

Medical Advisory Council (MAC)

MEETING MINUTES

June 12, 2025

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Angie Doyle-Scar, Division of Public Health and Co-chairperson of the Medical Advisory Council (MAC), called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. Doyle-Scar called the roll, attendance is reflected in the separate [roll call sheet](#)¹ and a quorum was achieved.

APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

The minutes from the [March 13, 2025](#)² meeting were approved by the council.

ANNUAL BENEFIT MAXIMUM (ABM) SUNSET

Sarah Petersen, Medicaid Dental Program Policy Manager, presented information regarding the [Annual Benefit Maximum](#)³ being phased out. Beginning June 1, 2025, Hawki members will no longer be subject to the \$1000 ABM for covered dental services. All Hawki Dental member ABMs will be removed on June 1, 2025.

BENEFICIARY ADVISORY COUNCIL (BAC)

Janae Carter, Medicaid Rules Officer, presented information on [new federal regulations around boards and committees](#)⁴. The Beneficiary Advisory Council members have been selected, and orientation will be held July 9, 2025.

HAWKI UPDATE

Jamie Beskow, HHS State Hawki Outreach Coordinator, presented [updates on outreach activities](#)⁵ in State Fiscal Year 2025 (SFY25). Hawki Outreach Coordinators have engaged with communities using the following access points:

- Schools

¹ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16332/download?inline>

² <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16296/download?inline>

³ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16325/download?inline>

⁴ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16330/download?inline>

⁵ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16295/download?inline>

- Small Businesses
- Urgent Care, Medical, Dental Clinics
- Faith-Based Organizations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Post-Offices
- Employers
- Iowa Workforce Development
- Pharmacies
- Libraries
- Unions

Record enrollment numbers were reported for the Hawki program at 63,673 children enrolled during SFY25.

HEALTHY IOWANS UPDATES

Lia Presnell, Healthy Iowans Steering Committee Coordinator, presented on the process of creating the Statewide Health Assessment (SHA) to provide data on Iowa residents which informs the Statewide Health Improvement Plan (SHIP). Lia will be collaborating with HHS, providers and community members to advance health improvements for Iowans.

MEDICAID DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

Jennifer Steenblock, Program Integrity & Compliance Bureau Chief, presented on behalf Rebecca Curtiss, Acting Medicaid Director and Deputy Director of Operations, to [provide updates in two key areas](#)⁶:

1. Iowa Health and Wellness Plan – Work Requirements Amendment
2. HOME Project – Program Readiness and Implementation

1. Iowa Health and Wellness Plan – Work Requirements Amendment

- The State of Iowa has submitted a demonstration amendment to CMS requesting approval to implement work requirements for the Medicaid expansion population under the Iowa Health and Wellness Plan.
- The amendment is aligned with Senate File 615, passed during the most recent legislative session.
- The amendment was submitted to CMS on June 6, following a public notice and comment process.
- Implementation Timeline:
 - 2025: Planning and coordination with CMS.
 - April 1, 2026: Target operational date.

⁶ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16329/download?inline>

- Public Feedback:
 - 199 total comments received.
 - Includes 72 comments from public hearings and 117 via email, as well as input from one tribal consultation.
- CMS will conduct a 30-day federal public comment period, pending determination of submission completeness (within 15 days of receipt).
- Ongoing updates and information will be available on the HHS website.

2. HOME Project – Program Alignment and Readiness

Efforts are underway to ensure alignment and readiness for the future implementation of the new Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) waiver programs. Key focus areas include:

a. Waiting Lists

- Preparing transition materials and finalizing policy decisions this month.
- Developing a future-state process map for waitlist management.
- Preparing stakeholder communications.

b. Assessments

- Streamlining assessments for consistency and person-centered care.
- Two key changes implemented in 2025:
 - All HCBS assessments now conducted by Telligen.
 - Individuals on the ID waiver now use the interRAI assessment tool.
- Updates to the HHS Assessment website are underway, incorporating stakeholder feedback.

c. Quality Management System

- Developing a quality management framework, including:
 - Six beneficiary journey maps completed.
 - Identifying and refining performance measures, including those overlapping with existing HCBS metrics.
 - Implementing a decision aid for measure development.

d. REACH Initiative

- Advancing work on the Quality Improvement and Assurance (QIA) Plan, which will be reviewed by the REACH Quality Subcommittee.
- A draft assessment tool memo is also being prepared for the REACH Assessment Tool Subcommittee.
- Analysis of state plans from Illinois, Kansas, Maine, and Ohio is informing new communication materials tailored for Iowa.

