

Access and Affordability Committee  
Meeting Summary  
Monday, December 11, 2006  
Holiday Inn on the River, Casper

Participants: Rex Arney, Rick Schum, Lynn Birleffi, John McBride, Tom Gallagher, Lori Jasperson, Lloyd Wilder, Barb Rea, Representative Jack Landon, Representative Bob Brechtel, Susie Scott-Mullen (staff).

Items on the agenda for the meeting included a review of the Health, Labor and Social Services Committee meeting and outline of the questions/concerns for Dr. Jon Gruber, consultant to the A&A committee.

Rick Schum presented a brief review of the recommendation for Access and Affordability made to the Joint Health and Labor Committee meeting regarding proposed changes to the Wyoming High Risk Pool, designed to lower the number of uninsured and lower premiums. The proposed changes involve two levels of participants in the pool based on the income of participants. Level one is participants with incomes at 300% FPL, and level two is participants with incomes less than 300% FPL. Rick reported that due to time constraints it was not possible for a full presentation at Joint Health and Labor, and that Senator Charles Scott would carry the bill forward rather than the proposal being a committee-sponsored bill.

The committee then spent time reviewing the items to be discussed during the call with Dr. Jon Gruber, consultant to the Access and Affordability committee. Options for a more aggressive approach to available Medicaid dollars, the millions of dollars it would cost to insure 46,000 uninsured persons, how to determine affordable and needy and transparency were a few of the items listed as concerns.

Further discussion led the committee agreeing to address the transparency issues on a separate track, rather than on the access and affordability track, which would probably be a natural component in a later phase.

The latter half of the meeting was devoted to a call with Jon Gruber. One of the purposes of the call was to narrow down some of the "moving pieces" involved in the project. Essentially, it was determined that nothing had been ruled out at this point, and everything was still a possibility. Specifics addressed or acknowledged during the discussion with Jon Gruber included:

- Wyoming's expensive healthcare delivery system.
- The current cost of insurance in Wyoming today, the cost of non-group, the cost of group and the idea of bare bones coverage.
- Long-term guideposts for decision making.

- New modeling possibilities for Medicaid to reflect HSAs.
- Finding the balance between too much insurance vs. initial primary care insurance.
- Defining needy and affordable considering WY Constitutional constraints.
- Coverage questions, e.g.
  - How much subsidy can we spend?
  - Do we make everyone buy if it costs 20% of their income?
  - How much do we mandate them to buy?
  
- Mandate is essentially a tax to help pay for the not-so-healthy.
- Using uncompensated care dollars to reduce cost
- WY has only 4% managed care
- Cost and Quality Commission in Massachusetts
  - A possibility in Wyoming?
  - The purpose, the workings, the outcomes, etc.

The next meeting of the Access and Affordability Committee is January 8 in Cheyenne. Depending on agenda items and time available, Jon Gruber might participate via phone in the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 p.m.