

PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE MINUTES

APRIL 4, 2007 – 3:30 P.M.

Present: Chairman Sausville; Supervisors Callanan, Hunter, Janik; Spencer Hellwig, Mgmt. Analyst; Janet Glenn, Terry Stortz, Alan Kempf, Public Health; Diane Brown, Maplewood Manor; Dale Angstadt, Mental Health; League of Women Voters; Press.

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

On a motion made by Mr. Callanan, seconded by Mr. Janik the minutes of the March 8, 2007 meeting were approved unanimously.

Mrs. Glenn highlighted her Annual Report as follows:

Communicable Disease

Public Health continues to work cooperatively with the hospital and all the medical providers to ensure timely communication with regard to any communicable diseases.

Emergency Preparedness:

Public Health partnered with Skidmore College last summer to present a town hall meeting, which included a panel of experts discussing pandemic flu preparation.

A tabletop drill was held with members of the judicial system to examine isolation and quarantine issues.

Public Health continues to be an active participant on the countywide emergency preparedness committee that is facilitated by Saratoga Hospital.

Preventative Services:

The number of clinics increased last year as well as attendance. Preparation began with regard to the community health assessment in conjunction with the Adirondack Rural Care Network and six of the neighboring counties to assess the needs of the community. A strategy was developed to address and identify the needs.

Rabies:

The number of animal bites continues to increase from 624 bite reports in 2005 to 770 in 2006.

Certified Agencies:

Patient referrals were up as well as the total number of billable visits.

Mrs. Glenn said Public Health has begun discussions with the insurance companies to increase the rates that are paid for home care services. This is done on an annual basis, she said.

Mrs. Glenn requested approval of rate increases from Blue Shield of Eastern New York and MVP.

With regard to Blue Shield of Northeastern New York, a request was made for an increase in the 2007 anticipated Medicaid rates for skilled nursing, speech and home aides. Those rates are not known at this time, however, Blue Shield has agreed to pay what the 2006 Medicaid rates were effective 6/1/07. That would mean the reimbursement for a skilled nursing visit would go from \$115.50/day to \$139.94/day, representing a 21.16% increase; speech therapy will increase from \$91/day to \$93.63/day representing a 2.89% increase; home health aide will increase from \$36/hr. to \$43.39/hr. representing a 20.53% increase. All other services that are provided and paid for are already being reimbursed at a higher rate than the 2006 Medicaid rate.

Blue Cross and Senior Blue provide 5.45% of the 2006 agency home care visits, which is the highest percentage of any nine governmental payers we have, she said. This would establish their rates as the second highest behind the 2007 Medicaid rates. It is anticipated that the increased rates will provide up to \$1,000 additional revenue for each month that they are in effect or approximately \$7,000 for 2007 if the contract is effective on June 1st.

Mrs. Glenn requested committee approval of the reimbursement rates as stated above.

A motion was made by Mr. Callanan, seconded by Mr. Hunter to approve the insurance reimbursement rates as stated above, and to forward them on to the County Attorney for review. Unanimous.

Mrs. Glenn said Public Health has asked MVP to increase their rates to the anticipated 2007 rates. The following rates were given: Skilled nursing visit increase would be \$5/visit going from \$120/day to \$125/day representing a 4.7% increase; home health aide rate increase would be \$3/hr. from \$45/hr. to \$48/hr representing a 6.67% increase. All other services that they provide reimbursement for are already higher than the current Medicaid rate.

MVP and the related plans that go along with it provide 1.13% of home care visits. It is anticipated that it would provide approximately \$50 additional revenue for each month or \$385 for the year.

A motion was made by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Janik to approve the insurance reimbursement rates from MVP as stated above, and to forward them on to the County Attorney for review. Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown said the employee meal program is being phased out. The requirements for the plan are that the individual would have to have been employed since 1981 to be eligible to participate. Currently, there are sixteen people who qualify for the program, of which only four employees are anticipated to take advantage of the program. The cost to provide the meal is \$2 per meal.

Mrs. Brown requested committee approval to continue the program at a cost of \$2/meal.

A motion was made by Mr. Janik, seconded by Mr. Callanan to approve the \$2/meal for the Employee Meal Program at Maplewood Manor. Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown said in March a letter was received from the Department of Health indicating eligibility for a retroactive grant for the period July 1, 2005 thru December 31, 2006, in the amount of \$24,323. The money would be used for reimbursement for the Nursing Scholarship Program. The idea of the grant is to help reduce recruitment and retention issues in the workforce and to encourage employees to become licensed.

A motion was made by Mr. Janik, seconded by Mr. Callanan to approve a resolution to accept a Department of Health Grant in the amount of \$24,323 to be used for the Nursing Scholarship Program at Maplewood Manor. Unanimous.

Mrs. Brown said in January 2006 there was a resolution approved by the Board of Supervisors allowing Maplewood Manor to enter into a memorandum of understanding with Senior Whole Health. Senior Whole Health is an insurance carrier interested in pursuing approval in New York State to provide coverage for people that live in the state. Nursing homes needed to have this memorandum in order to proceed. Senior Whole Health has been approved, and they are seeking a contract with Maplewood Manor in order to provide services to people in the community who could have this type of insurance. Three levels of service have been proposed as follows: Level 1 – in place of hospitalization, requiring more nursing intervention, additional diagnostics and treatment. The daily fee would be \$425/day; Level 2 – rehab and complex medical for individuals in need of 1 ½ - 3 hours of therapy a day. The fee would be \$325/day. Level 3 – skilled care, would provide service to someone who is very stable, who might be on therapy and would require only up to 1 ½ hrs. of therapy a day. The fee would be \$250/day. The current Medicaid rate is approximately \$135/day, and Maplewood Manor's costs are \$225/day. Mrs. Brown said the fees from Senior Whole Health would cover the extra expenses associated with some of the requirements within the contract.

A motion was made by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Callanan to approve a resolution to allow Maplewood Manor to enter into a contract with Senior Whole Health for the above stated reimbursement rates. Unanimous.

Mr. Angstadt requested a resolution authorizing the renewal of a contract with Family and Children's Services of the Capital Region, Inc for the contract period to be ongoing effective 1/1/07. This is the contract to provide clinically appropriate services at the Center for Problem Gambling. Such services will be according to guidelines that were established under the 2005 OASAS Planning Supplement, for a total not to exceed \$90,000.

A motion was made by Mr. Callanan, seconded by Mr. Janik to approve a resolution to authorize the renewal of a contract with Family and Children's Services for a contract period beginning 1/1/07. The contract would provide clinically appropriate services to the Center for Problem Gambling as established by the 2005 OASAS Planning Supplement for a total not to exceed \$90,000. Unanimous.

On a motion made by Mr. Hunter, seconded by Mr. Janik the meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,
Chris Sansom