringing the total approved project cost to \$52,683,586. This is the second approved increase in the project’s authorized expenditure, originally approved (May 2020) as \$39.8 million.

CON Applications Filed

Adventist Home Health Services – (Carroll County) – Matter No. 22-06-2456

Expand the service area of an existing home health agency, to include Carroll County

CareNet Health Systems and Services, dba Lorien Mt. Airy – (Carroll County) Matter No. 22-06-2457

Establish a home health agency providing service to Carroll County.

Determinations of Coverage

• **Acquisition/Change of Ownership**

Carriage Hill-Bethesda – (Montgomery County)

The bed rights and real property of this comprehensive care facility (CCF) are owned by Carriage Hill Bethesda, LLC, and this will not change. The leasehold operation of the facility will transfer from Carriage Hill Bethesda, Inc., to Carriage Hill Opco LLC, which is owned by Derek Vucich.
Purchase Price: \$0 (Change of leasehold operator only.)

Calvert Hospice – (Calvert County)

Acquisition of Calvert Hospice by Hospice of the Chesapeake. Hospice of the Chesapeake was authorized to serve Anne Arundel, Prince George’s, and Charles prior to the transaction. The hospice being acquired is only authorized to serve Calvert County.

Restructuring/Spin-Off of Encompass Health Corporation’s Maryland Home Health Agencies

EH Home Health of the Mid-Atlantic, LLC d/b/a Enhabit Home Health (MDH License No. HH7157)

CareSouth HHA Holdings of Virginia, LLC d/b/a Enhabit Home Health (MDH License No. 7160)

CareSouth HHA Holdings of Virginia, LLC d/b/a Enhabit Home Health HH#7162

The transaction will result in the existing holding company and intermediate owner, Enhabit, Inc. (Enhabit), spinning off the Encompass Health Corporation (Encompass) home health agencies (HHAs) to create an independently-owned, publicly-traded company. Following an internal reorganization involving the upstream merger of various holding companies and the conversion of Advanced Homecare Management, Inc., the

current direct owner of the HHAs, from a corporation to a limited liability company, Enhabit and all subsidiaries operating HHAs and hospices will separate from Encompass. Enhabit will be the parent company of all home health and hospice providers currently operating under the Encompass corporate umbrella.

MDH License No. HH7157 is authorized to provide HHA services in Somerset, Wicomico and Worcester Counties. MDH License No. 7160 is authorized to provide services in Montgomery County. MDH License No. 7162 is authorized to serve Baltimore County.

St. Joseph’s Nursing Home – (Baltimore County)

Acquisition of the real property, bed rights, and operational rights of this comprehensive care facility, currently owned by Sisters Servants of Mary Immaculate, Inc., by St. Joseph’s Nursing Home, Inc.
Purchase Price: \$1.00 (Transaction involves two not-for-profit entities.)

Capital Projects

NOTE: The following hospital projects required determinations of coverage that the projects did not need review and approval by MHCC because they are requesting approval of project funding through the Maryland Hospital Association 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

University of Maryland St. Joseph’s Medical Center – (Baltimore County)

Renovate and modernize the hospital’s Digestive Disease Center by establishing a patient prep and recovery area with 13 bays, expanding the medical equipment processing area, reconfiguring the nurse station, and establishing a dedicated separate work area for anesthesia services.
Estimated Project Cost: \$2,000,000
\$1,000,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

Carroll Hospital Center – (Carroll County)

Develop a respite care unit also referred to as recuperative care. Medical respite care is acute and post-acute medical care for patients without a fixed residence who are unable to recover from a physical illness or injury without a home but who are not ill enough to be admitted to the hospital.
Estimated Project Cost: \$2,000,000
\$500,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

Kennedy Krieger Institute/Kennedy Krieger Children’s Hospital – (Baltimore City)

Renovation and modernization of the Creamer Building.
Estimated Project Cost: \$3,200,000
\$1,300,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

Luminis Health Anne Arundel Medical Center – (Anne Arundel County)

Renovate existing emergency department (ED) space to create behavioral health rooms that have the full capabilities and functions of the standard ED room.
Estimated Project Cost: \$1,725,000
\$862,500 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

