

ATTACHMENT A

Maine Quality Forum Advisory Council

July 9, 2004
Minutes of Meeting

MQF Advisory Council members present: Jonathan Beal, Laureen Biczak, Rebecca Colwell, Frank Johnson, Nancy Kelleher, Jim McGregor, Becky Martins, Lisa Miller, Chip Morrison, Dan Roet, Steve Shannon, David White, and Janice Wnek. Dennis Shubert, Maine Quality Forum, Tom Dunne, Dirigo Health Agency and Maureen Booth, Muskie School of Public Service were also in attendance.

Minutes

Minutes of the June 11, 2004 meeting were accepted as distributed.

Dirigo Health Update

Adam Thompson from the Governor's Office of Health Policy and Finance described the ongoing activities of Dirigo Health's committees and agencies. Tom Dunne updated attendees on current negotiations with the only company that responded to the State's Request for Proposal. It is anticipated that negotiations will be completed July 31 pending resolution of outstanding issues. Simultaneously, Dirigo is working with the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) and the State's MaineCare program to assure readiness for the program.

MQF Web Site

Dennis Shubert discussed plans to launch a web site in September that will ultimately serve as a platform for presenting consumer-friendly data on health care use rates and best practices. Members reinforced the need to assure that information was presented at the 6th grade level and to consider alternative methods for educating consumers who may not be computer literate.

Provider Group

Rebecca Colwell, chair of the MQF Provider Subgroup, reported that her committee met to review additional nominations submitted for membership into the MQF Provider Group. The following persons were recommended for membership in accordance with adopted criteria relating to experience, geographic dispersion and commitment to quality of care:

RN Faculty: Jane Kirschling
Physician Assistant: Shawn McGlew
Chiropractor: Christopher Pingitore

The MQFAC approved the above nominations. It was noted that the community pharmacy and Indian Health positions remain open and that additional solicitations for these positions are underway.

Revolving Loan Fund

Dr. Shubert requested that further discussion on this issue be postponed until late summer at which time additional information would be available regarding how best to lower the cost of borrowing to assist health care providers in accessing and implementing information technologies.

Technology Assessment Committee

Jonathan Beal, chair of the Technology Assessment Committee, reviewed the status of the Committee's activities relating to LD 616, a proposal to institute nurse staffing ratios in hospitals to improve patient safety. In response to a legislative request to study the issue, the MQFAC requested that the Technology Assessment Committee review current literature and status of nurse staffing in Maine hospitals and prepare recommendations for consideration by the MQFAC. Mr. Beal reported that a preliminary report was prepared under contract with the Muskie School of Public Service synthesizing current literature on the relationship of nurse staffing and patient safety. This report is currently under review by the Committee and is being distributed more broadly for additional review and comment. In another phase of its work, the Committee is exploring options for obtaining information on current nurse staffing levels in Maine hospitals through state licensure surveys.

Mr. Beal reported that a meeting of the Provider Group was scheduled for July 29 to get their input into the issue. Staff was requested to circulate a copy of the preliminary report to MQFAC members and interested parties.

Performance Measurement Committee

Jan Wnek, chair of the Performance Measurement Committee, reported that an additional indicator was recommended for inclusion in the core measurement set to be adopted by the MQF, Maine Hospital Association and the Maine HealthCare Management Coalition. The MAFAC approved the inclusion of central line infection rates in the core measurement set.

Public Comments

In response to a question about data comparability, Dr. Shubert noted that, when similar information was being presented, the website would use the same data sources as currently used by the Maine Health Management Coalition.

There being no further questions the meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.