Steenblock opened the floor for questions. Co-chair Haglund asked for an update on the appointment of a permanent Medicaid Director. Steenblock reported the search for a candidate is still underway. Another member asked whether the public comments for the Work Requirement amendment yielded any changes. Steenblock reported

exemption of tribal members using the IHAWP program was the only change made as a result of the feedback received.

MCO QUARTERLY REPORT AND MEDICAID DASHBOARD

Kurt Behrens, Managed Care Reporting and Oversight (MCRO), reviewed the Managed Care Organization (MCO) second quarterly report for State Fiscal Year 2025 (SFY25 Q2). All information available in the quarterly report will be available in some form in the [Iowa Medicaid Dashboard](#)⁷ which can be accessed on the [Agency Dashboards webpage](#)⁸. Additionally, Medicaid reports can be accessed on the [Medicaid Performance and Reports webpage](#)⁹.

LEGISLATIVE UPDATES

Carrie Malone, Director of Government Relations, presented a [high-level summary of key developments](#)¹⁰ from the most recent legislative session, with a focus on Medicaid and other health and human services (HHS) initiatives.

1. Overview of the 2025 Legislative Session

- This session was particularly active in the health and human services space, with Governor Reynolds highlighting major HHS initiatives in her Condition of the State Address—a notable and unprecedented focus.
- The Governor’s direction led to swift legislative momentum on a variety of HHS-related priorities from the first day of session.

2. Key Legislative Successes (Agency-Wide)

a. Governor’s Rural Health Initiative

- A key element of the Governor’s agenda, this bill included:
 - A \$420,000 state appropriation to increase maternal health rates.
 - When combined with federal matching funds, this investment represents a significant rate increase.
 - Further details on implementation are forthcoming.

b. Agency Legislative Initiatives

- Technical Omnibus Bill: Streamlined departmental processes and aimed to improve client interactions.
- Supporting Youth in Crisis Legislation: Aimed at improving services for at-risk youth, with specific provisions related to HCBS and Hawki (CHIP) coverage.

⁷<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiaMmlyMTQxNzItZmlwNS00ZDI2LThhMDAtZGI1MzZhNmNiMmM3liwidCI6IjhhkMmM3YjRkLTA4NWEtNDYxNy04NTM2LTM4YTc2ZDE5YjBkYSJ9>

⁸https://hhs.iowa.gov/dashboard_welcome

⁹<https://hhs.iowa.gov/performance-and-reports/medicaid-reports>

¹⁰<https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16329/download?inline>

3. Medicaid-Specific Budget Highlights

While fewer Medicaid bills were introduced this year, several significant appropriations were secured:

Item	Amount	Purpose
Nursing Facility Rate Increases	\$20 million	Support for long-term care facilities
Intermittent Supported Community Living	\$3 million	HCBS-related support
Dental Rate Increases	\$2 million	Based on HHS annual rate review
Maternal Health Rate Increase	\$420,000	Part of rural health initiative
Prosthetics Reimbursement Increase	\$100,000	In collaboration with providers
Personal Needs Allowance Increase	\$330,000	For Medicaid members in institutional settings

- Legislative Materials: All presentations and documents are available on the Iowa HHS Government Relations Resources webpage.

4. Child Protective Services (CPS) & Medicaid Intersections

- Youth served by Child Protective Services receive Medicaid benefits.
- This year’s budget included:
 - Rate increases for QRTPs (Qualified Residential Treatment Programs) and shelter providers.
 - Increases for foster care and adoption supports.

5. Looking Ahead: 2026 Legislative Session

Key areas of focus for the next session include:

- Public Health System Alignment
 - Anticipated discussions around continued system alignment, particularly for local public health infrastructure, building on recent behavioral health and disability services integration efforts.
- Medicaid for Employed People with Disabilities (MEPD)
 - HHS is conducting a comparative review of other states’ programs to inform future improvements.
 - A potential fall presentation (September or October) may be scheduled to share preliminary findings and explore phased approaches to increase access.

When the floor was opened for questions, there were no questions or comments.

MANAGED CARE PLAN (MCP) UPDATE IOWA TOTAL CARE (ITC)

Jay McLaren, Vice President of Legislative and Government Affairs at ITC, provided a brief update on [ITC's recent activities](#)¹¹.

