

Meeting summary for OHCA Assisted living member call (03/04/2025)

Quick recap

The monthly assisted living member call covered updates on Service Plan delivery delays, changes in processes for area agencies on aging, and legislative matters affecting Medicaid eligibility and patient liability. Discussions included state budget advocacy efforts, federal budget concerns, and issues with the long-term care quality navigator and consumer guide. Concerns were raised about the accuracy of the Care Portal's quiz and its potential impact on the assisted living industry in Ohio.

Next steps

- Pete to follow up with the Department of Aging regarding issues with the long-term care navigator quiz and provider information survey.
- Pete to address Kristin's specific license renewal issue with ODH.
- OHCA to continue advocating for assisted living rate increases and regular rate reviews in the state budget process.
- OHCA to monitor and engage in federal budget process discussions, particularly regarding potential Medicaid cuts.
- OHCA members to register early for the OHCA convention and use coupons for free admission before the early bird deadline.
- OHCA members to submit scholarship applications by March 14th deadline.
- Assisted living providers to be aware of potential changes in resident Medicaid eligibility due to Social Security Fairness Act payments.
- Assisted living providers co-located with SNFs to apply for their own NPI if coming up for recertification.
- OHCA to follow up with the Department of Aging regarding stakeholder input on the new satisfaction survey process and instrument.

Summary

Assisted Living Member Call Updates.

Pete initiated the monthly assisted living member call, which was delayed by a week. Erin then provided updates, starting with reports from area agencies on aging about delays in Service Plan delivery due to increased beneficiary caseload and workload. She mentioned that the Central Ohio Area Agency on Aging had agreed to send the Service Plan communication to both the beneficiary and the provider to improve efficiency. Erin also mentioned a change from Direction Home, which now requires a completed resident agreement, a process that could be challenging for providers. She

encouraged members to inform the team about any specific changes to processes they encounter with area agencies on aging.

Social Security Act, Nursing Rules, and Conventions

Erin provides updates on several topics. The Social Security Fairness Act removes windfall elimination penalties, resulting in lump sum payments to some beneficiaries by March end, which could impact Medicaid eligibility and patient liability for waiver providers. New draft rules for certified medication aids have been issued by the Board of Nursing, aligning with previous legislation and expanding their scope of practice. Erin also mentions a change requiring assisted living waiver programs co-located with SNFs to obtain their own NPI due to the switch from MITS to PNM. She concludes by reminding members about the OHCA convention registration and scholarship application deadlines.

Pete on Budget Bill and Advocacy

Erin discussed the management of their association's scholarships and introduced Pete to provide an update on the state budget process and federal issues. Pete detailed the recent Budget Bill release and the new hearing format, noting their efforts to advocate for rate increases and a streamlined cost review process for assisted living facilities. He also mentioned their support for bed hold payments for Medicaid beneficiaries. Pete emphasized that the advocacy approach is uniform across all home and community-based services. The outcome of these discussions remains uncertain, and future house hearings may require further action.

Medicaid Advocacy Amidst Budget Contention

Pete discussed the ongoing federal budget process, particularly the contentious tax cuts and their impact on the deficit. He noted the two-step process of passing a budget resolution and then reconciliation, where committees identify specific spending cuts. Pete highlighted the Senate's more conservative approach to Medicaid cuts compared to the House version, emphasizing the need to educate about services to people not being classified as waste or abuse. He concluded by mentioning the need for continued national and state-level advocacy to protect Medicaid payments for services to people.

Quality Navigator Quiz and Consumer Guide Revamp

Pete discussed the ongoing process of creating a committee and the committee's advocacy work. He also mentioned a new feature in the long-term care quality navigator that allows users to determine whether they should look at skilled nursing or assisted living options. However, he expressed concerns about the quiz's accuracy. Pete also discussed the revamping of the long-term care consumer guide, which will now include both resident and family satisfaction data but will take longer to post. He raised the issue of stakeholders not being involved in the process and recommended that stakeholder input be sought.

Care Portal Quiz Concerns Addressed

In the meeting, Kristen expressed concerns about the Care Portal's quiz, which she believed was potentially damaging to the assisted living industry in Ohio. Pete and Erin confirmed that the quiz was inaccurate and providing bad advice, and that they had previously raised these concerns. Pete agreed to take Kristen's specific license issue up with the Department of Aging, and both parties agreed to address the issues with the Care Portal survey with the relevant department.

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