

**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH (MDH)/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
ADMINISTRATION (DDA) RATE REVIEW ADVISORY GROUP**

**DATE:** Thursday, January 26, 2023

**TIME:** 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM

**LOCATION:** GoToWebinar

This meeting was held through GoToWebinar only.

Registration for the Rate Review Advisory Group Meeting on Thursday, January 26, 2023 10AM EST was available at: [Maryland Department of Health DDA Rate Review Advisory Group](https://constantcontact.com) (constantcontact.com)

After registering, participants received a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

## **AGENDA**

1. **Welcome and Introductions** - *Jennifer McIlvaine, Director of Finance, Medicaid, MDH*
2. **General Ledger Data Collection Process** - *The Hilltop Institute at UMBC*
3. **Rate Development Process Review** - *Jennifer McIlvaine*
4. **Review of Rate Review Cycle**- *Jennifer McIlvaine*
5. **Discussion of FY25 Rate Review Priorities** - *CBIZ Optumas*
6. **Open Discussion**
7. **Next Steps and Adjournment** - *Jennifer McIlvaine*

### **Co-Chairs**

1. Jennifer McIlvaine, Director of Finance, Medicaid, MDH
2. Robert White, Director of Administrative Services, DDA

### **Advisory Group Members Present**

1. Donna Retzlaff, Spring Dell Center
2. Shauna Mulcahy, The Arc Frederick County
3. Scott Hollingsworth, Appalachian Crossroads
4. Gregory Miller, Penn-Mar
5. Karen Adams-Gilchrist, Providence Center
6. Laura Howell, MACS
  - a. Sharon Lewis, MACS
  - b. Maria Dominiak, MACS
7. Christian Parks, Somerset Community Services
8. Karen Lee, SEEC/EAG
9. Carol Custer, SDAN
10. Mat Rice, People on the Go (invited)

### **DDA Panelists**

1. Bernard Simons, Deputy Secretary
2. Elizabeth Peters, Deputy Director, Administrative Services
3. Nick Burton, Director of Programs

### **The Hilltop Institute and CBIZ Optumas Panelists**

1. Steve Schramm, CBIZ Optumas X
2. Caleb Levan, CBIZ Optumas (invited)
3. Megan Frenzen, CBIZ Optumas (invited)
4. Christin Diehl, The Hilltop Institute
5. Todd Switzer, The Hilltop Institute
6. Kris Welch, CBIZ Optumas
7. Cynthia Woodcock, The Hilltop Institute
8. Alice Middleton, The Hilltop Institute

**DDA Office of Change Management Panelist**

1. Emily Ornstein, Consultant

## **MDH/DDA RATE REVIEW ADVISORY GROUP MINUTES**

Thursday, January 26, 2023

10:00 am to 12:00 pm

### **WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Ms. Jennifer McIlvaine, Director of Finance, Medicaid, MDH, called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. As part of the welcome address, Ms. McIlvaine thanked members for being a vital part of the Maryland Department of Health's commitments to the development of adequate and sustainable rates. This effort promotes the vision and mission of the DDA community. Members' participation and contributions sets the precedent for an open, informed and transparent process to reviewing rates.

As a start to the calendar year 2023 rate review cycle, RRAG members introduced themselves to members of the public present.

### **GENERAL LEDGER DATA COLLECTION PROCESS**

Ms. Christin Diehl, The Hilltop Institute, shared details on the work underway with a group of providers who volunteered to participate in a general ledger data collection provider pilot workgroup. Ms. Diehl expressed appreciation for the feedback the RRAG shared on the draft template prior to the start of the work group. Edits proposed by the RRAG members were incorporated.

The purpose of the pilot provider general ledger group was to provide feedback on the draft general ledger data collection template, instructions, and process. This included asking participants to complete the draft general ledger data collection template to note areas that providers would need to update their processes or systems. Ms. Diehl summarized the selection process for the sixteen (16) member workgroup, the process of soliciting feedback, and main areas of concern from the providers who participated in the workgroup around the template and data collection.

