

Meeting Summary for OHCA NF Member Call

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Quick recap

pete and Ruby Joe Lubarsky discussed several health and work-related topics. pete had undergone face surgery and was uncomfortable appearing on camera, while Ruby Joe mentioned a helpful colleague, Adam Mather. They also discussed health conditions of others, including Joseph T.'s upcoming ankle surgery and changes to the private room reimbursement incentive. pete explained the private room incentive program, its implementation process, and potential funding for a project. They also discussed the criteria for approving private rooms and the procedure for approving people into a program. Lastly, they addressed several questions and concerns about the private room rate program and its impact on the healthcare setting.

Summary

Health, Meetings, and Policy Updates

pete and Ruby Joe Lubarsky discussed their health conditions and the upcoming meeting. pete had recently undergone face surgery and was uncomfortable appearing on camera, while Ruby Joe mentioned a colleague, Adam Mather, who could be helpful. They also talked about Joseph T., who is set for ankle surgery in January. pete confirmed that Ruby Joe was temporarily filling their role from Kentucky, with a permanent replacement on the horizon. pete also discussed changes to the private room reimbursement incentive, which facilities could start applying for as of January 1st. They clarified the process for asking questions during the meeting and mentioned a later webinar for specific questions about the application process. pete also shared several reminders and updates, including the status of a lawsuit, the deadline for assisted living facilities to qualify for the memory care rate, and the impending finalization of skilled nursing facility and RCF licensing rules.

Private Room Incentive Program Explanation

pete explained the private room incentive program, which was created as part of the Budget Bill earlier this year. This program offers an additional payment for Medicaid residents in private rooms, with the incentive amount depending on the type of room. The program is yet to be implemented, and its commencement is subject to approval from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). pete highlighted that this program is new not only for Ohio, but also nationally, and that Ohio's Department of Medicaid must approve each private room or facility's private rooms before they can receive the incentive payment. pete also clarified that the program's start date is six months post-CMS approval, making it unlikely to commence in April 2024 as previously suggested.

Project Timeline and Private Room Criteria Discussion

Joe and pete discussed the timeline and potential funding for a project, with pete suggesting that the earliest possible data could be available by October 2022, 15 months into the Biennium. They then moved on to a discussion about private rooms and their criteria for approval. pete explained that a private room is defined by statute as a bedroom meeting certain criteria, including access to a hallway and a toilet without traversing another bedroom. The criteria for approval include meeting this definition and either being a private room existing on July 1, being created by surrendering licensed beds, or being part of a facility licensed after July 1. pete also clarified that a facility cannot count banked beds towards private rooms. Joe raised a question about the status of beds that were in a semi-private room before the Banger, but pete confirmed that these would not qualify.

Program Approval Procedure and Qualifications

pete discussed the procedure for approving people into a program. They clarified that beds don't need to be surrendered until the program is approved by Cms and outlined additional qualifications required for approval. They emphasized the importance of submitting applications quickly and discussed the statutory dollar cap on projected spending for a program, which is set at \$40 million for fiscal year 24 and \$160 million for fiscal year 25 and subsequent years. pete also clarified that unspent funds from one fiscal year do not carry over to the next.

Medicaid Application Process Discussed

pete discussed the recent adoption of an emergency rule outlining the general terms of the Medicaid application process, emphasizing the Department's authority to create rules and the possibility of more depending on CMS approval. They clarified that the application process for category one rooms will open on January 2nd, 2024, and more information about the requirements is expected. pete also explained the application process for category one and two private rooms in a facility, the documentation required, and the first-come-first-serve nature of the process due to a dollar cap. Curtis inquired about the acceptability of an excel spreadsheet floor plan, to which pete responded that no specific format had been stated.

Medicaid Projections and Room Priority Discussion

pete discussed the projection for the Medicaid program, assuming that 50% of private room days would be used by Medicaid patients, on an annualized basis. They expressed concern about potential overspending of the allocated budget. pete also outlined the priority given to category one private rooms and explained the approval process for category two rooms. They shared their estimate that nearly half of all remaining beds in qualifying facilities could potentially qualify as category one private rooms. Lastly, they discussed the issue of special focus facilities not having star ratings and estimated around 235 to 237 special focus facilities, further reducing the total number of beds available.

Healthcare Private Room Utilization Criteria

pete discussed the application of certain criteria to spending and private rooms in a healthcare setting, highlighting potential payment cuts when utilization exceeds 50%. They outlined the

reconsideration process if a private room application is denied and additional qualifications after FY25. Pete also addressed issues with facilities refusing to participate in family satisfaction surveys and the uncertainty surrounding the private room rate program due to the need for CMS approval. They clarified that once approved, an applicant wouldn't have to reapply annually and that the program might get filled but there's a possibility for expansion in the future. They also addressed several questions and concerns, including the possibility of applying for the program in subsequent years, the fate of unspent funds if the program doesn't get up and running quickly, and the impact of implementing private rooms on the quality of care. The discussion ended with Pete promising to post a summary of the meeting and continue the discussion in the following week's meeting.

Next steps

Pete will answer Brad's question about the private room application process in an upcoming webinar.

Pending more information on the application process, providers should prepare to submit their applications as early as possible on January 2nd. Providers should also monitor updates on the dollar cap and its impact on the number of private rooms that can be approved.