



**COLORADO**

Department of Health Care  
Policy & Financing

**Accountable Care Collaborative  
Program Improvement Advisory Committee  
Meeting Minutes**

**March 18, 2020 // 9:30 A.M. to 11:15 A.M.**

**1. Introductions**

Carol Plock welcomed participants to the meeting and called the meeting to order at 9:31am. The following people were in attendance:

**Voting Members:**

Arnold Salazar, Bethany Pray, Carol Plock, Catania Jones, David Keller, Dede de Percin, Donald Moore, Ian Engle, Joanna Martinson, Julie Reiskin, Kiara Kuenzler, Lila Cummings, Shera Matthews, and Wendy Nading.

*A quorum of voting members was present.*

**Non-Voting Members (webinar attendees only):**

Alana Ketchel, Alison Keesler, Alyssa Rose, Amanda Fitzsimons, Amanda Jacquelin, Amanuel Melles, Amy Yutzy, Andrea Loasby, Andrew Rose, Anne Jordan, Ashleigh Phillips, Brooke Powers, Cara Herbert, Carol Tumaylle, Catherine Morrissey, Cathy Johnson, Cathy Michopoulos, Christina Yebuah, Mindy Klowden-Lima, Elizabeth Baskett, Frank Cornelia, Jeremy Sax, Janelle Shumaker, Jeani Frickey Saito, Jeff Appleman, Jeff Bontrager, Jen Hale-Coulson, Jenna Coffman, Kari Snelson, Katie Trotter, Kellie Jackson, Kelly Bianucci, Kelly Marshall, Kelly O'Brien, Kevin Wilson, Kier Bard, Kim Fairley, Lesley Reeder, Lili Carrillo, Lisa Clements, Liz Chapman, Lois Forrestal, Mary George, Matthew Lanphier, Matt Sundeen, Megan Comer, Morgan Anderson, Moses Gur, Natasha Brockhaus, Nikina Holmes, Phyllis Albritton, Randi Addington, Stephanie Brooks, Stephanie Glover, Tammy Arnold, Tara Smith, Tina Gage, and Wendy Nading.

**2. Department Response to COVID-19**

Carol invited Executive Director Kim Bimestefer to share information regarding the Department's response to the COVID-19 pandemic. Kim thanked PIAC participants for their time and partnership through the unprecedented time. She informed PIAC that the Department has submitted an extensive 1115 waiver to the Centers for Medicaid and Medicare (CMS) requesting flexibility on a wide array of federal requirements. Kim stated the waiver was submitted to CMS on Friday, March 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020, and she hoped the Department would receive formal approval (partial or full) by Friday, March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2020, to share with the public.

Kim cautioned the group that even if CMS waived federal regulations or granted flexibility, additional funding to support the increase in claims was not guaranteed. She said the Department receives a Federal Medical Assistance Percentage (FMAP) from the federal government each year in supplemental funding that is determined by a state's average income per capita. Because Colorado has historically had a strong economy, Colorado's FMAP was around 50% but the Department was awarded a 6.2-point increase in funding due to the pandemic. She added that the Department has been working furiously to analyze and prioritize budget impacts but has requested additional funding as the number of unemployed increases, so does the number of Medicaid eligible Coloradans.

Kim concluded by assuring the group that the Department continues to focus on protecting the vulnerable populations in the most cost-effective way. She stated the Department will continue to work daily with CMS and provide real time updates as often as possible. She acknowledged the Department's collaboration of several stakeholders, provider organizations, and local public health agencies and invited the group to attend upcoming stakeholder calls when appropriate. She emphasized the importance of continued stakeholder collaboration to develop creative solutions and opened the floor for PIAC questions, comments, and concerns.

The group questioned Kim about potential changes to the current telemedicine policies, if changes to the policies would include both fee-for-service providers and behavioral health providers, and if the Department planned to assist the local public health agencies in processing the surge in Medicaid applications.

Kim emphasized the need to protect providers and caregivers using telemedicine practices. She stated that CMS agreed to provide temporary flexibility throughout the state of emergency for fee-for-service providers and they were currently outlining processes to extend the changes to behavioral health providers as well. She acknowledged the anticipated increase in Medicaid applications due to the increase in unemployment applications and stated the Department was using a variety of methods to monitor the issue closely while it developed an appropriate approach.

