

PRESCRIPTION DRUG AFFORDABILITY BOARD
VIRTUAL MEETING
Monday, January 25, 2021
Minutes

Chairman Van Mitchell called the meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.

Board Members present: Joseph Levy, PhD, Eberechukwu Onukwugha, MS, PhD, Gerard Anderson, PhD, and George Malouf, MD.

AGENDA ITEM 1.

Approval of minutes

Chairman Mitchell moved that the November minutes be approved as submitted. Dr. Anderson made a motion to approve the minutes, which was seconded by Dr. Onukwugha and unanimously approved.

AGENDA ITEM 2.

Introduction of Prescription Drug Affordability Board Executive Director, Andrew York

Following approval of the November minutes, Chairman Mitchell introduced the Prescription Drug Affordability Board (PDAB)'s Executive Director, Andrew York.

Dr. York introduced himself to the Board, provided information related to his educational and professional background and experiences, and expressed his enthusiasm for working on the issue of drug affordability for the State.

No Action Needed

AGENDA ITEM 3.

Presentation by Vincent DeMarco, President of Maryland Health Care for All Coalition, on Consumer Experience with Prescription Drug Costs

Next, Chairman Mitchell introduced Vincent DeMarco to present on his research regarding consumer experience with rising prescription drug costs.

Mr. DeMarco began his presentation by noting three different ways in which high-cost drugs create significant problems, including budget shortfalls for state and local governments, increasing cost of premiums for consumers, and the impact on patients who can't afford drugs. He then explained how his organization, over the course of a year, hosted several meetings with local government officials to discuss the impact of high-cost drugs and listen to consumers' stories. Mr. DeMarco also highlighted an example response received by a consumer struggling with high-cost drugs and how it impacted her and her family's health.

Mr. DeMarco then discussed some key takeaways from his meetings. This includes consumer attempts to define affordability, excitement that the PDAB existed, and consumers' hope that the Board considers a variety of approaches. Mr. DeMarco also noted some significant frustrations reported by Marylanders, such as frustration with formularies, a lack of transparency, and discrepancies in drug costs.

No Action Needed

AGENDA ITEM 4.

Administrative Updates

Next, the Board received a series of administrative updates, beginning with Mr. Vallecillo. He provided an outline for the 2021 legislative session, explained how the pandemic will impact the work of the General Assembly, and noted that the staff is actively working with peer agencies to track legislation and coordinate positions.

Dr. Anderson provided the Board with an update on the Data Collection Committee. Dr. Anderson opened his remarks by explaining the importance of having appropriate data, as it will inform the Board's policies, reports, and potential future actions. Dr. Anderson stressed that this data needs to be current, Maryland-specific, and comprehensive. For Maryland-specific data, Dr. Anderson identified data contained in the All Payer Claims Database (APCD), the amount paid by State employees for specific drugs, how much Maryland Medicaid is paying for specific drugs, and the amount health insurers are paying for specific drugs. He also noted that it is very important for the Board that the data received is post-rebate. For data that is not Maryland-specific, Dr. Anderson identified Medicare claims data, the list prices that manufacturers set for drugs, net prices for drug products, and value or cost-effectiveness assessments by third-parties, among other sources.

Finally, Mr. Johnson then provided the Board with an update on the FY 2021 and FY 2022 budgets, and the Board's efforts to secure office space. Regarding the budget, Mr. Johnson noted that the Board currently exists within the MHCC budget for FY 2021. For the FY 2022 budget, Mr. Johnson explained that the Board's budget was largely unchanged from the FY 2021 budget, with similar funding levels, an identical allocation of employees, and enough funds to cover various operating costs. For office space, Mr. Johnson announced that the Board's preferred office location would be available March 1, 2021, but the Board has not yet received final approval for the lease.

No Action Needed

AGENDA ITEM 5.

Chairman's Update

Chairman Mitchell announced that the Board extended Mr. Johnson's contract for an additional year, at no additional cost. Chairman Mitchell explained that Mr. Johnson's service has been an integral part of the Board's establishment, despite only using approximately half of the time provided for in the contract.

No Action Needed

Adjourned at 2:57 p.m.