Howard County General Hospital – (Howard County)

Renovate space adjacent to the emergency department to create a new Behavioral Health Unit, increasing the hospital’s treatment capacity dedicated to behavioral health from six to 20 beds.
Project Cost: \$2,400,000
\$500,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

MedStar Montgomery Medical Center – (Montgomery County)

Renovate and reconfigure the emergency department, relocating the pediatric unit to a more centralized area and creating geriatric and behavioral health units in the vacated space.
Estimated Project Cost: \$2,700,000
\$1,350,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

MedStar St. Mary's Hospital – (St. Mary's County)

Modernize and expand the hospital's existing emergency, inpatient, and outpatient behavioral health spaces.

Estimated Project Cost: \$1,400,000

\$200,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

Sinai Hospital of Baltimore, Inc. – (Baltimore City)

Renovate existing inpatient space (former ambulatory surgery center) to create the Academic Center, providing dedicated space for educational simulations, a medical library, a classroom, and conference areas. In addition, separate resident and student lounges will be provided.

Estimated Project Cost: \$2,500,000

\$500,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

Sheppard Pratt at Elkridge– (Howard County)

Establish a 16-bed community-based residential crisis stabilization center in Howard County.

Estimated Project Cost: \$4,400,000

\$880,000 is being requested from the MHA 2023 Hospital Bond Program.

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

Fahrney Keedy – (Washington County)

Temporary delicensure of three CCF beds, reducing the facility's bed capacity to 98.

- **Disposition of Temporarily Delicensed Bed Capacity or a Health Care Facility**

General German Aged Peoples Home, Inc. d/b/a Edenwald – Baltimore County)

Confirmation that this CCF can transfer the ownership of 22 beds with temporary delicensed status, subject to the requirements of COMAR 10.24.01.03C(5)(e).

- **Other**

Peak Healthcare at Copper Ridge – (Carroll County)

Request to waive the deadline for implementing a six-bed addition to this CCF. The request was denied. The bed addition was authorized in February 2020 but was not implemented within the one year time frame for such bed additions.

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

Calvert Manor Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare (Calvert County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Axis Health at Calvert propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: Axis Health at Calvert propco LLC

Operator: Axis Health at Calvert opco LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: 1881 Telegraph Road Propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: 1881 Telegraph Road Propco LLC

Operator: 1881 Telegraph Road Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$17,898,139

Additional information: The CCF is located at 1881 Telegraph Road in Rising Sun. The facility currently has an above average 5 out of 5-star rating on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The facility does not have a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) specifying a minimum required level of service to Medicaid patients. The anticipated closing date of the transaction is August 1, 2022.

Commission staff notes that other CCFs owned or operated by Aryeh Stern, a principal in the acquiring entities, have below average ratings on the CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System, both inside and outside of Maryland¹. 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)].

Birch Manor Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare (Carroll County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Axis Health at Birch propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: Axis Health at Birch propco LLC

Operator: Axis Health at Birch opco LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: 7309 Second Avenue Propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: 1881 7309 Second Avenue Propco LLC

Operator: 1881 7309 Second Avenue Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$10,010,429

Additional information: The CCF is located at 7309 Second Avenue in Sykesville. The facility currently has a poor 1 out of 5-star rating on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The facility complies with its Medicaid MOU. The anticipated closing date of the transaction is August 1, 2022.

See the above information and the footnote on CCFs owned or operated by Aryeh Stern, a principal in the acquiring entities.

Long View Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare (Carroll County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Axis Health at Long View propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: Axis Health at Long View propco LLC

Operator: Axis Health at Long View opco LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: 3332 Main Street Propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: 3332 Main Street Propco LLC

Operator: 3332 Main Street Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$12,642,273

Additional information: The CCF is located at 3332 Main Street in Manchester. The facility currently has an above average 5 out of 5-star rating on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The facility complies with its Medicaid MOU. The anticipated closing date of the transaction is August 1, 2022.

¹ The rating scores were accessed on June 1, 2022, from the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The data had been last updated on May 25, 2022. The average score for the 38 CCFs located in Maryland, Connecticut, New Jersey, Wisconsin, and West Virginia was 2.7 stars out of 5 stars.

