

Public Health Committee Minutes

December 12, 2011 – 4:00 p.m.

Present: Chairman Wright; Supervisors Kinowski, Raymond, Southworth, and Wood; Diane Brown, Maplewood Manor; Karen Levison, Public Health; George Martin, Treasurer; Hans Lehr, Mental Health; Ryan Moore, Mgmt. Analyst.

Chairman Wright called the meeting to order and welcomed all in attendance.

On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mrs. Southworth the minutes of the November 13, 2011 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mrs. Brown said there is one resident in Maplewood Manor who has been in the facility since February 7, 2008 and every year the insurance company is contacted to negotiate a rate. Last month at the committee meeting a private pay rate increase was adopted of \$329.04 including the cash assessment. Mrs. Brown said she has contacted Chubb Insurance and proposed a rate increase of \$339.19/ day which is \$10.15 more per day, and they have agreed to it. The reason for being above the \$10 increase per day is because the county covers the increase in drug costs and any x-rays performed in the facility. An analysis was done to determine that the cost for drugs was less than the \$10, but in the event that the resident would need any special drugs during the year this should more than cover the difference. This will be effective January 1, 2012.

A motion was made by Ms. Raymond, seconded by Mr. Kinowski to approve a revenue agreement with Chubb Insurance for a private pay rate increase of \$339.19/day beginning January 1, 2012. Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown said Maplewood Manor has had a contract with Thomas Nicolla Consulting Services for several years. The physical therapy services are used five days a week for approximately 7 ½ hours a day. In order to bill for restored physical therapy you need a physical therapist in the building. There was a request in the budget for a rate increase, but it was not approved, she said. Thomas Nicolla Consulting Services has reluctantly agreed to continue another year at the current rate of \$46.48/hr.

A motion was made by Mrs. Southworth, seconded by Ms. Raymond to approve a contract with Thomas Nicolla Consulting Services, PLLC at an hourly rate of \$46.48/hr. for physical therapy services. Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown said if someone is a Medicare person and they receive 325 minutes of restorative therapy per week, the rate that is received is between \$330/day up to \$417/day, depending on what other care the resident would need.

For a resident receiving 500 minutes of therapy per week, the range goes from \$413/day up to \$419/day depending on what other type of therapy they receive. If the resident receives 720 minutes of therapy per week the rate would range from \$460/day up to \$558/day. Mrs. Brown said therapy is not provided unless needed.

Mrs. Brown said there are currently 10 empty beds at Maplewood Manor. There was a meeting with Social Services on November 9th to work on getting the Medicaid reviews done in a timely manner. There are three applications from residents that are interested in the facility that Medicaid has some of the information, but they are still waiting for documents. There are seven residents in the facility that are still waiting for Medicaid numbers due to documents that are still pending. Work continues aggressively to collect bad debts with a few small accounts have been collected.

Mrs. Levison said the rates for Certified Home Health Agencies have not increased since 2008. When looking to change the rates there are several things that are considered such as: is the sliding fee scale in place for private pay patients, and the agency is required under public health law to provide a minimum of 3.33% charity care. These rates are based on the 2011 initial Medicaid rate group ceiling. The group ceiling is an average of what the Medicaid rates are across the region. If our rate is not above the Medicaid group ceiling rate then we are paid less than everyone else. In our case right now, the Medicaid group ceiling for nursing is \$185.91 and our current charge is \$170. Our cost per visit right now is averaged at \$196.79. On the cost reports for Medicaid and Medicare we were well over \$250 per visit. The other factor that has been taken into consideration is what the other agencies are doing, which is right around \$200 per nursing visit.

Mrs. Levison said the reason to increase the rates is to establish charges high enough to maximize Medicaid revenues, while remaining competitive with other agencies serving Saratoga County. Increasing the charges allows for more leverage to negotiate favorable rates from private insurance companies. Currently, CDPHP and MVP both are paying much less than our current rate of \$170 per nursing visit.

A motion was made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mrs. Southworth to approve an increase in the Public Health Nursing Services' Agency fees to maximize Federal and Medicaid funding effective January 1, 2012. Unanimous.

Mrs. Levison said the Children with Special Health Care Needs Grant is now due. It is an annual grant of \$26,405 used to assist families with finding resources to support children with specific qualifying diagnosis or making referrals for families without insurance. This is supplemental grant funding to article 6, which is 100% state aid.

On a motion made by Mr. Kinowski, seconded by Mrs. Southworth the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom