**NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COUNTY DIRECTORS OF SOCIAL SERVICES**

**ADVISORY & ISSUES MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**DATE: February 9, 2022**

**TIME: 8:30**

**LOCATION:** Zoom webinar

**ATTENDEES; Robby Hall (Co Chair), Christine Dowdell (Co Chair),**  Alex Showalter, Amanda Tanner-McGee, Sharnese Ransome, Angela Ellis, Angela Wall, Amy Pridgen-Hamlett, Heather Skeens, Felissa Ferrell, Nicki Perry, Trish Baker, Tammy Schrenker, Sheila Brosier, Lula Jackson, Laure Potter, Tracie Murphy, Yvette Smith, Ruth Lockman, Kristin Bonoyer, Wes Stewart, Gregory Grier, John Eller, Kimberly McGuire, Melanie Corprew, Debbie Green, LaDawn Pearson, Dolly Clayton, Jason Hughes, Tony Carpenter, Lynn Fields, Karen Harrington, Velvet Nixon, Brandy Mann, Lakkiyah Sellers, LeCorey McCrary, Vivian Tookes, Sharon Barlow, Jacqueline McKnight, Jessica Adams, Marcy Mays, Jessica Wall, Charles Lycett, Deanna Cherry, Cindy Holman, April Snead, Augustine Frazer, Felicia Exum, Samantha Hurd, Wendy Boone

**WELCOME**

Geoffrey Marett opened the meeting and welcomed everyone via virtual Zoom.

**APPROVE MINUTES (January 12, 2022)**

The meeting minutes for January 12, 2022, were sent to everyone with the agenda. Mr. Marett asked for a motion to approve the minutes.

* + - **Motion Offered By:**  Christine M. Dowdell
    - **Motion Seconded By:**  Angela Elis
    - **Motion Carried:** Yes

**RECAP ADVOCACY CALL ()**

* **Medicaid Expansion**

Mr. Marett stated that the Medicaid expansion meeting will be on February 18, 2022, and there will be another meeting in March. The first meeting is the presentation about the status of the health care and what the Medicaid expansion will look like. DHB will be at the meeting on March 1, 2022, to discuss matters. There are questions on how Medicaid will look and considering our roles in Medicaid eligibility and determination. There was a discuss during the joint county state relations meeting on February 8, 2022, on how to help them communicate efforts to legislation without getting too far ahead of ourselves.

During the expansion they were made aware of our ability to be there for any discussions. The next meeting is March 9, 2022 and Sharnese sent a link for the JLOC meeting and encouraged everyone to attend. There was also discussion with the Association, to include the REDA audit, which may be a chance to get some of the audits reviewed and lifted off of agencies with Medicaid a expansion coming. In 2017, included in the state budget was language about county payback on eligibility error, outside of the error being determine solely the state responsibility. We asked what else can we do to improve the eligibility determination process without adding more pressure on staff.

John Eller stated this is strategically a good time to deal with this and asked the Association on how to proceed. Individual counties will need to do what they need, but we need to think about this, and the expanding access to serve populations with Medicaid expansion. We also need to think about state or legislative partners if we want to be successful. We need to have some ideas so it is not about whether expansion is good or bad, but what will it take to make it successful. Three suggestions mentions were: (1) needing the federal and state partners to access waivers to help agencies with administrative burdens. (2) REDA audit pulls staff away from doing all extra non-federally requirements by the state, but the federal partners hold us accountable for outcomes. If we want expansion to occur, they need to give us some administrative relief. We don’t have waivers that we ask for and this doesn’t help use to b be successful. (3) We need to maybe try to automate as much as we can for this to be successful and have control over the administrative burdens. State and legislative partners are not talking about this with new leadership, and we can help them be successful, with those suggestions. Counties can still do what they need to form an advocacy perspective.

Tracie Murphy stated that during the joint state county relations meeting many of John’s points were discussed and they acknowledge this was discussed on the front end but did say they understood more needs to be done on the front end. They also discussed what could be automated. This is going on to be very political issue and we do want to be involved with that.

Heather Skeens agreed and stated this is a strength focused opportunity and they are waiting until March to be part of the conversation. There are approximately 500,000 to 600,000 eligible Medicaid recipients if Medicaid expansion were to occur. There are 300,000 eligible for family planning only and in the system along with COVID testing groups. There are automatically assessed to determine if eligible to avoid the manual processes, we still have to do recertifications. We need to be strength based, to entering a political conversation or opposed to expansion.

Chuck Lycett stated we need to push for as much automation to ensure that things are working now and not manually driven, but automated driven. We need to work together and be prepared for when this begins.

Glenn Osborne- It’s important that the uninsured and underinsured, because whey families have greater access to health care everyone wins. We need to have good communication with our legislators. We can’t be so overwhelmed with processes and requirements that it affects our clients. On the grassroots levels, we have discussed better ways for accountability. We need weekly calls.

Geoff Marett stated we needed to starting having standard meetings to address this issue. Laverne Bennett reminded everyone that the Zoom links has be established already. Everyone is encouraged to attend.

* **Telephonic Signatures**

Glenn Osborne discussed the telephonic bill and stated that everyone has seen benefits from this. Waivers are now issued on a month-to-month basis and possibility ending during early. NACO legislative meetings will vote to extend and make permanent administrative flexibility that have been applied during the pandemic. Human services standing committees will vote a resolution for federal partners to extend and make permanent the administrative flexibility that were approved through the pandemic.

Heather Skeens stated that committee would make the decision and asked Tracy to serve as the liaison and not as a motion. A report by the committee to ask the Association to consider this.

Geoff Marett stated he read the bill and it’s not a one resolution. The Food & Nutrition Act of 2018, to permit states to report in writing that the applicants for SNAP benefits have signed our application thought reading over the telephone.

Heather Skeens stated when we report out, we want everyone in the Association signing the resolution. Advocacy will bring this up to the Association to consider signing on to the resolution. Glenn Osborne asked for approval to inform NACO at the meeting on February 12, 2022, to inform them that the Association was on agreement of this. Heather Skeens agreed and stated she did not see this as an issue, since we agree with this.

* **Trilluum**

Geoff Marett discussed the communication bulletin sent to the eastern counties by Sean Kenny, the DSS Liaison LME/MCO with Trillium. The letter focused on inquiring about DSS permanency for children and establishing permanence for youth in care and will escalate cases for children who do not have permeance in the required timeframe. Robby Hall stated he felt they were taking on the monitoring role to report to the state, but it says to coordinate with us in the plan. Heather Skeens stated that a letter was sent to Debra Farrington for her response at the Executive Board meeting and may need to bring this up again. Heather Skeens stated Deborah Farrington stated she would follow up with Trillium to see if they mistakenly represented themselves or misunderstood their role. Sharnese said she sent an email asking her to address it tomorrow. Robby Hall said it may be something in the plan and not necessarily Trillium’s fault, but we will see. Heather stated it may not be the way it was intended.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**: With nothing else to discuss, the meeting adjourned at 9:30am.

**NEXT MEETING:**

**DATE:** March 9, 2022

**TIME:** 8:30 am

**LOCATION:** ZOOM webinar