Volunteers for the general ledger provider pilot work group were a diverse group of providers representing a variety of provider group affiliations, all regions, and offered the full range of services available to participants. The goal was to bring together a diverse, representative group of providers to review the general ledger template, instructions, and process. The workgroup metrics lend support to the diversity of providers included, and the ability to get feedback from

a representative group.

In addition to the discussion during workgroup meetings, Hilltop received written feedback on the template, process, and level of effort it took to complete the template.

Hilltop is in the process of reviewing the templates received, along with the feedback submitted from the work group. Key areas for discussion with DDA and Optumas will be identified to assist with necessary edits to the template and supporting documents. Ms. Diehl completed her presentation by noting that Hilltop will share the template with the RRAG members at the March meeting.

Mr. Scott Hollingsworth, with Appalachian Crossroads, asked if members present would like to offer additional feedback. No additional feedback was offered at this time. Ms. Diehl added in the chat box that three providers who participated in the workgroup identified themselves as RRAG members. Later in this meeting, it was noted by Ms. Laura Howell, MACS, that this number was inaccurate and only one participant is a current RRAG member.

Ms. McIlvaine wrapped the discussion by noting that MDH would like to use the general ledger data collection process to ensure consistency across the provider network and ensure that data is interpreted uniformly by providers and the DDA. Having comprehensive, detailed data could potentially reduce the need for ad hoc data requests and inform rate review priorities.

Regarding data requests in the interim, the state will continue to share with the RRAG data summaries and take back additional analyses requests or looks at the data that may support this group in identifying rate review priorities. Providers have the ability to share raw data with each other if desired.

### **RATE DEVELOPMENT PROCESS REVIEW**

Ms. McIlvaine refreshed the group on the process of rate development. This includes collecting provider data; organizing that data into sub-cost categories; gathering feedback on the data and categories; adjusting data for program or policy changes and trends; the consideration of administrative costs; and finally gathering stakeholder feedback on rates. Ms. McIlvaine noted that these components are the framework for rate reviews which ensures that rate priorities are data-informed and based on the cost of services per hour.

### **REVIEW OF RATE REVIEW CYCLE**

Ms. McIlvaine shared the annual schedule of activities and deliverables for the long term maintenance of DDA rates. She highlighted that next month the goal is for RRAG to finalize and

prioritize issues of interest to review this cycle. March is focused on gathering stakeholder feedback on potential rate modifications. In April the state team will share results and analyses. May and June will include rate update presentations with discussion. In July, the state team will consult with MDH and the Department on Budget and Management on any proposed rate changes. August and early September are dedicated to provider impact/budget simulations. She concluded by sharing the deliverables and rate review timeline alongside Maryland's fiscal year milestones.

Ms. Howell stated that there needs to be enough time in the rate review cycle to offer quality feedback. Mr. Hollingsworth asked if the RRAG members will be able to see the feedback from the general ledger template workgroup. Ms. Maria Dominiak, MACS, asked if the general ledger template will be used this rate analysis cycle. Ms. McIlvaine shared that the state will be more in a position to implement the general ledger template next rate review cycle. For this cycle, data collection will focus solely on identified priorities.

#### **DISCUSSION OF FY25 RATE REVIEW PRIORITIES**

Mr. Kris Welch, CBIZ Optumas, stated the intended outcomes of the RRAG rate review structure. This includes ensuring that stakeholders understand the process by which rates are reviewed and feedback is collected; adhering to a structured timeline to support the timely rate reviews and/or adjustments; a timely processes for the collection and review of feedback to enable long-term development and maintenance of DDA rates; stronger consistency in the Medicaid rate setting process; and maintaining strong programs and stewardship of public funds.

Mr. Welch guided the conversation to a brief review of the summary of stakeholder rate review interests shared previously. The goal is to then hold a group discussion to validate this summary with the goal of reaching consensus on FY25 priorities. He offered the following considerations for the prioritization of rate reviews in order to think through the scale, scope, service and budgetary impacts of any recommended changes:

- number of people impacted
- number of services impacted
- number of providers impacted
- Relevance to DDA values/focus areas
- Short term vs. long term priority
- Other potential impacts

Mr. Christian Parks, Somerset Community Services, added that the group should also consider

the severity of the issue as well.