See the above information and the footnote on CCFs owned or operated by Aryeh Stern, a principal in the acquiring entities.

Oak Manor Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare (Montgomery County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Axis Health at Oak Manor propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: Axis Health at Oak Manor propco LLC

Operator: Axis Health at Oak Manor opco LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: 3415 Greencastle Road Propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: 3415 Greencastle Road Propco LLC

Operator: 3415 Greencastle Road Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$14,781,555

Additional information: The CCF is located at 3415 Greencastle Road in Burtonsville. The facility currently has an above average 4 out of 5-star rating on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The facility complies with its Medicaid MOU. The anticipated closing date of the transaction is August 1, 2022.

See the above information and the footnote on CCFs owned or operated by Aryeh Stern, a principal in the acquiring entities.

Caroline Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare (Caroline County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Axis Health at Caroline propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: Axis Health at Caroline propco LLC

Operator: Axis Health at Caroline opco LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: 520 Kerr Avenue Propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: 520 Kerr Avenue Propco LLC

Operator: 520 Kerr Avenue Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$8,559,654

Additional information: The CCF is located at 520 Kerr Avenue in Denton. The facility currently has an above average 4 out of 5-star rating on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The facility complies with its Medicaid MOU. The anticipated closing date of the transaction is August 1, 2022.

See the above information and the footnote on CCFs owned or operated by Aryeh Stern, a principal in the acquiring entities.

Manokin Center for Rehabilitation and Healthcare (Somerset County)

Transaction: Acquisition of assets

CURRENT

Owner of the real property: Axis Health at Manokin propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: Axis Health at Manokin propco LLC

Operator: Axis Health at Manokin opco LLC

POST-TRANSACTION

Owner of the real property: 11974 Edgehill Terrace Propco LLC

Owner of bed rights: 11974 Edgehill Terrace Propco LLC

Operator: 11974 Edgehill Terrace Opco LLC

Purchase price: \$11,160,322

Additional information: The CCF is located at 11974 Edgehill Terrace in Princess Anne. The facility currently has an above average 4 out of 5-star rating on the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The facility complies with its Medicaid MOU. The anticipated closing date of the transaction is August 1, 2022.

Commission staff notes that other CCFs owned or operated by Yechiel Hirth and Manashe Eisen, principals in the acquiring entities, 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 inside and outside of Maryland². 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)].

CENTER FOR HEALTH INFORMATION & INNOVATIVE CARE DELIVERY

Health Information Technology Division – Nikki Majewski, Division Chief

Telehealth Study

The National Opinion Research Center (NORC) convened two focus groups with representatives from behavioral health provider organizations and advocates for consumers of behavioral health services. An analysis of over 1,000 responses to the provider telehealth survey and 78 consumer interviews is underway. Claims analysis on the use of audio-only and audio-visual technologies is progressing. Recommendations on telehealth coverage and payment levels relative to in person care are due to the Senate Finance Committee and the House Health and Government Operations (HGO) Committee by December 1, 2022.

Interstate Telehealth Expansion Study

Responses to a Request for Proposals (RFP) (not to exceed \$50,000) are being reviewed to identify a contractor to complete an interstate telehealth expansion study. The HGO Committee requested the study after House Bill 670, *Maryland Health Care Commission – Study on Expansion of Interstate Telehealth* was held during the 2022 legislative session. The HGO Committee seeks information on the benefits and barriers of interstate telehealth to inform future legislation. An award is anticipated by the end of June; a final report is due to the HGO committee by December 2023.

Patient Generated Health Data

A Request for Information (RFI) is nearly complete seeking information on innovative use cases to integrate patient generated health data (PGHD) outside of a clinical setting with an electronic health record (EHR) system. Responses will inform initiatives aimed at using PGHD in the workflow to supplement existing clinical information. The RFI is targeted for release in June.

Hospital Assessment – Advance Directives

Data analysis is progressing on the collection and storage of advance directives in hospital EHR systems. Data was obtained via the *2022 Hospital Health Information Technology Survey* (survey). Among other things, the survey assessed the number of unique patients (new in the last 12 months and existing) with an electronic advance directive. An information brief is targeted for release in September.

Federally Qualified Health Centers Environmental Scan

² The rating scores were accessed on June 6, 2022, from the CMS Nursing Home Compare website. The data had been last updated on May 25, 2022. CMS Nursing Home Compare Five-Star Quality Rating System lists that a Florida CCF in which Mr. Eisen currently holds 5% or more in direct or indirect ownership is currently flagged by CMS for abuse.

Completion of the *Health Information Technology Questionnaire* distributed to Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) organizations is underway. Data collected will inform initiatives aimed at optimizing use of health IT and in developing peer-to-peer learning events in collaboration with the Mid-Atlantic Association for Community Health Centers.

Electronic Data Interchange

Data collection of the 2022 *Electronic Data Interchange Progress Report* (report) from payers with an annual premium volume of \$1 million is advancing. COMAR 10.25.09, *Requirements for Payers to Designate Electronic Health Networks*, requires payers to annually report census level information on administrative health care transactions by June 30th.

Electronic Preauthorization Regulations

Staff received two comments during the informal public comment period on draft amendments to COMAR 10.25.17, *Benchmarks for Preauthorization of Health Care Services* (regulations). The regulations specify four electronic preauthorization benchmarks for payors. The changes modify dated language in the regulations and reduce administrative activities for payors seeking a waiver from one or more benchmarks. The regulations will be presented as proposed permanent at the July Commission meeting.

Cybersecurity

Planning is underway to develop a guidance document to assist small practices in bolstering cybersecurity preparedness. The document will include educational information and select scenarios to improve a practice's readiness in detecting and responding to cyber incidents. Planning is progressing on a series of practice educational videos overviewing the importance of cybersecurity.

Innovative Care Delivery Division – Melanie Cavaliere, Division Chief

Advanced Care Delivery

MDPCP Tutorial

Staff is collaborating with the Maryland Primary Care Program (MDPCP) Program Management Office to record an educational tutorial on the MDPCP. The on-demand tutorial consists of nine modules that overview benefits to providers and consumers, care delivery requirements, and payment design. Modules are designed as standalone sessions that allow users to select specific learning areas based on preference.

Practice Transformation Grant Activities

Drafting of practice-specific work plans in collaboration with MedChi Care Transformation Organization (CTO) is advancing. Findings from the practice assessments inform development of work plans for nearly 44 practices in the *Advancing Practice Transformation in Ambulatory Practices* program. The CTO will review work plans with practices and make additional changes that align practice priorities with the redesign process. Practice training sessions are scheduled to begin in July.

Practice Roundtable

The practice health equity roundtable (roundtable) discussed health equity best practices. The roundtable considered various strategies related to reducing inequitable barriers and providing high-quality care. The roundtable is scheduled to convene in June to finalize select approaches to help address challenges in the medical neighborhood.

Patient Reported Outcome Measures

Planning is underway to convene the patient reported outcome (PRO) measures practice panel (panel). The panel will consider challenges and opportunities for using PRO measures. PROs assess whether care provided improved a patient's health and sense of well-being. Findings will be used to inform strategies aimed at building practice awareness of PRO measures.

Learning Networks

Staff convened a care management webinar that highlighted the value in partnering with community-based resources to address the health-related social needs of the most complex and vulnerable patients. The webinar featured several providers that presented strategies for building relationships with community-based resources to improve overall health and well-being of patients and their families.

Health Information Exchange Division – Alana Sutherland, Division Chief

Privacy and Security Regulations

Guidance to Post & Schell, P.C. (contractor) on the Health Information Exchange (HIE) Policy Board feedback to revisions suggested by the contractor is advancing. The contractor was competitively selected in August 2020 to assist in modernizing COMAR 10.25.18, *Health Information Exchanges: Privacy and Security of Protected Health Information*.

Consumer Consent Management

Staff continues to engage select registered HIEs in Maryland to test technical specification of a consumer consent management utility (CMU). Collective Medical and Cerner have initiated testing and Allscripts is preparing to test. 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.

