

**HEALTH PLAN OF SAN MATEO**  
**CONSUMER ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**Meeting Minutes**  
**Thursday, June 11, 2020**

Important notice regarding COVID-19: Based on guidance from the California Department of Public Health and the California Governor's Office, in order to minimize the spread of the COVID-19 virus, the meeting was conducted via online meeting/teleconference. Members of the public were invited to submit public comment via email to the Assistant Clerk to the Commission in advance of the meeting and were also able to access the meeting using the web and teleconference information provided on the meeting notice.

**Committee Members Present:** Amira Elbeshbeshy, Mary Pappas, Rob Fucilla, Ricky Kot, Judy Garcia, Cynthia Pascual

**Committee Members Absent:** Hazel Carrillo, Cynthia Pascual

**Staff Present:** Maya Altman, Pat Curran, Carolyn Thon, Gabrielle Ault-Riche, Karla Rosado-Torres, Keisha Williams, Megan Noe, Sarah Munoz, Samareen Shami, Katie Elyse-Turner, Karen Fitzgerald, Colleen Murphey, Kati Phillips, Michelle Heryford

**1.0 Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 12:06 pm by Ms. Elbeshbeshy.

**2.0 Public Comment:** There was no public comment via email or by the public.

**3.0 Approval of Agenda:** The agenda was approved unanimously via roll call. **M/S/P**

**4.0 Approval of Meeting Minutes for March 5, 2020:** The meeting summary was approved as presented unanimously via roll call. **M/S/P**

**5.0 HPSM Operational Reports and Updates:**

**COVID-19 Outreach:** Ms. Phillips outlined outreach efforts made to HPSM members by Provider Services (PS) and HPSM staff during the COVID-19 shelter in place. Cross departmental task forces were created in the early days of the stay-at-home order to streamline member and provider efforts ensuring HPSM members have access to health care services, supplies and medications as well as accurate information, food and social support. They identified three Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF's) as COVID-19 Centers of Excellence (COE's). Judy Garcia asked if Carlmont Gardens in San Carlos is one of the COE's taking COVID-19 positive patients. Ms. Phillips noted while it is an HPSM facility they are working closely with, it is not one of the COE's. Mr. Kot said he has heard from many members that are expressing appreciation for HPSM's flexibility with prescriptions and supplies. They have

remarked on the hard work HPSM is doing to ensure members' needs are met. However, he said not all members are getting the supplies they need. Incontinence supplies in particular are short. Dr. Moore interjected to say unfortunately, these problems are occurring nationwide. HPSM's Provider Services department is working on identifying suppliers. Dr. Moore added that some of the durable medical equipment (DME) providers are also having difficulties at this time.

Ms. Philips also spoke about Teledoc. This arrangement thru LA Care allows Providers to offer virtual primary care services. It is available to any member whose assigned PCP is not able to provide telemedicine. Ms. Ault-Riche noted that the Pharmacy has expanded the scripts for the medication therapy management benefit. This benefit ensures that HPSM pharmacists reach out to members to review their medication plan. They have now incorporated COVID related subjects into these conversations. The Pharmacy has also relaxed restrictions on refills, making it easier to obtain early refills and 90-day supplies. They have also publicized the fact that pharmacies are offering free delivery. Ms. Ault-Riche said one of the first things they did related to access was to leverage existing relationships with a couple of vendors to do telephonic wellness checks, focusing on older members and those with chronic conditions or disabilities. She informed the group that pregnant women, new moms and asthmatics are other risk groups for COVID that they've identified. In response they are incorporating COVID related subjects to this population when reaching out. In order to make sure that members have access to accurate information HPSM has created a microsite on the HPSM website. They then sent postcards to all members advising them of the microsite and providing them with a "cheat sheet" of important phone numbers and information about COVID as well as resources for meal deliveries and information on member eligibility. She went over the different ways they are addressing meal insecurity by expanding Mom's Meals as well as the addition of Great Plates Delivered. HPSM is also exploring a volunteer effort for grocery deliveries to members requiring it. Mr. Kot noted that the County is currently serving 1300+ meals to San Mateo County residents from approximately 60 local restaurants. This program has been extended to July 10, 2020. Ms. Ault-Riche reminded the group this effort has the added benefit of supporting local restaurants in the area, which is sorely needed at this time as well.

Finally, she went over the informal Social Outreach calls HPSM staff has been making to check in on members, reminding the committee that isolation was already an issue for many members and COVID-19 has only exacerbated it. They have also tweaked the Wider Circle program to incorporate member-to-member Buddy Calls and embarked on a "Dear Neighbor" postcard mailing campaign with the help of volunteers. Mr. Kot inquired about the frequency of the member outreach calls. Ms. Ault-Riche replied the Buddy calls are ongoing, the Social Outreach calls by HPSM staff tend to be a one-time call, due to the volume and employees bandwidth. Mr. Kot said the County has been doing something similar, reaching out bi-weekly to high risk clients as a wellness check. Ms. Ault-Riche asked to meet with him offline to hear about their efforts so as not to duplicate calls and outreach.

