

OHIO HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION ASSISTED LIVING BOARD

February 19, 2024

Zoom Meeting

MINUTES

Chair Amy Francis called the meeting to order. The grid at the end of these minutes shows attendance.

The Chair pointed out the online folder of materials for the meeting, with particular attention to the OHCA Antitrust Compliance, Conflict of Interest, and Confidentiality Policies. The previous meeting minutes were approved.

Erin Hart discussed issues related to billing and communication with the Department of Aging. She mentioned ongoing work to address confusion and misinterpretation of rules. She also highlighted the upcoming implementation of the critical access add-on and problems with health plans not correctly paying claims, which they are actively addressing.

Danielle Russo and Amy Francis discuss recent memory care surveys, which went well. They are now billing at the higher waiver rate due to the increased staffing levels. Ms. Hart and Pete Van Runkle expressed concern about the number of facilities billing people with dementia at higher rates.

There was a discussion among the participants about the challenges faced in providing care for dementia patients in assisted living facilities. The main concern was that not all dementia patients require higher staffing, yet some facilities were being asked to provide these services. The participants expressed frustration that the rule was changed at the last minute, leading to confusion and difficulty in determining staffing requirements. Mr. Van Runkle criticized the lack of guidance provided to the providers on how to assess and document these requirements. The group felt the situation was unnecessary and could have been avoided if the Department had stayed with the previous language.

Mandy Smith provided an update on the 5-year rule review, highlighting recent webinars and expected timelines for finalizing and activating changes in the summer. She also outlined the changes, emphasizing that while some language is changing, some requirements are not. Changes discussed included adopting gender-neutral language, adding full-time and part-time definitions, and clarifying that first aid training can be done online. Ms. Smith also mentioned proposed changes such as requiring a new admission agreement in certain scenarios, adding infection prevention language, and clarifying that the daily newspaper can be electronic. Additionally, she discussed updates to internal policies regarding hand washing protocols, water management, disaster preparedness, temperature regulations, smoking policies, alternative bed options, and contact information for nearest relatives or guardians. She also addressed the issue of increasing elopement citations in assisted living and emphasized the need for awareness and prevention measures.

Ms. Hart discussed the development of a new career pathway model for direct care workers in residential care facilities. The model aims to create a career ladder within the direct care worker role, allowing them to advance without needing additional schooling. She mentioned several specialty training certifications in dementia, mental health, end-of-life, and technology. The model also includes a medication aid certification and a preceptor role. Erin explained that employers would agree to a raise for each step progression, and the Ohio Healthcare Association would approve different certifications for this model. Ms. Hart mentioned plans for a medication aide apprenticeship program and a legislative agenda that includes changes to the STNA to a CNA, among other items. She also discussed potential changes to the qualified Medicaid certification program.

Mr. Van Runkle proposed extending the conditional employment period for background checks from 30 to 60 days. He shared the team's plans to pursue a workforce package and prepare items for the upcoming lame-duck session. He also discussed the opposition to House Bill 236, which would relax visitation restrictions in various facilities. He brought up the upcoming sunset of their preferred program in 2025 and the state's plans to develop a replacement, which must be a dual eligible special needs program tied to a Medicaid managed care program. He expressed concerns over the transition's preparation, the state's ability to take Medicaid statewide as directed in the Budget Bill, and the potential restrictions the new program might impose on resident choice. He mentioned the need for amendments to ensure providers have at least fee-for-service rates and that they were actively drafting additional pieces to address these concerns.

Julie Simpkins discussed the federal update with NCAL, including her testimony, mentioning that their team had enlisted their attorney to review aspects of their work, particularly concerning costs to the consumer and additional fees. She also addressed questions from Senator Warren, focusing on staffing requirements and past incidents. Julie shared that they had not asked for an extension, unlike the other three providers, and there might be another hearing in which the CEOs from those companies would need to participate. She emphasized the complexity of their industry, which is highly regulated. Lastly, she reported on incidents over the past five years, serving nearly 9,000 residents, with less than 1% being incidents.

Ms. Smith announced the opening of the first round of OHCA certification scholarships available to employees and their children of member facilities. She also discussed the CEAL program, a certification for assisted living executive directors, and mentioned that the list of current CEALs is available on the OHCA website. Furthermore, Ms. Smith and Ms. Hart will present on rule changes and waiver issues at an upcoming convention focusing on assisted living. Lastly, Ms. Smith shared about a media training session conducted by Rachel Reeves, emphasizing its importance given the current pressure on assisted living.

The team discussed the upcoming convention on May 13th through 16th, with the AL Cocktails and Conversations session on the 14th. They also mentioned that Director McElroy will be speaking at the Annual Meeting. The Board meeting was scheduled for Wednesday at noon, a joint board meeting. The team also discussed the need for updated headshots for the website and elections during the convention. The team emphasized the importance of board support at the convention and the productivity of their conversations during the AI conversation session.

Next Meetings: Third Monday every other month at 3 PM

April 15, 2024

June 17, 2024

August 19, 2024

October 21, 2024

December 16, 2024

The meeting was adjourned.

Attendance:

First Name	Last Name	10/28/22	2/22/23	9/27/23	11/29/23	2/19/24
Brent	Classen	P	P	P	P	P
Amy	Francis	P	P	P	P	P
Charlotte	Kister	P		P	P	P
Matt	Pool	P	P	P	P	P
Shannon	Schwarm					
Julie	Simpkins				P	P

Danielle	Russo	P	P	P	P	P
Erin	Hart		P	P	P	P
Mandy	Smith	P	P	P	P	P
Pete	Van Runkle	P	P	P		P