**OHIO HEALTH CARE ASSOCIATION**

**HOME CARE AND HOSPICE BOARD**

**July 21, 2021, 1:00 p.m.**

**Conference Call**

 **MINUTES**

Participants verbally confirmed attendance on the call, and the results are in a table at the end of this document.

Erin Begin, OHCA Home Care and Hospice Director, opened the meeting with a brief introduction and welcome to our meeting on behalf of David Walsh, OHCA Home Care and Hospice Board Chair. The OHCA antitrust compliance, conflict of interest and confidentiality policies were indicated as in the board folder and members acknowledged policies. Mark Knepper then motioned approval of the previous OHCA Home Care and hospice Board meeting minutes, seconded by Bryan Casey.

The meeting started with a review of the OHCA Home Care and Hospice Membership report. Since our last meeting, 5 agency members have been approved; Zimam Home Care, Generations Home Health, The Student Herbalist, Menorah Park Home Health and Menorah Park Hospice. Ms Begin explained that this was mostly a result of Pete reaching out to agency providers who were attending OHCA home care and hospice events as members, and had a OHCA SNF or other member. She also stated that a new member had applied and was pending, Wesley Hospice, bringing total agency member count to 81.

Pete Van Runkle then discussed the Advocacy Agenda items for 2021. For the budget overview, Mr. Van Runkle discussed the 4% and 2% increases approved for Medicaid Home Health and Aging Waiver services, which was being converted to a 6.1% increase tentatively effective November 1, 2021. He also discussed the home health licensure legislation that was included in the budget bill. Ms. Begin mentioned that several members have reached out as to applicability of survey requirements for non-ODA and Medicare certified agencies, as they have separated these services under a separate tax ID number. She added that she has posed this question to ODH for discussion during the next long term care provider meeting scheduled later that day. OHCA would push for participation in the formation of any rule or survey process development as a result of those changes.

Mr. Van Runkle then discussed the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) dollars and how those dollars were divided between the State and Local dollars and the home and community based services (HCBS) funds. While the HCBS funds had a 10% Federal Match that was designated in part to go to providers, the state and local dollars were up for anyone to receive. Ohio has already allocated $2 Billion of the total $2.7 Billion received in this fund. OHCA submitted a proposal to award lump-sum payments to our membership types, including a $47 million payment to hospices which equated to 20% of 2019 revenues. Hospice is not included in the definition of HCBS for that allocation. Ohio recently submitted their plan, which does at least mention providing direct provider payments as a part of their HCBS payment plan. There are no details available at this time, and stakeholders such as OHCA will be included in conversations on the distributions and allocations from the total amount given to Ohio. Ms Begin pointed to the OHCA survey results included in the board folder, demonstration significant loss in gross margins and increases in starting wages. Bryan Casey expressed concern over using the dollar amount reported for home health cost per visit. Mr. Van Runkle stated we would not use that metric and pick and choose the most relevant data. Ms. Begin also stated that the percentages were not grossly impacted by outliers, and that we were in conversations with Ohio Council for Home Care and hospice on combining data for a universal proposal on the HCBS and hospice side.

Mr. Van Runkle then reviewed the Infrastructure bill and Better Care Better Jobs Act, which included a permanent extension of the 10% FMAP for HCBS included in ARPA. He explained that these are not included in the Infrastructure bill, but will be going into the reconciliation process. MS Begin added that our national affiliate, NAHC, was not yet publicly supporting this bill due to concerns over union participation requirements.

Ms Begin discussed the OHCA Annual Conference and Trade Show, and pointed to the list of board activities during the conference. Kathy Chapman reviewed this list in detail, and explained that Ms. Begin would provide a list of vendors that board members should thank during the conference closer to the conference dates. Ms. Begin asked any board members not attending to let her know, as our next board meeting would occur during the conference, as well as photo head shots.

Ms Begin then stated she was in development of a basic Medicaid eligibility and billing course for each member constituency group by member request, and asked that board members provide feedback on specific requests for this program. She also discussed a Home Health Value Based Purchasing virtual event. NAHC had declined to extend discounts to state affiliate members, so OHCA would be working towards offering our own with a member discount.

Ms. Begin then discussed the OHCA Awards for Home Care and Hospice, and thanked board members for their assistance in judging, as well as submitting nominations. Caregiver of the Year will be awarded to Adam Davis of VITAS, Manager of the Year will be awarded to Rhonda Beuerlein of Hospice of Southwest Ohio and Support Service Professional of the Year will be awarded to Megan Schimmoeler of Heritage Home Care. Kathy Chapman explained that these awardees would be recognized during our Awards ceremony at the Annual Conference and Trade Show by invitation, and that the nominees would be notified by letter in the next week.

Ms. Begin then discussed the OHCA Network Development and invited Board members to participate. She noted that the primary objective would be to gain facility contracts, and she would push for home health and hospice. She also stated that Humana was already in the conversation and she requested hospice contracts for VBID. Home health and hospice agency dues would be much less to start due to availability of contracts. The end goal would be to eliminate the need for less reputable intermediaries such as CSI.

Ms. Begin then moved to the reporting of key issues. The home health proposed payment rule included a 1.7% increase and expansion of Home Health Value Based Purchasing nationwide. It also included hospice survey enforcement action changes including civil money penalties, special focus agencies, and surveyor training requirements to operate as a time. Changes were forthcoming on the changes to display of data on Compare.gov. She stated that OHCA added sessions for these key changes at the OHCA conference and trade show in August.

Ms. Begin also discussed the OSHA Emergency Temporary Standard for COVID 19 and pointed to the OSHA webinar scheduled for tomorrow, as there are still many questions relative to the applicability to HCBS. Mr. Van Runkle discussed the Nursing Facility rate setting delays as it relates to hospice room and board. Rates are ready and completed, and OHCA has requested calculations to verify validity. ODM was experiencing technical issues in putting the rate setting package together for facility use, but we would publish to hospice members as soon as it was available. Ms. Begin stated that the MyCare Plans were paying the old rates. Buckeye and Molina would suspend the claims until August 15, at which time they would pay the old rates if the new rates aren’t loaded.

Ms Begin asked if there was any new business. Hearing none, Mark Knepper made a motion to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Bryan Casey. The next meeting is scheduled for August 25 at 12pm at the annual conference and trade show.

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| **First Name** | **Last Name** | **Company/Agency** | **7/21/2021** |
| Erin  | Begin | OHCA Staff | X |
| Bryan | Casey | Buckeye Hospice and Palliative Care | X |
| Mark | Knepper | VITAS Healthcare | X |
| Kathy | Chapman | OHCA Staff | X |
| Mike | McConnell | Absolute Home Health and Hospice | X |
| Eric | Talbert | Heartland Home Health and Hospice |  |
| Genevieve | Stelzer | Heritage Home Care | X |
| Bill | Levering | TLC Home Health Care |  |
| David | Walsh | Hospice of Southwest Ohio/ Carebridge | X |
| Pete | Van Runkle | OHCA Staff | X |