

GLOBAL WAIVER TASK FORCE MEETING
November 26, 2012
MEETING MINUTES

Task Force Members Attending: Paul Block, Virginia Burke, Jill Beckwith, Rebecca Kislak, Linda Katz, Kathleen Kelly, Joan Kiatkowski, Maureen Maigret, Joanne Malise, Donna Martin, Kathy McKeon, James Nyberg, Michelle Brophy, Michael Varadian, Sharon Terzian, Dawn Wardyga, Vivian Weisman

Staff Members and Public Attending: Jeff Resch, Kristin Sousa, Diana Beaton, Sharon Kernan, Cristina Amedeo, Stephanie Murry, Lindsay McAllister, Catherine Taylor, Roberta Merkle, Michele Heim, Janis Cutone, Susane Vandal, Steven J. Patriarca, Tom Marcello, Jennifer Reid, Ellen Mauro, Jennifer Bergeron, Lori Quarantu, Deidre Gifford, Ken Pariseau, Linda Ward, Deborah Florio, Holly Garvey, Deborah Garneau, Rick Jacobsen, Tina Spears, Elena Nicolella, Ann Martino, Anthony Salvo, Sen. Tom Izzo

Ann Martino, EOHHS Policy Director, opened the meeting by welcoming all task force members and requesting input from members on information they would like to see on the EOHHS website. She also noted that letters have been sent to all EOHHS Department directors requesting feedback on certain initiatives related to the global waiver.

Senator Tom Izzo, Community Chair, told task force members that he has sought information from DHS in regards to the \$250,000 one time supplemental payment for assisted living facilities. It is his understanding that facilities have yet to receive the funds. Senator Izzo also noted that he is still waiting to hear the status of regulations regarding DOH culture changes in nursing homes etc. He also told interested task force members that a sub-group on children's issues will have to be held on a mutually agreed upon date.

Ms. Martino also announced that there is work being done to rebuild the EOHHS website from scratch. The revamped website will offer a broader view of what each EOHHS department provides as well as provide a bulletin board of important dates and information.

Question – Maureen Maigret – Is this just for the EOHHS website?

Answer – Ann Martino – The other departments will have full flexibility when it comes to their own respective websites. The EOHHS site will use information from the other websites to make navigation easier and consumer friendly.

Question – Linda Katz – What about the Ford Initiative and work supports? Will there be a time when the task force can view the website before it goes up?

Answer – Ann Martino – The new website will have three tabs at the top, consumers, partners/providers and references. This will make the website easier to navigate. We will show the website to the task force before it goes live.

Elena Nicolella, Medicaid Director, acknowledged that the request being sent to CMS is not for an entirely new waiver. The name will change from Global Waiver back to an 1115 waiver. There will still be opportunities for the CNOM population that were noted in a letter sent to CMS.

Question – James Nyberg – Is there confidence that the request will be approved?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We believe the request will be approved by CMS.

Question – Dawn Wardyga – An issue that has come up several times is access to services for kids with special healthcare needs who do not meet Medicaid Katie Beckett requirements. These children have commercial insurance that does not meet their needs. The General Assembly has talked about a buy-in option. Our system requires Medicaid eligibility for children to receive these services. This barrier to access must be corrected.

Answer – Elena Nicolella – It is not clear that we need an 1115 waiver to get more access to these children.

Question – Maureen Mairret – The original Global Waiver floated the idea of a \$400 income disregard for home and community based services. Could this be a part of the new waiver?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We can look for creative options to address housing for those who are in the transition process.

Question – Vivian Weisman – Children with behavior health needs have a gap in services from when they age out of services until adult Medicaid expansion takes over under ACA. These 18 – 20 year olds are not eligible for behavior health services until ACA is fully implemented in 2014. Is there possible financing for a transition bridge?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – This is a systemic difference. Agencies have been trying to address this issue however the system is not built for a lifetime. We can see if the 1115 waiver can be used as a tool to allow agencies to be more responsive.

Question – Linda Katz – The waiver goes into effect at the same time that Medicaid expansion is fully implemented.

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We can continue to work with CMS on amendments to existing waiver and look at services in 2014.

Steven Costantino, Secretary, Executive Office of Health and Human Services, thanked the task force for their continued effort and time in attending all the GWTF meetings. He also reiterated previous statements that the new waiver will be re-branded as an 1115 waiver rather than a Global Waiver. Publications and media outlets have attempted to claim that Rhode Island's waiver is really a block grant. The new title of the waiver will hopefully put this issue to rest. Secretary Costantino also noted that the Affordable Care Act will change the way we provide and fund health care services. He also mentioned the integrated care models that Rhode Island is currently using with its dually eligible populations. Our models could be a model for the ACA. There are also new rules with 1115 waiver applications that require more time from both the states and CMS.

Question – Joan Kiatkowski – How was expedited eligibility been used?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We have not used that authority, the process we used was something different. In ACA, hospitals are allowed to do presumptive eligibility. If a hospital wants to pursue presumptive eligibility it can. We will look at the original proposals that did not work.

Question – Kathleen Kelly – Does 1115 include Medicaid funded BHDDH services?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – Yes, as it did in the original waiver.

Question – Kathleen Kelly – Is there any consideration being given to allowable room and board (non-medical services)?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We do that an extent with transportation services. However, room and board is not included in this area. We will continue to look for ideas on how Medicaid financed services can help people maintain their services.

Secretary Costantino also noted that there is a great need for housing dollars for Medicaid recipients. However, long-term room and board is not what Medicaid is all about. Housing fell behind in the ACA law.

Question – Linda Katz – The cap associated with the Global Waiver is part of the reason the waiver is viewed as block grant. I hope the cap will not be renewed.

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We are not wedded to the cap unless the federal government disagrees.

Question – James Nyberg – Will there be a renewal for supportive care residences and an extension of CNOM (cost not otherwise matchable) services?

Answer – Elena Nicolella – We will follow up with DOH on the supportive care residences. CNOM costs are driven by the budget and ACA. Some populations will no longer be considered in the CNOM population.

Elena Nicolella also spoke in regards to Medicaid and prisoner re-entry issues. The Department of Human Services and Department of Corrections are currently working together to ensure that people who are eligible for Medicaid upon discharge have already been put onto the program. There have been some system issues in the past however there is renewed energy to get this moving in early 2013. The population being addressed is usually adults with disabilities as well as RIte Care parents. The ACA expansion population will also include many individuals who are in the prison system and slated for release. This would help the prisoner re-entry system in general.

Ann Martino notified all task force members to send any ideas or concerns regarding the extension of the waiver to her email, amartino@ohhs.ri.gov or to Anthony Salvo, asalvo@dhs.ri.gov.

The next Global Waiver Task Force meeting will be on Monday December 17, 2012 at the Arnold Conference Center, Pastore Complex, Cranston, RI.