

OHA Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

July 25, 2023
12:00 p.m. to 12:30 pm
Via Teams
CT-N Broadcast

Attendance: **Members in attendance:** Lynne Ide, Dina Berlyn, Mark DeWaele, Susan Halpin
Absent: Steve Wanczyk-Karp

OHA Staff: Sean King, Adam Prizio, Denise Ramoutar, Alexandra Lowry
Absent: Ted Doolittle

Meeting convened at 12:00 pm

1. Welcome & Approval of Agenda and Minutes

Motion to approve July agenda: Lynne Ide motioned to approve, and Dina Berlyn seconded; No discussion, no nays, motion carried unanimously.

Motion to approve April 25, 2023, minutes: Lynne Ide motioned to approve, and Dina Berlyn seconded: No discussion: no nays, motion carried unanimously.

2. Administration Report

Budget

- The legislature passed Public Act 23-79 during last session and established a new office of the Cannabis Ombudsman. This office will be hosted under the Office of the Healthcare Advocate for administrative purposes only. The Healthcare Advocate is assigned responsibility of appointing the first cannabis ombudsman under that new bill, which includes funding to hire the individual. Lynne Ide commented on this position being housed under OHA, and Sean King stated although there are other agencies this position could be housed under, he believed it was due in part to maintaining its independence that it be within OHA.

Personnel

- In addition to a Cannabis Ombudsman, there is a paralegal position, staff attorney, and secretary position OHA to fill soon.

Auditors of Public Accounts

- The report is scheduled to be published later this week and a copy will be sent to all members of the committee.

3. Data Reports

- Sean King reviewed the 2nd Quarter Data Report highlighting key points:
 - Overall Q2 activity on the high end.
 - There has been a shift with a higher level of core cases.
 - Savings to Connecticut consumers has returned to pre pandemic levels.
 - A steady increase of cases referred to us due to the placement of revised language on insurer denial letters.
- Susan Halpin suggested this may also reflect pent up demand in 2023 with consumers accessing elective treatments and surgeries.
- Lynne Ide suggested the increase in money captured may be due to providers increasing cost of care. Sean King stated OHA may be able to adapt some of the data collection to get further detail.

4. Other

- Sean King shared insurers have submitted their requests for rate increases and the insurance department has scheduled an informal public hearing for August 21st. OHA will be participating to ensure the public's comments and interests are represented. The format will be the same as last year with Anthem, Cigna and Connecticare invited to participate. The hearing will be held at the LOB with opportunity to attend via Zoom.

Lynne Ide motioned to adjourn; Susan Halpin seconded; No discussion: no nays, motion carried unanimously. Meeting adjourned at 12:21 pm

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, October 24th at 12:00 PM