

**STAR KIDS Managed Care Advisory Committee**  
**APPROVED Meeting Minutes – v.3**  
**Wednesday, March 8, 2023**  
**9:00 a.m.**

**Hybrid Meeting:**

**TEAMS Virtual Meeting – John H. Winters Bldg., 701 W 51<sup>st</sup> Street, PHR 125, First Floor, Austin, Texas 78751**

**Table 1:** SKMCAAC member attendance at the Tuesday, March 8, 2023 meeting.

MEMBER NAME	YES	NO	MEMBER NAME	YES	NO
Dr. Rahel Berhane	X		Dr. Ricardo Mosquera	X	
Mr. Josh Britten	X		Mr. Jose Pereda	X	
Ms. Rosalba Calleros	X		Mr. Blake Smith	X	
Ms. Catherine Carlton, Chair	X		Ms. Elizabeth Tucker	X	
Ms. Terri Carriker, Vice-Chair	X		Ms. Shawnett Viani		X
Ms. Iris Gutierrez	X		Ms. Belinda West		X
Ms. Tara Hopkins		X	Ms. Beanca Williams		X
Ms. Alice Martinez		X	Ms. Teresa Ruiz	X	
Dr. Glen Medellin, MD	X				

(\*) joined meeting after Roll Call.

**Agenda Item 1: Welcome, logistical announcement, and roll call**

STAR KIDS Managed Care Advisory Committee meeting was called to order by Ms. Catherine Carlton, Chair called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m. Ms. Catherine Carlton announced the September 21, 2022 draft meeting minutes would not be considered at today’s meeting.

Ms. Jacqueline Thompson, Facilitator, HHSC, announced the meeting was being conducted in accordance with the Texas Open Meetings Act, conducted roll call, and advised the chair a quorum was present for the meeting.

**Agenda Item 2: September 21, 2022 SKMCAC draft meeting minutes – TABLED  
 June 15, 2022 SKMCAC draft meeting minutes.**

There were no edits or changes to the June 15, 2022 SKMCAC draft meeting minutes.

**Motion:**

Ms. Catherine Carlton requested a motion to approve the December 6, 2023 SKMCAC draft meeting minutes. The motion was made by Mr. Jose Pereida. Seconded by Mr. Josh Britten. The June 15, 2022 SKMCAC draft meeting minutes were approved as presented by a vote of Twelve (12) Ayes, Zero (0) Nays, Zero (0) Abstain, and Five (5) Absent.

**Agenda Item 3: Presentation: The Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan’s Wonderland – Dr. Robert Sanders, Director of Complex Health Communicare Health Centers, Mr. Allan Castro, President at The Multi-Assistance Center at Morgan’s Wonderland, and Ms. Crystal Calvillo, Navigation Director**

Presentation Highlights:

- Comprehensive, integrated medical and non-medical services for individuals with special needs of all ages.
- Core Values: Empower, Include, Educate, and Innovate
- Challenges facing individuals with Special Needs

- Social Determinants of Health
- Multi-Assistance Center (MAC) Care Model
- How To Become a MAC member
- MAC Levels of Support
- MAC Partners
- CommuniCare™ services offered at the MAC
- Medical Services at the MAC
- Practice Without Pressure™ (PWP) philosophy and model of care.
- Evaluation and Research Coordinating Center (ERCC)

**Agenda Item 4: HHSC updates:**

**a. STAR Kids Legislative updates – Ms. Kellie Dees, Senior Policy Advisor, HHSC**

(i) 86<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session (2019): Senate Bill (SB) 1207, Coordination of Benefits

Member Discussion:

- Committee members requested a copy of the Uniform Managed Care Manual changes.
- Mr. Britten requested an explanation from HHSC for why durable medical equipment (DME) was removed from the definition of specialty provider.

(ii) 87<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session (2021), SB 1648: Comprehensive Health Homes for Integrated Care Kids Pilot Program - Ms. Tausi Suedi, Policy and Program Development, HHSC

Highlights:

- Comprehensive Health for Integrated Care (CHIC) Pilot Goals
- CHIC Pilot Projects
- CHIC Kids Pilot Partnerships
- CHIC Service Delivery Areas
- CHIC Pilot Evaluation

Member Discussion:

- Dr. Rahel Berhane stated that it would be helpful to understand barriers and how they can be addressed early on in the pilot. She asked if HHSC has considered creating a learning collaborative for the pilot.
- Ms. Elizabeth Tucker asked if HHSC has received any initial feedback from the pilots that can be shared. She suggested HHSC share the feedback at the next Health Homes Subcommittee meeting. She requested presentations from the pilots at future SKMCAC meetings.

