

Montgomery Cares Advisory Board

December 13, 2023 Meeting Notes

MCAB Members Present: Dr. Katherine Kelly, Susan Emery, Dr. Kisha Davis, Yuchi Huang, Peter Lowet, Diana Saladini, Melanie Bunting, Wayne Swann, Dr. Helaine Resnick

MCAB Members Absent: Sharron Holquin, Viviana Azar, Mark Foraker, Melinda Hite, Denise Kishel

DHHS Staff: Dr. Tricia Boyce, Magda Brown, Sean Gibson, Robert Morrow, Dr. Christopher Rogers, Rebecca Smith, Ashley Miller

County Council Staff: Tara Clemons Johnson

Primary Care Coalition: Leslie Graham, Marisol Ortiz, Aisha Mason (Robinson), Sara Woods, Dr. Veronica Vela, Sarah Frazell

Guest:

Diana Saladini called the meeting to order at 6:15 pm. Meeting was held virtually.

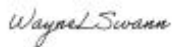
Item		Action Follow-up	Person Assigned	Due Date
1.	<p>Approval of Minutes – October 25, 2023</p> <p>Moved to January meeting due to lack of quorum.</p>	Review and approve October minutes at the January 2024 meeting.		
2.	<p>Montgomery Cares Advisory Board Chair Report – Wayne Swann</p> <p>Wayne Swann re-affirmed that the board will be responsible for the minutes starting July 2023. He would take the minutes for the July and September meetings and seek volunteers for the balance of the year. Mark Foraker volunteered to take the minutes for the October meeting. The Chair offered to take the minutes for the December meeting as well and Yuchi Huang has volunteered to take minutes for the January 2024 meeting. A Board volunteer is needed to take the February 2024 minutes.</p> <p>The nomination and voting process for Chair and Vice Chair has been postponed until Board vacancies have been filled and all Board members are seated.</p>	Yuchi Huang will take notes for the January 2024 meeting. A volunteer is needed for the		

	<p>Wayne Swann provided an update on the vacancy/interview process for new and reappointed Board members. The Vacancy Notice for MCAB closed in November, but was extended due to the number of applications received. The extended MCAB Vacancy Notice will close on January 8, 2024. The Boards Committees and Commissions Office of the County Executive (BCC) oversees the application and initial vetting process. Once applications are released the Nominating Committee will conduct interviews and provide recommendations to the County Executive for consideration. Yuchi Huang and Susan Emery have volunteered to serve on this year’s Nominating Committee.</p> <p>Members Helaine Resnick and Susan Emery inquired about the process for advertising the Vacancy Notice. The BCC manages the process of developing, advertising and overseeing the Vacancy Notice process. BCC Vacancy Notices are posted on the County’s website and shared through County listservs among other methods. Board members are also highly encouraged to share the vacancy postings.</p>	February minutes.		
3.	<p>County Health Officer Update – Dr. Kisha Davis</p> <p>Covid-19 levels went from low to medium this past month. Vaccination rates remain lower that expected. Montgomery Count overall has a higher average vaccination rate compared to the State. Howard County has the highest vaccination rate in the State.</p> <p>Vaccination push in nursing homes in the County. DHHS is reaching out to County nursing homes and will be recognizing those publicly with awards those who have greater than 75% and 50% of their residents vaccinated. DHHS will work with nursing homes to determine a vaccination plan to increase vaccination numbers.</p> <p>Illness related hospitalizations and ICU visits still primarily contributed to COVID-19, followed by Flu and RSV. Two deaths in the State have been attributed to influenza, higher rates of death were attributed to COVID-19 in fall 2023. The currently predominant strain of COVID-19 is milder. People are having symptoms, but recovering at a higher rate and more quickly. COVID-19 is currently expected to peak in mid-January.</p> <p>RSV has bene on the uptick, but DHHS is cautiously optimistic that RSV has hit its peak. Influenza is on the rise.</p> <p>The County is continuing to see a rise in fentanyl and opioid overdoses. The County is working to get these numbers under control and are working to increase access for youth assistance, treatment and care. Conversations are currently taking place between the County, State and private entities to reopen beds for youth and outpatient treatment. Resources are available for those who are insured and uninsured and on medical assistance. The County has been in conversation with Mary’s Center and the juvenile justice system in Prince George's County talking about resources for medication assisted treatment.</p> <p>The County has also started to look a lot at youth safety, youth harm and violence and the impact of gun violence through a more holistic lense. There has been an increase in youth victimization and youth being victims of crime. The Community Health Needs Assessment found that a protective factor was safe</p>			

