

Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC)

MEETING MINUTES

March 19, 2026

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The Iowa Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) convened its March meeting of the Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC), bringing together Medicaid members, family caregivers, and state staff to discuss ongoing initiatives, upcoming program updates, and the experiences of Iowans receiving Medicaid services. Members introduced themselves, providing background on their personal and professional experiences with Medicaid, including:

- Family caregivers of children with disabilities
- Adoptive and foster parents
- Medicaid recipients
- Representatives from county health departments
- Public health staff
- Long-term care and compliance staff
- Members of the Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council
- Individuals with extensive personal Medicaid system experience

Members expressed appreciation for the detailed minutes produced for the previous meeting.

PROPOSED MEETING DATES FOR 2026

HHS staff presented proposed dates for remaining quarterly meetings:

- Q2: May 13, 2026 (Wednesday, 1–3 PM)
- Q3: August 12, 2026 (Wednesday, 1–3 PM)
- Q4: November 18, 2026 (Wednesday, 1–3 PM)

MAC meeting dates will be confirmed after the first MAC meeting of the year on March 30.

ONGOING CONCERNS & PRIORITY SETTING

The group assessed a broad list of previously identified issues to determine top priority items for 2026, to be forwarded to MAC and HHS leadership.

Issues reviewed included:

- Background check delays for CDAC and CCO providers
- Ability for families to serve as host home providers
- \$2,000 asset limit concerns
- Lack of medical daycare in waiver definitions
- Transition issues when youth turn 18
- Clarity in denial letters
- EPSDT access barriers
- Out-of-state provider access
- Dental coverage and dental provider participation
- Waiver redesign transparency
- Integrated Health Homes sunsetting
- Rural service access
- DentaQuest transition challenges

PRIORITY TOPICS FOR 2026

Waiver Redesign – High Priority Concern

Members raised extensive concerns:

- Lack of transparency regarding the financial impact of the 2026 waiver redesign.
- Unanswered questions about Consumer Choice Option (CCO) funding reductions (potential 80% rate instead of 100%).
- Fear of cuts to services during transition from HD, PD, and CMH waivers into new categories in October 2026.
- Concerns about equity in waitlist processes, especially the dual-path waitlist proposal using both application date and functional survey data.
- Need for clear service definitions and clarity on level-of-care determinations.
- Concern that providers and families are unprepared for operational impacts.

Dental Coverage & Provider Access – High Priority Concern

Members reported:

- Regional dental deserts, with some counties having no Medicaid-accepting dentists within an hour drive.
- Providers refusing DentaQuest or MCNA.

- Perception that University of Iowa receives higher reimbursement than community dentists.
- Children missing dental care during key developmental periods.

Transition Between Service Types (Youth → Adult and Community → Facility)

Concerns included:

- Disruptions when children turn 18 and move into adult systems.
- Difficulty transitioning from community services into higher levels of care (nursing home, assisted living).
- Delays caused by lack of coordination between internal HHS units.
- Need for clearer instructions and pathway guidance for families.

Host Home Access for Families

Members voiced strong support for:

- Allowing families to serve as certified host home providers for their own adult children.
- Expanding autonomy and choice for individuals with disabilities.

Waitlist Lengths

Members reiterated:

- ID waiver waitlist is currently approximately four years.
- Families see the current timeline as unacceptable.

ADDITIONAL DISCUSSION ITEMS

Woodward Facility Abuse Reports: Members expressed alarm regarding recent reports of abuse and neglect at the state-run Woodward facility.

Concerns included:

- Systemic oversight failures
- Lack of individual accountability
- Fear that vulnerable Iowans in institutional settings remain unsafe
- Parallels with previous Glenwood facility closure
- Members emphasized that the state must be held accountable for operations within its own facilities.

Managed Care Organization (MCO) Oversight: Members expressed concern about:

- Denials without adequate oversight
- Legislative proposals to codify MCO mandate
- Lack of recourse for vulnerable populations
- Need for stronger state-level oversight mechanisms

Potential Federal Changes to Provider Tax Programs: Members reported information from public health associations indicating:

- Possible federal disallowance of Iowa's provider tax mechanism
- Potential significant Medicaid funding reductions
- Impacts on nursing homes, hospitals, and broader state Medicaid budgets

Health Information "Bank Accounts" (Patient-Controlled Records): A member proposed exploring:

- State or federal systems where individuals own and control their unified health records
- Potential reductions in administrative burden
- Easier Medicaid renewals and disability verification
- Elimination of multiple patient portals

Eligibility & Renewal Form Concerns: Several members raised issues with renewal forms:

- Some families received full disability redetermination packets, including a 2010 form requiring 120+ pages of documentation.
- Others were automatically renewed without submitting anything, raising questions about equity.
- Some caseworkers appeared unaware of new policies or form logic.
- Members questioned whether automatic data checks or consent flags might explain disparities.

HHS committed to investigating:

- Why some families receive extensive renewal packets while others are auto-renewed
- Why outdated forms are being issued

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

GAX Reimbursement Forms

- Members must use the updated GAX template.
- The version originally in the chat was reported as corrupted; a corrected version will be emailed.

MAC Attendance Requirements

- Beginning at the May meeting, attendance tracking will begin to ensure compliance with federal requirements.
- MAC requires minimum representation at each meeting; a rotation schedule will be established.

Term Limits & Future Membership

- Current BAC seats are at capacity.
- Terms are 2 years, staggered—half expired July 2025, half began January 2026.
- Members may not serve two consecutive terms; a 2-year break is required.
- Applications for the next cohort will open late 2026.
- Iowa Developmental Disabilities Council currently has open seats via Iowa Talent Bank.

After no further questions or comments, the March meeting of the Beneficiary Advisory Committee was concluded.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 2:12 p.m.

Submitted by

Nell Bennett

Recording Secretary

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