(iii) 88<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session (2023): general updates related to STAR Kids – Ms. Jennie Costilow, Director, Policy, and Program Development

Highlights of legislation filed relating to CHIP/Medicaid, just days prior to the sixty (60) day filing deadline:

- Bills in relating to Managed Care contracting
- Sickle Cell Disease and care
- Minimum Pay increase across the state
- Medicaid Expansion bills
- Bills affecting children in foster care
- Mental health and telehealth services
- Extending Medicaid eligibility post-partum
- Electronic Verification Systems
- Conversion Services for gender transition or re-assignment

- Eliminating Pre-authorization for drug refills

are just some of the examples of legislation that has been filed to date.

Member Discussion:

- Ms. Alice Martinez asked if behavioral health (BH) services will be expanded.
  - Ms. Costilow stated that she was not aware of bills related to BH at the time of the meeting.
  - Ms. Tucker mentioned Senate Bill (S.B.) 1696.
- Mr. Britten asked about a Title IXX form.
  - Dr. Ryan Van Ramshorst, Chief Medical Director, HHSC, stated that the Title IXX form is a federally required form. Dr. Van Ramshorst provided resources to research federal and state legislation.
- Ms. Tucker requested an update on a request for additional funding for 2,000 people to receive waivers.
  - Ms. Erica Brown, HHSC, stated that she will provide a response to the Committee following the meeting.
- Ms. Rosalba Calleros commented on the healthcare relief grant from S.B. 8 (87<sup>th</sup> Legislative Session). She stated that many families do not know how to use the check when they receive it. She mentioned that some families try to cash the check and pay providers without any information about tax implications. Ms. Calleros requested HHSC provide guidance around this. Her organization is directing families to hold onto the checks until further guidance is provided from the State.
  - Ms. Carlton said there are outstanding questions around the ARPA funds. She requested that HHSC follow up.

**b. Private duty nursing reimbursement rates – Ms. Jessica Jupe, Manager Health Services Team, HHSC**

Presentation Highlights:

- Private Duty Nursing Utilization November 2016- August 2021 – Based on paid STAR Kids managed care encounters from TMHP data.
- Number of encounters and clients served have steadily increased since 2019.
- Increased cost and average reimbursement rates increased also increased since 2019.

Member Discussion:

- Ms. Carriker asked if the pay rates presented were for individuals providing services.
  - Ms. Carlton added that, while the rate increased, there are now more entities taking a cut before the nurse is paid. She asked what the actual paid rate is to nurses.
  - Ms. Jupe stated that HHSC will follow up in response to the question.
- Ms. Tucker stated her opinion that the rate of pay still does not support home health nurses. She stated that the pay increases are benefiting facility nurses more.
- Dr. Medellin highlighted the increase in number of units of time per patient.
  - Dr. Van Ramshorst stated that HHSC can take the question back but will require a more complex data inquiry.
- Ms. Carriker mentioned that she has never been able to fulfill the PDN hours that were authorized.
- Ms. Carriker asked for a breakdown of what is actually paid to the LVN or RN and what administrative costs are taken out of the rate.
- Dr. Medellin asked for a breakdown of authorized versus utilized and paid PDN hours.

- Dr. Van Ramshorst said HHSC will take back and follow up after the meeting.

**c. Durable Medical Equipment – Ms. Tausi Suedi, Manager, Policy, and Program Development, HHSC**

Presentation highlights:

- The purpose of the DME Project - the purpose for the DME simplification initiative is to reduce administrative burden of prior authorization renewal requirements on stakeholders, including members, caregivers, medical and Home, health service providers and Medicaid Managed Care Organizations (MCO's)
- Stakeholders have reported burdensome frequency and requirements for STAR Kids.
- Reduction in paperwork; Title 19 forms, Letters of Medical Necessity are required every six (6) months are likely to change
- HHSC analyzing federal feedback regarding changes HHSC is considering to existing administrative processes
- Renewals for STAR Kids DME would extend to one year instead of every six months
- For all MCS managed programs

**Agenda Item 5: SKMCAC subcommittee updates**

**a. Assessment and Service Delivery – Ms. Catherine Carlton, subcommittee chair**

Subcommittee Highlights:

- Last meeting occurred at the end of February at which time the subcommittee worked to prioritize its recommendations for the December report
- The subcommittee, agreed it was best to repeat recommendations from the previous report
- Reviewed ongoing feedback relating to CFC, DME, PCS and therapy
- MDCP eligibility and limited stay
- Repeated recommendations on medical necessity, preferred providers, notification, transparency, and coordination of benefits
- Subcommittee will meet every 6 weeks going forward

Member Discussion:

- Ms. Tucker commented that all STAR Kids members meet the federal requirements for having a disability. She asked why only 7% of the STAR Kids population receives PCS and CFC. She asked if other states have a similar experience.
  - Ms. Kuhlman responded that HHSC is exploring the topic and will continue to investigate and work with the subcommittee. She offered to inquire with other states that have CFC.
  - Dr. Van Ramshorst asked if the issue is awareness around CFC or if it is something else.
  - Ms. Tucker said the process for assessing for CFC is not smooth. She expressed that there are a number of reasons including a lack of information.
  - Ms. Carlton commented that the issue may require advocating at the legislative level for STAR Kids members to not need a DID in order to receive CFC. She mentioned the lack of process for LMHAs to refer members to CFC. She commented that children that are not on the YES waiver are being missed.
  - Dr. Van Ramshorst recommended that HHSC behavioral health services staff that work closely with LMHAs be invited to the discussion, and that he would like to participate as well.

