
DELAWARE NURSING HOME RESIDENTS QUALITY ASSURANCE COMMISSION
Legislative/Advocacy Subcommittee

In-person & Virtual Meeting

Cisco Webex

Anchor Location: Medicaid Fraud Control

Unit

900 N King St, 4th Floor

Wilmington, DE 19801

Meeting of November 1, 2024 @ 10:00 am

FINAL

Subcommittee members present: Cheryl Heiks, Mary Peterson, RN, Chris Marques, Esquire (anchor location) and Dr. Avani Virani, MD. The majority of Subcommittee members attended virtually. A quorum of subcommittee members was present.

Subcommittee members not in attendance: N/A

Others Present: Margaret Bailey, DNHRQAC Executive Director.

1. Call to order

This meeting was called to order at 10:04 am.

2. Approval of minutes

The subcommittee meeting minutes draft of May 3, 2024 were approved as written.

3. Discussion of:

Subcommittee members briefly recapped legislation that was signed by Governor Carney during the previous legislative session which impacts long term care.

Ms. Bailey asked subcommittee members how they would like to follow-up on the recent legislation or regulations. Ms. Peterson suggested the Commission may want to ask Division of Health Care Quality (DHCQ) to provide status updates on recent legislation or regulations during DNHRQAC full Meetings.

Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver

Subcommittee members discussed whether they should send a letter in support of not delaying the Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver timeline beyond 1/1/2025. Ms. Peterson mentioned the DNHRQSC Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver Subcommittee wrote to Joint Finance Committee (JFC) members a while back and asked for their support in moving forward with the Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver, without any further delays.

The DNHRQAC Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver Subcommittee meets next on 11/15/2024. As a result, members from this subcommittee motioned to bring up this discussion during 11/15/2024 subcommittee meeting and then if approved, to send another letter to JFC.

A motion was raised that with DNHRQAC Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver Subcommittee's approval, DNHRQAC Legislative/Advocacy Subcommittee will send a letter to JFC supporting the reinstitution of the staffing

ratios on 1/1/2025. The motion was seconded. One member stated they need to remain neutral/abstain from voting. The motion was carried.

FY 26 Legislation/Advocacy Efforts

Ms. Bailey mentioned FY 26 Department of Health and Social Services (DHSS) Public Budget Hearing will be held on Friday November 15, 2024, 10:00 am – 1:00 pm. Members of the public have an opportunity to hear testimony from DHSS and submit their own testimony regarding the Department. Comments can be submitted in writing, too.

Subcommittee members discussed whether they plan to provide verbal or written testimony on November 15, 2024 and what items they might want to include in their testimony.

Subcommittee members asked Ms. Bailey to contact Julianne Villecco, DHSS Legislative Director, to see if she can share generalizations relating to FY26 DHSS budget.

Ms. Heiks shared that the industry would like to testify during FY 26 DHSS Public Budget Hearing about: survey consistency, Background Check Center (BCC) to be completed and address budget shortfalls. She plans to speak at the DHSS FY26 Public Budget Hearing about these items.

A discussion occurred about the status of BCC. Subcommittee members motioned and seconded Ms. Bailey to contact Spencer Price, DELJIS, for an update. The motion was unanimously carried.

Ms. Peterson mentioned she plans to testify during FY 26 DHSS Public Budget Hearing that DHCQ should increase their staffing complement, something that has not changed in many years despite an increase in their workload.

Subcommittee members were asked to think about legislative and/or advocacy items they would like to work on in the coming months. Members were asked to share their ideas during the next subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Marques mentioned Project Comfort Project, which provides a visit, blanket and handwritten card to residents during the holiday season, might be something this subcommittee or the full Commission may want to participate in during December 2024. Ms. Bailey mentioned, in the past, DNHRQAC staff and commission members have participated in this effort.

Ms. Heiks added the Delaware Health Care Facilities Association (DHCFA) is doing a blanket drive as part of their educational conference. They are also providing a small sponsorship to Project Comfort. Ms. Heiks mentioned a DHCFA staff member is assisting with the handwritten card portion of this effort. Ms. Heiks would like to see if something like this blanket drive can also occur in the spring, too.

Action Item(s): Ms. Bailey to contact DHSS Legislative Director for list of FY 26 generalizations.

Ms. Bailey to contact DELJIS for a BCC update.

Ms. Bailey will send Project Comfort sign-up genius link to DNHRQAC once it has been created for this coming holiday season.

Subcommittee members will share their legislative and advocacy wish lists during next meeting.

4. Public Comment

No members of the public were present.

5. Next Meeting

The next DNHRQAC Legislative/Advocacy Subcommittee Meeting will be held on December 12, 2024 @ 1:00 pm. In-person and virtual attendance options will be available. The meeting information will be posted on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar.

6. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 11:26 am.

Attachments: 11/1/2024 DNHRQAC Legislative/Advocacy Subcommittee Meeting - agenda
5/3/2024 DNHRQAC Legislative/Advocacy Subcommittee Meeting – minutes draft