



**Hawki Board Meeting  
June 21, 2021**

<b>Hawki Board Members</b>	<b>Department of Human Services</b>
Mary Nelle Trefz, Chair – present	Elizabeth Matney, Medicaid Director
Angela Burke Boston – present	Julie Lovelady, IME
Jim Donoghue – present	Paula Motsinger, IME
Eric Kohlsdorf –	Jennifer Steenblock, IME
Dr. Bob Russell – present	Mary Stewart, IME
Dr. Kaaren Vargas – present	Amela Alibasic, IME
Shawn Garrington – present	Kevin Kirkpatrick, IME
Senator Nate Boulton – present	Anna Ruggle, IME
Senator Mark Costello –	Kurt Behrens, IME
Representative Shannon Lundgren –	Tashina Hornaday, IME
	Bob Schlueter, IME
	<b>Guests</b>
	Gretchen Hageman, DDIA
	John Hedgecoth, Amerigroup
	Jean Johnson, IDPH
	Lindsay Paulson, MAXIMUS
	Kim Flores, ITC
	Dr. Jarod Johnson

**Call to Order and Roll Call**

Board Chair Mary Nelle Trefz called the meeting to order at 12:30 PM via Zoom. Chair Trefz conducted a roll call, and attendance is as reflected above. A quorum was established.

**Approval of the Hawki Board Meeting Minutes**

Chair Trefz called for the Board to review the minutes from the April 12, 2021, meeting. Chair Trefz asked for a motion to approve the minutes and the motion carried.

**Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**New Business**

Chair Trefz began by asking each Board member if they had any new business to discuss. No new business was shared at this time. Chair Trefz then noted that Eric’s and Dr. Vargas’

terms on the Board had ended, and asked the group if anyone had any information to share about finding a new public member(s) to replace departing Board members. Michael Kitzman, Iowa Medicaid Enterprise (IME), said that he's been in contact with the Office of the Governor, but they have not provided information about potential replacements. Chair Trefz then brought up the topic of grievances with Amerigroup, balance billing, and out-of-state, out-of-network providers. Specifically, she posed the question of whether these issues have affected Hawki members. She stated she would like to follow up with this at the next meeting.

### **Update on Denial of Outpatient Dental Services**

Dr. Vargas voiced concerns that Amerigroup is denying certain cases involving children, mainly those age five and under with significant dental needs and behavioral issues that do not allow in-office treatment. She described a recent case in which her office manager spent a significant amount of time on the phone with Amerigroup and the associated loss of patient care hours and resultant reimbursement issues. She also discussed peer-to-peer issues and the inordinate amount of administrative steps needed before a patient can receive treatment, which potentially leads to providers deciding not to take Hawki members.

Dr. Russell added that Amerigroup's first-tier case reviews are conducted by nurses, and while it is good practice to have medically-trained personnel reviewing cases, there is perhaps a "language barrier" between dental providers and those that work solely in the medical realm. He suggested that having dental-specific reviewers could bridge the communication gap.

Dr. Jarod Johnson, a pediatric dentist in Muscatine, shared some of his experiences working with Amerigroup. He expressed serious concerns regarding the treatment approval process and suggested that this could be detrimental to the well-being of his patients. Dr. Vargas also suggested that Amerigroup employ a pediatric dentist that understands the nuances of providing dental care to this subset of the population. Director Matney said the cases brought to the Board's attention have some notable differences from the cases and the data IME and Amerigroup have discussed, and IME will consider this information and bring something back to the next Board meeting.

### **Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) Core Set Quality Measures**

Bob Schlueter, IME, gave a presentation on Medicaid and CHIP core set quality measures. These voluntary measures are requested by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), and IME prepares them annually for the state. Bob discussed several of the measures in place, including primary care access and preventive care, maternal and perinatal health, care of acute and chronic conditions, behavioral healthcare, and dental and oral health services. He explained how the effectiveness of these measures is represented by which quartile a state falls in when compared to other states – though states generally have different methods of implementing these measures and it can be difficult to compare a state's data directly against another state's. Bob also noted that IME bases the effectiveness of meeting these measures on administrative claims data, rather than clinical data, and that incorporating clinical data will give a better representation of future effectiveness. Additionally, he emphasized that the data is pre-COVID-19 and that we have yet to determine to what extent COVID-19 has affected the data over the past two years.