- Ms. Kuhlman commented that MCOs are responsible for coordinating non-capitated services, which include referrals from the SK-SAI to the LMHA or LIDDA. She mentioned the recent changes to the SK-SAI are being evaluated to determine if the new tool improves assessment for services like CFC.

**b. Transition – Ms. Elizabeth Tucker, subcommittee chair**

Subcommittee Highlights:

Subcommittee has not met since December 2022. Therefore, there were no updates. Ms. Tucker suggested a presentation to the full committee from HHSC to find out which of the subcommittee /committees recommendations could be implemented.

The coding issue is a priority recommendation the subcommittee / committee would like feedback from the agency on this and other recommendations made by the Transition subcommittee. Such as:

- Adding Medicaid codes to improve transition and to allow for payment of some transitional services

Ms. Tucker mentioned recommendations about sharing of information between STAR Kids and STAR+PLUS health plans and having call lines for transition.

**c. Health Homes Subcommittee – Dr. Rahel Berhane, MD, subcommittee chair**

Subcommittee highlights:

- The subcommittee last met in December at which time they learned more about the different CHIC Pilot program
- The subcommittee would like to be more engaged in the CHIC Pilot project by eliminating any potential roadblocks
- Help HHSC and MCO’s carve out Oversight for STAR Kids population

**Agenda Item 6: Public Comment**

Ms. Hannah Mehta (Virtual)  
Co-Founder / Executive Director  
Project TX Fragile Kids

- Requested HHSC expand on how the navigation process at the MAC is being funded through GR dollars. Commented on inability to access PDN hours. Asked HHSC if the rate increase was a reinstatement of an administrative reduction from 2019 or if it was something else. She asked HHSC to clarify the policy on coordination of benefits.
  - Dr. Van Ramshorst commented that HHSC is interested in exploring additional funding and is in communication with the MAC.
  - Ms. Carlton commented that Ms. Mehta’s other questions will be addressed in a subcommittee meeting.

Ms. Jessica Rothe  
Advocate  
[throthe@verizon.net](mailto:throthe@verizon.net) pre-registered online but did not attend the meeting.

Ms. Jessica Galinski, (In Person)

Parent of Medically fragile child/Texas Fragile Kids Advocate

- Commented on families institutionalizing their children because they can't get nursing care. She added that they have approved hours but cannot access a nurse. She stated that caregivers suffer from their own health issues from living in a constant state of stress. She stated that attendant home health rates have not increased in 20 years. She added that part of the problem is that the rate is written in code. She mentioned that PDN nurses are not making a living wage and are having to seek public assistance for their own families.

**Agenda Item 7: Review of Action Items and agenda items for June 14, 2023, meeting**

Ms. Catherine Carlton, chair noted the following action items:

- Dr. Ryan Van Ramshorst, MD, Chief Medical Director, HHSC will provide his 'tool kit' to the committee
- Ms. Kellie Dees will send follow-up to her presentation
- Ms. Jennie Costilow will provide a list of bills
- Clarification on Private Duty Nursing (PDN) rates and Data on Authorized vs Paid PDN hours per MCO
- Follow up on DME
- Follow up on CFC
- CHIC Metrics and Home Health updates
- Request for HHSC to provide feedback on recommendations from all three subcommittees
- Mr. Britten's request relating SB 1648
- Pay rate for LVNs vs RNs
- Administrative simplification agenda item
- Network adequacy agenda item

Member Discussion:

- Ms. Tucker stated that the MCOs have the ability to pay more than the fee schedule. Dr. Van Ramshorst will check with HHSC financial teams to find out if there is ever a scenario where MCOs can pay below what is on the fee schedule.
- Dr. Medellin asked for a continued focus on administrative simplification.
  - Mr. Britten added that the paperwork required for DME audits and recoupments is very burdensome.
  - Dr. Medellin added that the administrative burdens trickle down to the families, adds costs, and prevents children from getting needed services. Dr. Ruiz, Community First Health Plan, agreed.
  - Ms. Carlton recommended a workgroup on administrative simplification to discuss barriers and propose recommendations to HHSC.
- Ms. Carriker asked for follow up on network adequacy and holding MCOs accountable for accuracy of provider directories.

**Agenda Item 8: Adjournment**

Ms. Catherine Carlton, chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:00 p.m.

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Below is the link to the archived video of the March 8, 2023 STAR Kids Managed Care Advisory Committee will be available for viewing approximately two years from date meeting posted on website and based on the HHSC records retention schedule.

[STAR Kids Managed Care Advisory Committee](#)