Kim, once again, thanked the members for their time and feedback and invited Medicaid Director, Tracy Johnson to speak. Tracy elaborated on the Department's request to the temporary telemedicine changes and how it applied to different provider types. Additional information and guidance can be found on the [Health First Colorado Announces Telemedicine Changes](#) announcement and in the [Temporary Authorization of Telemedicine Services during COVID-19 State of Emergency](#) policy.

Tracy added that several requests were proposed to CMS regarding Home and Community Based Services (HCBSs) within Appendix K of the Department's contract with CMS as well. She referenced several resources, such as memos and webinars, can be found under the Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) section of the [COVID 19 webpage for providers](#). She added that the Department was working closely with Single Entry Points (SEPs) and Community Center Boards (CCBs) to provide the organizations with additional member information, such as the RAE assignments or Primary Care Physicians (PCPs), to increase case management supports amongst all community partners.

Tracy solicited feedback regarding policy changes and community and stakeholder concerns. She explained that the Department was trying to react proactively and engage in as many conversations with CMS as possible in the next few days.

The group expressed a large amount of concern related to the increase in the number of Medicaid applications and the local human services agencies' ability to process in a timely manner. Participants suggested the Department consider granting Presumptive Eligibility sites the authority to process applications and utilize Connect for Health insurance navigators to assist members with using PEAKHealth.

The group was also very concerned with member disenrollments and redeterminations. Many suggested the Department consider a temporary freeze in disenrollments to alleviate the administrative burden of reprocessing applications and to ensure members do not have a lapse in coverage.



Additional concerns were raised regarding the virtual process of member appeals and what supports would be provided to assist members with the process if it changes.

In addition to eligibility and enrollment concerns expressed, members were highly concerned with Medicaid provider credentialing and validation. Multiple participants questioned how the Department and RAEs planned to handle the increase in applications in a timely manner. Others asked if additional funding was available to support those providers who were not providing immediate services or were forced to close clinics temporarily due to the pandemic.

Tracy thanked the group for their valuable feedback and stated that the Department would consistently update the [COIVD-19 webpage](#) with information as it became available. She also noted that the Department of Public Health and Environment's (CDPHE) [website](#) contained valuable COIVD-19 information as well.

A summarized list of questions and answers from the discussion can be found in the [PIAC COVID-19 Q&A Tracker](#) document.

### 3. Open Comment

Matt Sundeen opened the floor to the public comments concerning COVID-19. The Department collected and collated the public comments within the [PIAC COVID-19 Q&A Tracker](#).

Lila Cummings announced that the Colorado Hospital Association predicts a shortage in resources and stated she may reach out to voting members for assistance and thanked everyone for any help in advance.

Dede de Percin asked how the group could help support providers, community organizations, and emergency response teams during this difficult time. She encouraged participants to take the non-profit needs survey by close of business on March 18, 2020 if possible.

### 4. Minutes Approval, PIAC Housekeeping, and Next Steps

Carol solicited a motion to approve the February minutes, Julie Reiskin motioned to approve, and David Keller seconded the motion. The final February meeting minutes can be found [here](#).

Carol summarized the meeting and noted the committee's top concerns and priorities:

1. Telemedicine Policy Changes
  - a. Strong desire to include telephone, texting, and econsults
  - b. Concerns with the lack of HIPAA compliant modalities
  - c. How the change in policy affects all provider types and clinics
2. Medicaid application processing
  - a. County capacity to process the increase in applications
  - b. Disenrolled and barriers, waive the disenrollment process
3. Medicaid provider credentialing and validation
  - a. Need for expedited of provider credentialing
4. Extend waiver recertifications and Prior Authorization Requests (PARs) timelines



- a. Need to reduce the administrative burden and prevent lapse in services for members
5. Information about where people can get screened and tested for COVID-19
6. Information on where the Department will post and update policy changes
  - a. <https://www.colorado.gov/pacific/hcpf/COVID>

Below are the following actions items for the Department:

1. Send voting members information on the advocates call with Director Bimestefer
2. Develop a Q&A document to track and answer the questions proposed during the meeting
3. Share COVID-19 resources and guidance documents

Below are the following action items for PIAC:

1. Complete the non-profit needs survey if interested
2. Send additional comments and questions to Natasha Brockhaus

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15am.

DRAFT