**5.1.1 CEO Update:** CEO Maya Altman stated how proud she is with how everyone at HPSM has rallied during this difficult time. Particularly HPSM's response and how they reached out and put members' needs at the forefront. She is also impressed with the San Mateo counties response. She remarked that one of the more concerning issues for her is the number of COVID cases and deaths in nursing homes and assisted living care facilities. She noted the need to protect vulnerable individuals in these settings as well as the need for a comprehensive testing plan to prevent outbreaks. She also said there needs to be assurances that assisted living facilities have the resources they need to deal with a COVID outbreak. She noted there is a lot of public pressure for local officials to address this. It is such a concern that the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors is considering making an investment to ensure there is a team devoted exclusively to congregant living.

She also spoke about proposed budget cuts that are coming down the line that she is really concerned about. Particularly the ones around home and community based services that help keep members out of institutions. There are also cuts to Medi-Cal that are coming up. One positive sign is the proposal for a Long Term Care (LTC) at home benefit. She believes the reason they are offering this is because they are now realizing that congregant facilities can be a dangerous place to be. There is an urgency to provide alternatives in this area. Mr. Fucilla inquired if the deaths occurring in congregant homes are the smaller or larger houses. Ms. Altman said they tend to be occurring in medium sized homes, she hasn't seen as many at the smaller ones. She said the County has it broken down on their public health website.

**CMO Update:** Dr. Richard Moore reported an uptick in positive COVID-19 cases in the county. Not all are visibly sick, some are asymptomatic. He noted the World Health Organization (WHO) has retracted their statement that there was little risk of transmission from an asymptomatic positive patient. He reiterated that skilled nursing facilities have been hit hard with the COVID outbreak with up to 40% of US deaths from COVID-19 having taken place in nursing homes or long-term care facilities. Deaths in California nursing homes from COVID-19 more than doubled during the month of May. A total of 1,190 nursing home residents died from the disease last month alone, representing more than half of the state's coronavirus-related deaths for the month.

Dr. Moore spoke about the coalition created of skilled nursing facilities (SNF's). They consist of administrators, medical directors, and infection preventionists representing 23 facilities, including one long term acute care hospital. Two new members of the coalition include non-contracted SNFs; The Sequoias in Portola Valley and Vista Terrace in Belmont. The goals of the coalition meetings include the sharing of best practices, discussion about problems and obstacles, learning about work around techniques (given the shortage of PPE), patient and staff COVID testing, complying with mandated reporting to CMS, CDPH, and the County, and bringing in guest experts. They have recently featured Dr. Michael Wasserman, President of the California Association of Long Term Care Medicine. Local speakers have included Dr.

Albert Tam, geriatrician, who leads the PAMF and Santa Clara County's SNF response. In closing he noted that in mid-May the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) released a report entitled "Toolkit on State Actions to Mitigate COVID-19 Prevalence in Nursing Homes." In it, they applaud the efforts of HPSM and the San Mateo County Health Department for having designated three skilled nursing facilities (SNFs) as Centers of Excellence (COE) to proactively coordinate care for COVID-19 residents.

**5.1.2 Quality Improvement:** Ms. Munoz opened with an update on the Population needs Assessment (PNA). The PNA's purpose is to create a profile of HPSM members and lay out HPSM's health education, cultural and linguistically appropriate services and quality improvement efforts. They hope it will help them identify gaps they may have in these areas. She briefly went over the health Education topics they currently offer and issues they have found that are concerning to members of the community. As well as the modes of communication they use to share this information with members. They are also considering a text messaging campaign.

Ms. Garcia thanked them for the information and outreach. She feels many of those in nursing homes are not getting the information they seek during this time. Ms. Ault-Riche offered to work with Ms. Garcia offline to see about how best to reach out to members in nursing homes or congregant facilities. Ms. Altman noted the challenge of reaching out to those isolated in nursing homes, she said they are always looking at ideas and ways to reach that population.

**5.1.3 Grievance and Appeals:** Ms. Rosado-Torres briefly reviewed the Grievance and Appeals (G&A) report. She informed the committee that Medi-Cal has halted dis-enrollment for the time being. They have also extended the deeming process, which gives Cal-Medicconnect members time to stay in the CareAdvantage (CA) program.

**5.1.4 Provider Services:** The Provider Services report presented by Ms. Phillips and Ms. Murphey was incorporated into Item 5.0 – COVID-19 Member Outreach, where they outlined efforts by HPSM to provide both provider & member support in a variety of areas during the COVID-19 shelter-in-place.

**5.1.5 Member Services:** Time did not permit reviewing the Member Services report as a group. However, all reports were provided in the packet for members to peruse at their convenience and Ms. Ault-Riche announced she will review them briefly at the July 23, 2020 meeting.

**6.0 New Business:** There was no new business.

**7.0 Adjournment:** The meeting was adjourned at 1:10 by Ms. Elbeshbeshy.

Respectfully submitted:

*M. Heryford*

M. Heryford

Assistant Clerk to the Commission