



## COALITION MEETING NOTES

Friday, January 18, 2019

### 2019 Legislative Session Overview

*Alice Steiner, Colorado Community Health Network (CCHN)*

CKF asked Alice Steiner of CCHN to provide a general overview of state politics and bills that have been introduced this legislative session that may be of interest to CKF members. Colorado has a new Democratic governor, plus the state House and Senate are now controlled by Democrats. 250 bills have already been introduced within the first two weeks of the state legislative session which is unusually high. Themes in health care bills include cost containment, price transparency, and general affordability. One bill CCHN is tracking is a bill that would create a public option for health coverage (HB 19-1004). This bill would use existing infrastructure to create a new coverage option, at ideally lower costs. If this bill passes, it will start with a study.

Another bill that CCHN is tracking would allow pregnant women with CHP+ to access dental benefits (HB 19-1038). It is a popular bill and does not cost much, so CCHN expects it to pass. It was introduced in the House, but because it has a cost attached to it, it was referred to appropriations. Further action is not expected on this bill until April.

Gov. Polis released his proposed budget. The big request is a full-day kindergarten program, which costs approximately \$250 million. Though there is money to fund this in the current state budget, the legislature has questions around how to pay for this program in the future. Gov. Polis' focus on health care is affordability.

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### Connect for Health Colorado Updates

*Saphia Elfituri, Connect for Health Colorado*

Open Enrollment closed on January 15. This was Connect for Health Colorado's most successful enrollment ever. There were over 169,000 enrollments; 21 percent were new customers, 79 percent renewing customers, and 77 percent were financially-assisted.

Before the next open enrollment period, Connect for Health Colorado is focusing on improving the new eligibility system (NES). As they move forward, they are focusing on customer improvement and engaging stakeholders. To be involved, reach out to your channel (Assistance Network or broker) lead.

Meeting participants discussed that assisters are hoping for an improved password reset process and asked whether Connect for Health will tackle this for the next open enrollment period. Ian McMahon from Connect for Health Colorado shared that they need more direction from the Connect for Health Colorado board and more knowledge on the direction of the legislative session before prioritizing changing the password reset process. He noted that it is a large call-driver, so it is a big issue for Connect for Health Colorado; however, they need to think strategically about their priorities.

Saphia Elfituri spoke briefly on the recent District court ruling in Texas that determined the Affordable Care Act is unconstitutional. State Attorneys General and the U.S. House

of Representatives have intervened in that lawsuit as defendants in the case. A judge has also ruled a stay during the partial government shutdown. No action will happen until the case goes through appeals.

Connect for Health Colorado submitted comments to the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on the proposed program integrity rule, specifically on the changes that would add Medicare verification requirements. Connect for Health Colorado's comment letter was supportive, but they need more clarification on a timeline. They did oppose the portion of the rule change that would put in a requirement for carriers that provide non-Hyde abortion coverage. In practice, this would require health insurance carriers to send two separate bills to customers: one for essential health care benefits and one for abortion services, and would require two separate premium payments by the consumer. Connect for Health Colorado commented that this would be an unnecessary burden to consumers. CCHN also commented and opposed this part of the rule.

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### **Department of Health Care Policy and Financing Updates**

*Marivel Klueckman, Colorado Department of Health Care Policy and Financing (HCPF)*

Marivel Klueckman discussed the partial federal government shutdown, noting that there is no direct negative impact on Medicaid. However, food security programs are impacted. HCPF is assisting the Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) in prioritizing Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) renewals that were made early this month in order to ensure SNAP payments to participants could be made to cover food costs in February.

Marivel also shared that the Colorado Benefits Management System (CBMS) experienced a system error that occurred at the end of November for Income and Eligibility Verification System (IEVS) letters. IEVS letters were sent with incorrect employer information. Approximately 2,200 members received the letters but no members were negatively impacted. HCPF sent two follow up letters to affected members explaining the systems issues and actions they may or may not need to take. This error was caused by a coding error that has been remediated.

There was another CBMS error in December; a system update occurred that caused verification checklists to not go out for renewals. HCPF sorted those impacted by two groups. The first group includes members who already started working on their renewals, and HCPF did not make any changes for this group. For those who had not started working on their renewals, HCPF took the January renewal deadline and extended one month to February. They will send out a new renewal packet with new verification checklist. There are approximately 10,000 of these cases. The system fix occurred in early January. HCPF is making sure this system fix will not impact the renewal timeline for next year. If a member should renew in January 2019 but renews in February 2019, their 2020 renewal will still be in January 2020.

HCPF has a new monthly memo series which replaces agency letters and will be used for compliance issues. See memos [here](#) and sign up to receive memos via a monthly digest [here](#).

HCPF's legislative agenda includes an extension for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Program, which is set to expire July 1. HCPF is also supporting funding for the senior dental program.

HCPF and Connect for Health Colorado are working together to improve assistance provided by Medical Assistance (MA) sites, and want to hear assisters' perspectives. If you would like to provide feedback on MA sites contact to Liz Tansey ([ltansey@cchn.org](mailto:ltansey@cchn.org)).

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### **Overview of Code for America's Improvements to PEAK Report My Changes**

*Sarah White, Code for America, and Nina Schwartz, Governor's Office of Information Technology (OIT)*

Nina Schwartz provided an overview of OIT's relationship with Code for America (CFA) and introduced Sarah White. CFA is a non-profit that partners with governments to strengthen the delivery of public services through user-centered technology. In Colorado, CFA is focusing on the Report My Changes module in PEAK to help people with maintaining and keeping benefits.

CFA has created a standalone, change-reporting tool and a redesigned change report PDF. This is currently being piloted in Arapahoe County. The tool enables change reporting for: lost job, new job, change in hours, and change in rate of pay. Nina clarified that the purpose of this separate tool is to be able to ultimately make future changes in PEAK.

CFA is looking for feedback from clients or those familiar with the client experience -- including assisters. Additionally, CFA will be expanding the pilot to at least two more counties in the coming weeks. Get in touch by emailing [sarah@codeforamerica.org](mailto:sarah@codeforamerica.org) or [Nina.Schwartz@state.co.us](mailto:Nina.Schwartz@state.co.us). The demo site is [demo.reportchangescolorado.org](http://demo.reportchangescolorado.org).

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### **CKF News**

Stephanie Brooks has transitioned to CCHN's Policy Director. She will still be involved in CKF but won't be leading as much work. As discussed at the November CKF meeting, Liz Tansey is now hosting CKF's monthly meetings. CKF is posting a Policy Analyst job.

CKF is using zoom in the hopes of having a more "face-to-face" experience for remote attendees. Please send feedback on this experience to Liz at [ltansey@cchn.org](mailto:ltansey@cchn.org).

The next coalition meeting is **February 15, 2019**.