Community Events and Outreach

- Iowa Total Care has hosted and participated in several community events, including baby showers in Burlington and Des Moines to support new and expecting mothers with resources and essential baby supplies.
- These events combine engaging activities for children (face painting, crafts, games) with important family resources such as vision exams and safety information.
- Additionally, Iowa Total Care staffed a table at the Des Moines farmers market in May to engage with the public.
- The Green to Go program continues, distributing fresh produce to members and the public, with approximately 60,000 items distributed last year and goals to exceed that in the current year.

Mental Health Toolkit

- Iowa Total Care developed a new Mental Health Toolkit, distributed during Mental Health Awareness Month in May.
- The toolkit provides resources for recognizing and addressing mental health issues, including crisis line information and guidance on supporting loved ones.
- This resource, created in partnership with NAMI, is available not only to Iowa Total Care members but also to the public and partner organizations.

Provider Summit Series

- Iowa Total Care's annual Provider Summit Series invites network providers for collaboration on quality improvement and patient care strategies.
- The series also introduces new business lines and products in individual health insurance and Medicare markets.
- Recent forums have shown strong participation, with a 64% attendance rate in West Des Moines, reflecting robust engagement with providers.

Collaboration with Central Iowa Shelter and Services (CISS)

- Iowa Total Care has partnered with CISS to support the Empowerment Command Center in Des Moines and Grinnell, providing crisis shelter and services.
- An app funded by Iowa Total Care assists staff in evaluating client needs and connecting them with local resources.

¹¹ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16316/download?inline>

- A ribbon-cutting event for the Grinnell center took place on May 21, with an upcoming ceremony planned in Tama in July.

Support for Healthy Kids Iowa Program

- In partnership with the Iowa Department of Health and local food banks, Iowa Total Care has supported the Healthy Kids Iowa initiative, which provides summer food resources to children.
- Outreach efforts include text messaging 90,000 families, social media campaigns, newsletters, and directing members to the Department's website for local program information.

WELLPOINT (WLP)

John McCalley, Whole Health Director WLP, provided a brief update on [WLP's recent activities](#)¹².

Community Engagement

- WellPoint has been active statewide in various community initiatives, including:
 - An MCO panel discussion in Spencer, sponsored by Spencer Hospital and the marketing team, aimed at educating the public about Medicaid and value-added benefits.
 - Participation in a unique autism resource fair in Fort Dodge in partnership with local organizations.
 - Engagements at multicultural events in Sioux City, child abuse prevention awareness in Cedar Rapids, and the locally-driven Tapestry Farms initiative in Davenport supporting refugee populations through culturally aligned fresh produce.
 - The annual baby and toddler resource fair in Dubuque, providing vital maternal and child health resources.

CHAMP Housing Stability Initiative

- The CHAMP program is a distinctive WellPoint initiative providing gap funding and comprehensive case management to Medicaid members facing housing insecurity.
- The program collaborates with community agencies across 23 counties, recently expanding to Emmet County in 2025.
- CHAMP assists members in avoiding eviction, transitioning from homelessness, and accessing temporary shelter.

¹² <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16317/download?inline>

- Beyond housing support, CHAMP offers holistic case management, addressing food security, veteran services, household needs, and better navigation of Medicaid services.
- The program has helped over 1,500 members and supports transitions from incarceration, foster care, facility-based care, and rehabilitation to sober living.
- Referrals are simple via email, with additional resource identification tools available for members outside the program's counties.

WellPoint Job Connections Program

- Launched in May, this new program supports Medicaid members in navigating employment, particularly in light of work requirements.
- Powered by RankEm Works, it offers:
 - Job interest surveys, personalized dashboards, and profile building.
 - Job matching by location, work style, and level (entry to executive).
 - Resume building and AI-assisted resume review.
 - Interview coaching, soft skills training, and a concierge service for reminders and follow-ups.
- Case managers refer members identified as unemployed or seeking new opportunities, who then access a customized online portal to manage their job search.
- This program complements existing employment resources such as Indeed and LinkedIn, tailored specifically to WellPoint members' needs and tracked internally.