## **Director's Report**

Director Matney gave her update. This was Liz's first Hawki Board meeting as Medicaid director, and she discussed her philosophy moving forward. She noted inequity in the healthcare system, preventive measures, and improving dental care as areas of particular emphasis. She also mentioned IME's maintenance of effort requirement, and the importance of balancing that with the challenges Medicaid members face as we continue to move through the federal public health emergency (PHE). She concluded by stating that IME will continue its no-disenrollment policy while beginning an eligibility review in preparation for the end of the year.

## **Managed Care Organization (MCO) Updates**

John Hedgecoth from Amerigroup provided an update. He covered Amerigroup's vaccination outreach program and its two-pronged approach – focusing on members aged 12 to 15, and members with underlying medical conditions. This is being done telephonically. He specifically stated the outreach to four target member groups has been completed: Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) waiver, Integrated Health Home (IHH), homebound, and age 65 and over. With this completed, outreach focus will transition to members with barriers to vaccination and the vaccine-hesitant population. Amerigroup continues to work on Immunization Registry Information System (IRIS) data exchange with the Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH). Efforts to reach out to specific communities and promote vaccine awareness are ongoing. Additionally, Amerigroup will resume face-to-face case management on July 1, 2021.

Kim Flores from Iowa Total Care (ITC) provided an update. Kim stated that ITC continues to monitor health outcomes on a month-to-month basis, and that data have shown improvement compared to one year ago. She specifically mentioned well child visits and immunizations as areas of focus, and that ITC has benchmarks to measure effectiveness of these efforts and to determine what activities to implement, shift, or eliminate. ITC's member engagement team continues to target new mothers and encourage them to take advantage of post-partum programs, as well as well child visits and immunizations for their newborns. ITC has also reached out through mailings, promoting various programs for children 15 months and younger, and providing information about other services available, such as transportation and on-site interpreters. Kim stated that ITC continues to identify disparities in care and game plan how to most effectively address those shortcomings. Additionally, ITC has effectively conducted COVID-19 vaccine outreach through telephone calls and texting since April 2021.

Gretchen Hageman from Delta Dental of Iowa (DDIA) provided an update. Gretchen noted three main areas of care coordination and outreach that DDIA has focused on: members who have not received care in fiscal year 2021, reaching out via phone calls and text message, and reaching out to the adolescent population. She also discussed I-Smile, which is a local infrastructure that provides care coordination, outreach, and direct care, and emphasized that I-Smile has the ability to bill the Hawki program directly. DDIA also continues to focus on outreach at farmers' markets and food bank events, and will have a booth at the Iowa State Fair.

## **Outreach**

Jean Johnson from IDPH provided an update. She stated that most Title V agencies have resumed working in an office setting and that a significant number of public health agencies have returned to the office as well. Many agencies are continuing to provide COVID-19 vaccinations,

but this has been scaled back a bit because of the many options members have for receiving the vaccine. Jean added that public health agencies have done an excellent job using social media for outreach as needed, and that two new Hawki outreach coordinators will be joining the team on July 1, 2021. Finally, outreach coordinators have engaged members and their parents through schools this summer with particular effectiveness.

**Communications Update**

Kevin Kirkpatrick provided an update. He stated that the open choice period for Hawki families will be in August and September 2021, and that gives those members the opportunity to switch MCOs for any reason. This is separate from eligibility redetermination, and families will receive informational packets in the mail beginning in late July 2021.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be Monday, August 16, 2021.  
Meeting adjourned at 2:19 PM.

Submitted by,  
John Riemenschneider  
Recording Secretary  
jr