	<p>environments and safe neighborhoods. The County wants to make sure that we are increasing safe environments and neighborhoods and making that accessible for everyone.</p> <p>The County has been working on sickle cell anemia and raising the flag on this issue to increase awareness around sickle cell education around the disease to ensure that Montgomery County is a sickle cell friendly place.</p> <p>There is an increase in sesame seed allergy. Earlier this year, legislation was passed requiring manufacturers and bakers and producers to list sesame as an allergen on their packaging. Unfortunately, sesame has become a popular additive. The County is trying to raise the alarm and asking clinicians to notify their patients of this.</p>			
4.	<p>Health Care for the Uninsured Report – Dr. Christopher Rogers and DHHS Staff See Report</p> <p>Board members were asked prior to the meeting to review the Healthcare for the Uninsured Report and to bring any questions to the meeting.</p> <p>Peter Lowet inquired if there were any anticipated program areas where there may be a budget or programmatic challenge for the current or coming fiscal year in regards to the Healthcare for the Uninsured programs. DHHS staff will provide an update on this at the January 2024 meeting.</p>	DHHS Staff will provide an update on any programmatic challenges at the January 2024 meeting.		
5.	<p>Care for Kids Update – Marisol Ortiz See Report</p> <p>Marisol provided an overview of the first quarter for the Care for Kids program.</p> <p>Dr. Davis noted the numbers for utilization of behavioral health services and the hope that they will continue to rise over the remainder of the fiscal year in light of the increase in youth substance abuse. An increase in utilization of behavioral health services may have an impact on the number of referral for substance abuse.</p>			
6.	<p>Discussion of FY25 Second Tier Priorities – Diana Saladini</p> <p>Discussion on second tier priorities will be postponed until the release of the County Executive’s FY25 budget recommendations.</p>			

	<p>Diana noted the increasing the reimbursement rate to \$175 per encounter for the Montgomery Cares program remains the top priority. As the County Executive’s budget recommendations are being finalized/in anticipation of possible questions from OMB, Diana asked MCBA members for their thoughts regarding a phased in approach. For this a rate of \$155 would be suggested for one year, and a raise to \$175 for the following year. Diana noted this strategy may be advantageous in light of feedback from County Council last year, which noted the MCAB reimbursement rate request as unprecedented. Challenges to this strategy include rising healthcare costs and the concern that the longer the rate is postponed the further away it will be from a competitive and comparable rate.</p> <p>These considerations will be included in discussion with OMB.</p>			
7.	<p>Update Final Letter: MCAB FY25 Priorities to County Executive – Wayne Swann</p> <p>MCAB submitted a letter on FY25 advocacy and policy priorities in November 2023. The County Executive is still in the process of finalizing FY25 budget recommendations. An update on this will be provided at the January 2024 meeting.</p> <p>As the County Executive’s budget is in the process of still being finalized, items noted on the MCAB Policy and Advocacy Priorities Timeline will need to be adjusted to reflect the updated timeline.</p>			
8.	<p>Agenda and Next Steps Next meeting is on Wednesday, January 24, 2024 and will be held virtually using Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>Meeting Adjournment The meeting was adjourned at 7:20 PM <i>Moved by Diana Saladini</i> <i>Seconded by Susan Emery</i></p>			

Respectfully submitted,



Wayne Swann
Montgomery Cares Advisory Board