The floor was opened for questions, and a question about CHAMP program age groups was asked. McCalley reported the CHAMP program provides housing stability support to individuals of all age groups. It helps youth, including those with housing insecurity identified by their parents, as well as older adults transitioning to assisted living but lacking deposit funds. In response to the increasing number of older adults experiencing homelessness or housing instability, a new initiative from the state's aging plan will focus on connecting these individuals with necessary services. The information on the CHAMP program will be shared with the new ADRC (Aging and Disability Resource Center) to better assist Medicaid members and facilitate connections with the program.

MOLINA HEALTHCARE (MOL)

Briana Alexandres, Manager of Materials, and Christine Tucker, Maternal Health Program Manager at MOL, provided a brief update on [MOL's recent activities](#)¹³.

Community Engagement and Provider Relations

¹³ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16324/download?inline>

- **Communication Strategy:** Molina's communication strategy focuses on using data to address key health outcomes, particularly diabetes. They implemented an integrated plan to educate members, especially those who are diabetic or pre-diabetic, about available benefits and resources, including transportation and phone connectivity. Communication methods include postcards, text messages, emails, and social media.
- **Provider Engagement:** Molina has focused on strengthening relationships with providers through "Lunch and Learn" events. These sessions are tailored to specific provider needs, especially FQHCs, and aim to educate them on Molina's offerings and benefits.
- **Meet Molina Tour:** Molina conducted a "Meet Molina" tour, visiting over 70 community organizations and providers to increase awareness of their services. This was in addition to 150 events held earlier in the year. Molina's outreach efforts emphasize connecting with the community and offering support.

Maternal Health Initiatives

- **Doula Services:** Molina has introduced a hybrid doula program in Black Hawk and Polk counties, combining virtual education and in-person doula support. The Mae program aims to improve maternal health outcomes by providing support during pregnancy, delivery, and postpartum.
- **Community Partnerships:** Molina partners with community-based organizations like Every Step to offer pop-up clinics in Central Iowa, providing services like dental screenings, STI screenings, and lactation education. The goal is to offer culturally relevant services to underserved populations, including immigrants and refugees, through partnerships with groups like Knock and Drop.
- **Value-Added Benefits:** Molina offers benefits that address social determinants of health, such as transportation to food pantries or WIC appointments, home-delivered meals, YMCA memberships for wellness, and help with finding additional resources.
- **Baby Showers and Health Education:** Molina organizes quarterly baby showers to provide education on topics like labor and delivery, newborn care, and postpartum recovery. Members attending these showers receive \$100 in healthier rewards and critical health education.

Doula Program Outcomes

- **Program Impact:** In the first year, 58 members were matched with physical doulas, while 148 members accessed educational resources through the doula platform. Notably, only 13% of doula-supported births involved cesarean sections, which is significantly lower than the state baseline of 33% for Black mothers.

- Future Plans: Molina aims to expand the doula program beyond Polk and Black Hawk counties. The program is culturally responsive but open to all members, with a focus on those with higher-risk factors.

Timeline and Future Plans

- Timeline: Molina’s maternal health initiatives began in 2023 with support for Iowa Primary Care Association’s work with FQHCs. Baby showers started in early 2024, followed by the launch of the doula program in April 2024. Molina has been growing partnerships with community organizations and expanding their Every Step pop-up clinics.
- Future Programs: Molina plans to address the rising needs for gestational diabetes interventions in Iowa by offering webinars and adding gestational diabetes programming to support members in managing their condition.

PREPAID AMBULATORY HEALTH PLAN (PAHP) UPDATES

DELTA DENTAL OF IOWA (DDIA)

Nicole Miller with DDIA introduced Taryn Jonet, Government Programs Care Coordination and Outreach Consultant to provide a brief update on [DDIA’s recent activities](#)¹⁴.

[2024 Annual Report](#)¹⁵ Overview

- Funding & Grants: In 2024, Delta Dental’s foundation committed \$3.6 million to 324 organizations in Iowa to address oral and overall health needs. Notable contributions include:
 - \$1.35 million for capacity-building grants, including a grant for the Community Health Center of Fort Dodge to support their new mobile dental clinic.
 - Over \$710,000 in community health grants supporting dental workforce recruitment and public health education.
 - Nearly \$300,000 for the "Rethink Your Drink" program to install water stations in schools and community centers.
- Vision Clinic: Delta Dental hosted a free, volunteer-led vision clinic in Cedar Rapids, in partnership with OneSight and Prevent Blindness. A similar event is planned in Fort Dodge.