Mr. Welch then shared a summary of prior stakeholder rate review interests and priorities. These were detailed as follows:

Regarding Rate Construct:

- Validate whether rates sufficiently consider non-billable staff time
- Compare policy of group sizes for day services to operational needs
- Transportation Component Equity (Fixed vs. Variable)
- Collect data and consider adjustments to address varying needs among members
- Consider difficulties in transitioning to a new system
- Discuss details of Employment Services rate development
- Compare assumptions to waiver policy and new amendment
- Identify strategies to support career path development for DSPs

Regarding Rate Components:

- Discuss alignment and clarity in operational policies and service delivery in guidance and waiver documents
- Understand attendance policies like no-show and cancellation
- Explore relationship between wages and staff turnover
- Review daily staff hour assumptions in residential services

Mr. Welch opened up the conversation by asking if these are priorities reflective of the community interests and if there are other areas or considerations that would support recommendations for rate setting priorities. He added that RRAG members are encouraged to email [RRAG.DDA@maryland.gov](mailto:RRAG.DDA@maryland.gov) with any additional feedback to support identifying rate setting priorities by January 30th.

Mr. Parks began by saying that the structure of the RRAG and use of subgroups needs to be addressed early on in the rate review cycle in order to achieve the rate review goals this year. Ms. Howell added that a discussion would be helpful around subgroups to address a broader array of issues and priorities rather than pushing some of these identified priorities into future years. Ms. Donna Retzlaff, Spring Dell Center, echoed this with the addition that subgroups could action items with a bit more detail than the members can do during RRAG meetings. Ms. Karen Lee, SEEC, asked to have more information about what was done with the responses submitted by form last rate review cycle on subgroups. Ms. McIlvaine added that time on the February agenda could include time for subgroup discussion. Ms. Dominiak asked if the state

could share what, if any, issues from the last rate review cycle are still outstanding.

Mr. Gregory Miller, Penn-Mar, brought up the draft of the new Governor's budget and how it may impact the previously identified priority of allocating resources to services such as Meaningful Day.

Mr. Robert White, Director of Administrative Services, DDA, shared that the DDA team is still learning about the Governor's budget, but is taking the Optumas analysis around transportation into consideration. This included a recommended adjustment to that component of the BRICK model. Mr. White shared that the next meeting could include more of the details as a possible agenda item.

### **OPEN DISCUSSION**

Mr. Hollingsworth said that all of the priorities remain important to RRAG members. He asked if the group could discuss subgroups during this meeting. Ms. McIlvaine shared that subgroups remain an option, however there are resource constraints that would most likely not permit numerous subgroups. She asked if there are specific topics the group would like to cover in subgroups. Ms. Welch added that internal discussion was had around subgroups before this meeting. Some things to consider for subgroup work is where more nuanced conversations could happen. Mr. Parks suggested that there are a lot of complex areas, such as the general ledger data collection, that subgroups could support actioning between RRAG meetings. Details about when, how, and tying the work of the subgroups with the RRAG is the key. Karen Adams-Gilchrist, Providence Center, asked if the state could offer a status update on each previously identified priority.

Mr. Welch offered that the transportation adjustment is moving forward, and this can be looked at in detail at the next meeting. He supported the comment made by Mr. Miller that understanding the Governor's budget and how that may impact things is important. Ms. McIlvaine shared that is certainly something the group can pull together and distribute to the group in advance of the next meeting. Ms. Howell shared concern about how the group will progress this year. She emphasized that the group will need to act immediately and build on the learnings from last year's first rate review cycle. This includes being a little more productive - including communications that can be shared with the public and communications between meetings. Ms. McIlvaine noted that last year's process did make a difference, and some of the RRAG suggestions were incorporated into the Governor's budget. She said that this process does have meaning, however the co-chairs remain open to feedback. Ms. Howell noted appreciation for that outcome.

