PRIMARY CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL

PUBLIC LAW 2025, CHAPTER 218

Meeting Notes

December 19, 2025, 12:30 PM – 2:00 PM

The second meeting of the Primary Care Advisory Council began at approximately 12:30 p.m. with the following Council members in attendance: Olivia Alford, Christopher Bates-Withers, Dr. Kathryn Brandt, Bob Carey, Dr. Rob Chamberlain, Dr. Marco Cornelio, Dan Demeritt, Kate Ende, Dr. Renee Fay-LeBlanc, Senator Henry Ingwersen, Dr. James Jarvis, Dr. Lisa Letourneau, Trevor Putnoky, Ariel Ricci, Dr. Linda Sanborn, Dr. Matthew Toohey, Lori Towne, and Representative Sam Zager, M.D.

Staff to the Advisory Council in attendance: Karynlee Harrington, Executive Director of the Maine Quality Forum and Maine Health Data Organization, and Kimberley Fox, Carolyn Gray, Jenny MacKenzie, and Erin Ervin of the University of Southern Maine.

Interested parties in attendance: Meg Garratt-Reed, Ceilidh Shea, and Katie Senechal.

Welcome and Introductions

Karynlee Harrington opened the meeting by providing an overview of the agenda and asking Council members to briefly introduce themselves.

Administrative Business

- Review and Approve Meeting Notes: The draft meeting notes from the October 31, 2025, meeting was shared in advance of the meeting.
  - **Council Action:** The PCAC voted unanimously to approve the October 31, 2025, meeting notes as drafted.
- Elect Chair & Vice Chair**:** Marco Cornelio was nominated to serve as Chair of the Council for a two-year term.
  - **Council Action:** The PCAC voted unanimously to elect Marco Cornelio as Chair for a two-year term.
- Elect Vice Chair**:** Lori Towne was nominated to serve as Vice Chair for a two-year term.
  - **Council Action:** The PCAC voted unanimously to elect Lori Towne as Vice Chair for a two-year term.

Refer to Meeting Presentation and Documentation in the link below for details on topics summarized below: https://mhdo.maine.gov/primary_care_adv_cncl.htm

Presentation: Office of Affordable Health Care

Meg Garratt-Reed, Executive Director of the Office of Affordable Health Care (OAHC) presented her agency's work and policy proposals the agency is developing to improve the affordability, efficiency, and quality of the healthcare system.

Recently, Meg presented a policy framework to the Legislature's Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services Committee, recommending that the state set reasonable limits on commercial hospital facility prices (a cap on outlier-high hospital service prices and a cap on the growth of hospital prices). Savings could be used to reduce healthcare costs for families and businesses, increase payments to primary care and behavioral health providers, and reform prior authorizations to alleviate administrative burdens on providers.

OAHC is working to define the scope of primary care and behavioral health services to support increased investment, such as by identifying Evaluation and Management codes or a set of preventive service codes. OAHC is also considering a recommendation that self-insured plans must comply with prior-authorization limitations as a condition of benefitting from price caps. These changes are under consideration for the next legislative session, and OAHC would like to have future conversations with the PCAC to obtain technical feedback on sets of codes related to primary care, benchmark levels, and prior authorization.

Council's Feedback on Draft PCAC Annual Report

Karynlee shared a draft of the PCAC's first annual report for review before the meeting. Several members submitted written feedback via email, which staff incorporated into the report.

Before finalizing the report, staff will add a summary of today's meeting, and the Council will have an opportunity to submit additional feedback. The final report will be submitted to the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services and the Commissioner of the Department of Health and Human Services by the January 15th statutory deadline.

Next Steps for the PCAC in 2026

Dr. Marco Cornelio outlined a strategy for next steps for the work of the PCAC in 2026 for the council's consideration including:

- Operationalizing the definition of primary care for the purpose of measurement
- Consideration of the specific actions needed to create a sustainable, high-functioning primary care system, as required in Sec. 3, Part A. of the statute,
- Review of the focus areas specified in the PCAC's charge and how data/measurement can be used to assess and monitor the five domains defined in the statute (access, utilization, quality, equity, and workforce), and
- Developing Maine's first comprehensive primary care dashboard, which could be modeled after those created in other states and leverage existing data currently reported in Maine relative to primary care.
- Stakeholders in Maine and in other states could be invited to present on these topics at future meetings.

Discussion: The Council discussed the proposed outline. Several members stated that defining the characteristics of a high-functioning primary care system should be the priority. There was general agreement that learning about dashboards and the key metrics reported in other states would be helpful, especially in rural states like Maine. In future meetings, the Council would like to discuss the dashboard's purpose and how it can be used to inform the PCAC's recommendations to the Legislature. The council agreed establishing key metrics and a baseline will be important.

Staff will create a questionnaire to collect the Council's input on the definition of a high-functioning primary care system, which will be completed before the next meeting.

2026 Meeting Calendar

The council reviewed the proposed meeting schedule for 2026 and requested that the April 17th meeting date be changed to sometime in May. The group also discussed the value of one of the meetings in 2026 being in person. Staff will send out meeting appointments for the dates proposed, replace the April date with a date in May and begin to plan for an in-person meeting toward the end of the year.

The next meeting of the PCAC is scheduled for February 27, 2026, from 12:30-3:00 PM

Public Comments

None

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.