Health Data Utility Framework

An RFP (not to exceed \$50,000) was released to identify a contractor to develop a *Health Data Utility (HDU) Framework – A Guide for Implementation* (framework). HDUs are advanced HIEs that provide services (regionally, statewide, or across states) for clinical and public health purposes. The framework will guide Maryland registered HIEs in the implementation of robust technical capabilities required to address health data access challenges in ways that achieve greater economies of scale and data liquidity to support care delivery and public health.

Telehealth

Promotional material related to the *Telehealth Readiness Assessment (TRA)* tool was provided to the Maryland Optometric Association (MOA) for posting on their website. An on-demand webinar about the value of telehealth and the TRA tool is under development in collaboration with the MOA. The webinar is anticipated for release in July. The Maryland State Dental Association has invited staff to present at their annual conference in September.

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. 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 higher in May (7,649 users) compared to the April (6,868 users). The number of users continues to remain high because 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 70 social media posts in May. Topics included Mental Health Awareness Month, Older Americans Month, National Hand Hygiene 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 also continue 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 concluded in mid-May. The ad aired 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 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; since February there have been more than 25,000 visits to the site, or an average of approximately 6,250 users per month.

Hospital Quality Initiatives – Courtney Carta

Leapfrog Hospital Safety Grades

The Leapfrog Group assigns letter grades (A-F) to hospitals based on performance on various patient safety measures. Grades are assigned twice annually. Maryland hospital performance slightly declined from the previous grading cycle (Fall 2021) with fewer A facilities. Maryland also lags national performance based on percentage of A hospitals for the Spring 2022 grades. More information will be discussed during the Commission meeting.

Leapfrog Hospital Patient Safety Scores 2021-2022

Letter Grade	National Spring 2022	Maryland Spring 2022 n=41	Maryland Fall 2021 n=42
A	33%	7 (17%)	9 (21%)
B	24%	15 (37%)	17 (40%)
C	36%	17 (41%)	15 (36%)
D	7%	2 (5%)	1 (2%)
F	<1%	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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 mid-June and the results will be posted on the MHCQR website in July.

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 detailed reports to the Commission in accordance with established timelines. The second quarterly cardiac data coordinators meeting of 2022 occurred on May 10, 2022. Discussion points included data registry updates, a case study, and a question-and-answer session. The next meeting is scheduled for August.

Long Term Care and Health Plan Quality Initiatives—Stacy Howes

Nursing Home Family Experience of Care Survey

Facility reports have been distributed to nursing home administrators for review prior to public posting. Facility reports, the state report, and all data have been submitted to the website contractor uploading to the Quality Reporting website and should be reflected within a few more weeks. Results of the 2021 survey were shared with Commissioners at the May 19th meeting. Commissioner Boyle asked if we could complete an analysis of families who responded that the resident passed away. Unfortunately, we do not collect data that allows us to examine this question. Chairman Sergent asked if we could complete an analysis of the acquisitions data while looking at for profit vs. not-for-profit homes, and an analysis is underway and will be complete later.

The 2022 survey administration kickoff was June 1, with facilities notified to update their contact information with staff.

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 continued through May 20 (hospice and home health), May 27 (nursing homes), and June 17 (assisted living facilities). This was the inaugural season for collecting hospice and home health data, and all hospices and home health agencies participated. Data will be ready for the July Commission update.

Health Plan Quality Initiatives

Data collection for the 2021 calendar year is ongoing. In addition, a procurement is underway to support this initiative. One proposal has been submitted in response to our RFP, from the incumbent, HealthData Company.

The staff is working on preparing the necessary documentation to have this recommendation considered at the August Board of Public Works meeting. The new contract will begin collecting data for Rate Year 2022.

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

Staff continues to work on a catalog (inventory) of the responses provided by various MDH programs. This work was done in response to 2021's House Bill 309/Senate Bill 565. Staff continues to polish the summary briefs that explain the services and programs provided by Department. In late May, a representative from the newly established Health Equity Commission reached out to our office requesting assistance to collect more information about the labeling and funding information of programs based on our initial data collection. Staff worked with the Health Equity Commission to collect the requested information within two weeks and provided the Commission with additional support as needed.