Mr. Hollingsworth wondered if some priorities could be bundled or combined. He also noted



that employment services seem like a top priority as an Employment First state. Mr. Parks agreed with Mr. Hollingsworth, and asked if the subgroups could be identified based on the list of the priorities. Ms. McIlvaine noted that grouping priorities is worth considering and asked for members to turn to that discussion. Ms. Lee observed that some rate recommendations may not have a fiscal note tied to the implementation, but more identifying how to structure the rate differently. She asked if that is part of the current conversation. Ms. McIlvaine clarified that discussions on structure are valuable and the state would be interested in hearing that feedback. Ms. Lee continued that there are some things pervasive throughout several priorities identified. Mr. Welch restated that the slide of priorities reflected what was learned in the last rate review cycle.

Ms. Howell shared that MACS could offer specific feedback before next month. Ms. McIlvaine asked for Ms. Howell to send the suggestions to the dedicated email address and that the state team would take into consideration Ms. Howell's feedback on the urgency to act. Ms. Lee said if there is a small group needed to discuss the deliberation of subgroups she would volunteer and proposed there are most likely others who would participate.

Mr. Parks reiterated Mr. Hollingsworth proposal of combining some priorities together - day rate subgroup, employment services subgroup, and data collection subgroup that could include the general ledger work. Perhaps another dedicated subgroup to policy and then one other as a "catch all". Robert proposed that the group take advantage of the current meeting to start this conversation.

Mr. Hollingsworth started the conversation by asking how many subgroups seem reasonable. Mr. White supported this question. Ms. Dominiak noted that she sees the first three priorities as technical and potentially crosses all services from a methodology standpoint. She also noted there are some items that appear to be related to align policy with rate assumptions. Work through a subgroup could identify when guidance needs clarification. Ms. Dominiak observed that acuity is a priority that could touch many of the other priorities. She noted five separate committees and will connect with Ms. Howell to try and categorize and offer that feedback.

Ms. Lee noted that career pathways reduce turnover significantly, and is a high priority. She shared that training dollars and the ongoing infrastructure around career pathways could be put together. Mr. Miller asked about the status pertaining to career pathways currently as these are issues that inform the rate structure. He said that some of these priorities are being addressed elsewhere, it is possible that not all priorities need to be addressed through this advisory body. He asked for clarification on which items are not being actioned at all and where might the RRAG need to collaborate if there are actions in progress. Ms. Howell asked about the plan from the department for the \$20 million in the Governor's budget for LTSS pertaining to transportation and meaningful day services. She asked for this information before the next

meeting.

Mr. Hollingsworth asked if anything was going on regarding Employment Services currently. Nick Burton, Director of Programs, DDA, shared that there is an Employment First group that meets regularly and goals, objectives, and outcomes were discussed. One of the goals outlined was to review employment services and survey providers on employment services that may inform the work of the group if it identifies rates as a potential item to be addressed. Mr. Miller said that it is vital to know the timeline for incorporating these findings into the rate review cycle. Mr. Burton will coordinate with Mr. White on incorporating relevant feedback into the rate review cycle as needed. Mr. Miller reflected a level of frustration in these things and needing clarity and clear steps moving forward. Mr. Hollingsworth noted that the RRAG recommendations may always be behind the budget cycle.

Ms. McIlvaine said that actions the state can take are to chart priorities and actions in progress including an overlap of the RRAG timeline. Also a detailed look at the Governor's budget. The RRAG members confirmed that this would help the conversation.

Mr. White outlined the four major rate review priority themes based on the discussion as 1) cross-cutting rate components or methodology 2) policy or scope of services 3) workforce investment and strategies (maybe be a duplication) 4) service specific focus areas. He also reiterated the importance of using the dedicated email to gather feedback between meetings. He thanked members for the thoughtful conversation around potentially grouping priorities as this will be helpful for the state team.

Ms. McIlvaine also added that there will be an opportunity for RRAG members to see the work underway regarding the general ledger.

### **NEXT STEPS AND ADJOURNMENT**

Ms. McIlvaine thanked all members for the discussion and shared the 2023 meeting calendar, registration instructions, and reminded attendees of the designated DDA webpage for this advisory group. The meeting adjourned at 11:38AM.