¹⁴ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16323/download?inline>

¹⁵ https://www.deltadentalia.com/webres/File/foundation/2024%20Annual%20Report_web.pdf

- **Toothbrush Distribution:** In 2024, Delta Dental distributed over 395,000 toothbrushes across all 99 Iowa counties, reaching schools, clinics, veteran organizations, hospitals, and I-Smile coordinators.

Provider Support and Continuing Education

- Delta Dental hosted a continuing education webinar for providers, focusing on preventive dentistry, specifically topical fluoride. The session aimed to increase fluoride usage among children and improve understanding of various preventive products.

Value-Added Services and Incentives

- **Oral Health Survey:** Delta Dental launched a new incentive program where members receive gift cards for completing an oral health survey and getting a dental cleaning from an in-network dentist. This initiative encourages preventive care and helps establish dental homes to reduce the need for emergency care.

Care Coordination and Outreach

- **Between March and May 2024,** Delta Dental received 33 new care coordination referrals and identified 184 additional members needing dental care coordination through the oral health survey tool. This outreach helps members avoid emergency room visits for dental issues.
- **Emergency Room Data:** Delta Dental continues to track emergency room claims data from managed care organizations, reaching out to members who used emergency services to ensure they receive ongoing dental care and establish a dental home.

Community Events and Partnerships

- **Special Olympics Summer Games:** Delta Dental provided a grant for the Healthy Athletes program, offering dental screenings and care coordination for approximately 2,600 athletes.
- **Outreach Events:** Delta Dental participated in numerous community outreach efforts, including:
 - 2025 IDEAS Iowa Dental Association Conference in May.
 - Baby Bloom event, offering joint dental screenings and materials alongside the I-Smile program.
 - Drake Head Start partnership, providing dental kits to children and supporting home visits to promote oral health.
 - Molina collaboration for oral health materials in Head Start backpacks and at wash days events.

- Clay County LINC event, providing information on dental wellness plans and Hawki benefits for behavioral health professionals.
- Broadlawns Resource Fair, offering oral health education and materials.
- Cavity Free Club: Delta Dental partnered with United Community Health Center in Storm Lake to launch the Cavity Free Club, encouraging preventive dental care for Head Start students and promoting healthy oral hygiene habits at home.

MCNA DENTAL

Nicole Cusick, Provider Relations Manager MCNA Dental, provided a brief update on [MCNA's recent activities](#)¹⁶.

Quarter 3 Overview (Jan - Mar 2024)

- Provider Contact Visits: MCNA Dental conducted 129 provider site visits and attempted 161 additional contacts that were not completed due to various reasons such as lack of response.
- Outreach Events: Despite limited events in Q3 (likely due to weather), MCNA attended two outreach events:
 - Warming Shelter (February 25)
 - Central Iowa Shelter (March 25)

Provider Satisfaction

- Satisfaction Rate: MCNA's provider satisfaction rate reached 90.66% for Q3, marking a 16% increase over the past eight quarters.
- No Provider Complaints: There were zero provider complaints in the past four quarters, showcasing the effectiveness of their communication and support.
- Key Strategies:
 - Timely Follow-ups: The PR team responds to provider concerns within 24 hours.
 - Claim Denial Education: MCNA educates providers on how to reduce avoidable claim denials, easing administrative burdens and improving claim payment speed.

Provider Value-Based Payment (VBP) and Incentive Program

- Dental Home Establishment: Providers earn \$20 for establishing a dental home within 100 days of a new patient's exam. Results show:
 - 7% of children (DWP) established a dental home after an episodic visit.
 - 9% of adults (DWP) did the same.

¹⁶ <https://hhs.iowa.gov/media/16318/download?inline>

- Timely Recall Visits: Providers can earn \$10 for timely recall visits (175-235 days after a previous exam). Results show:
 - 39% of children (DWP) received timely recall visits.
 - 26% of adults (DWP) received timely recall visits.
- These value-based payments have proven effective in improving member oral health outcomes by ensuring continuity of care and promoting timely follow-ups.

Events (April - May 2024)

- Spring Provider Seminar: A seminar was held in the spring, with details to be shared in the next quarter's update.
- Iowa Dental Association Conference: MCNA's booth won first place at the State Fair-themed conference, with their "Butter Tooth" display contributing to their victory.

OPEN DISCUSSION

When the floor was opened for discussion, there were no questions or comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 2:51 p.m.

Submitted by,

Emma Nutter and Nell Bennett

Recording Secretaries

en/nb