

MCAC Council: Interim Workgroup update

Date: 12/11/23

Scope:

- **MCAC Workgroup:** Unclogging Alaska's Healthcare System by reducing administrative burden related to authorizations.
 - **Subgroup 1:** Inpatient Authorizations and processes
 - **Subgroup 2:** Long Term Care and Assisted Living Authorizations and processes
 - **Subgroup 3:** Outpatient Authorizations impacting discharges from care continuum
 - **Subgroup 4:** Travel Authorizations

Members:

- **Workgroup:** Stakeholders from DoH, Acute, Tribal Health System, Critical Access, Skilled Nursing, Post Acute, AHHA

MCAC Workgroup 1: Unclogging Alaska's Healthcare System

Matthew Dawson, PM & R, Acute, Physician

Nathan Dahl, Administrator, Maple Springs, Skilled Nursing.

Renee Gayhart, Director of Health Care Services, Department of Health Sponsor

Dr. Julius Goslin, Medicaid Medical Director, DOH Sponsor, Physician

Jeanette Lacey, Director of Case Management, Barlett, Acute

Jeannie Monk, Senior VP, AHHA, MCAC Chair Council

Jessica Oswald, administrator, Providence St. Elias, MCAC Workgroup Chair

Emily Stevens, CNO, ANMC, Acute & Tribal Health

Lee Vanderbrink, Supervisor Decision Support, PAMC, Acute

Katrina Wilson, YKHC, Nursing Home Administrator, Skilled Nursing & Tribal Health

Gennifer Moreau-Johnson, Senior Policy Advisor, ANTHC

Tammy Rose, Prestige, Skilled Nursing

Sariah Hughes, Prestige, Skilled Nursing

Connie Beemer, AHHA VP Post-Acute Care & Finance, post-acute care

Jared Kosin, CEO, AHHA

- **Subgroup 1:** Inpatient Authorizations and processes (Stakeholders & HCS)

Debra Schlitt, DOH, Medicaid Program Specialist III, Medicaid Operations

Sherri Larue, DOH Medicaid Program Specialist IV, Lead Operations, Medicaid Operations

Jessica Howard, DOH, Medicaid Program Specialist II, Long Term Care, Medicaid Operations

Kristin Delfino, DOH Health Care Services

Dr. Matthew Dawson, PM&R, Acute, physician

[Please see additional members in workgroup one section.]

Workgroup 2: LTC and ALF (Stakeholders, DPA, SDS and HCS)

Inpatient Authorization and Ongoing stay

Becca Stovall, Chief of Division 52 Support, Division of Public Assistance

Moli Atanoa, Division of Senior and Disability Services, Nursing Unit Manager

Joshua Welsh, Long-term Care Unit, Leadership team, Division of Public Assistance

[Please see additional members in workgroup one section.]

Executive Summary:

- Workgroup kicked off in August 2023 chartered with a focus on Unclogging Alaska's Healthcare System scoped to focusing on reducing administrative burden related to authorizations.
- The workgroup has completed most of the process discovery work and begun reviewing potential recommendations.
- **Several short-term incremental improvements** have been identified that can be implemented immediately without impact to statute, regulation, department policy, or contractual relationships.
- **Longer term higher impact recommendations** are actively being discussed by the workgroup that would have potential impact on department contracts, policies, regulations and potentially statute.
- **Workgroup continues forward with recommendations phase.**

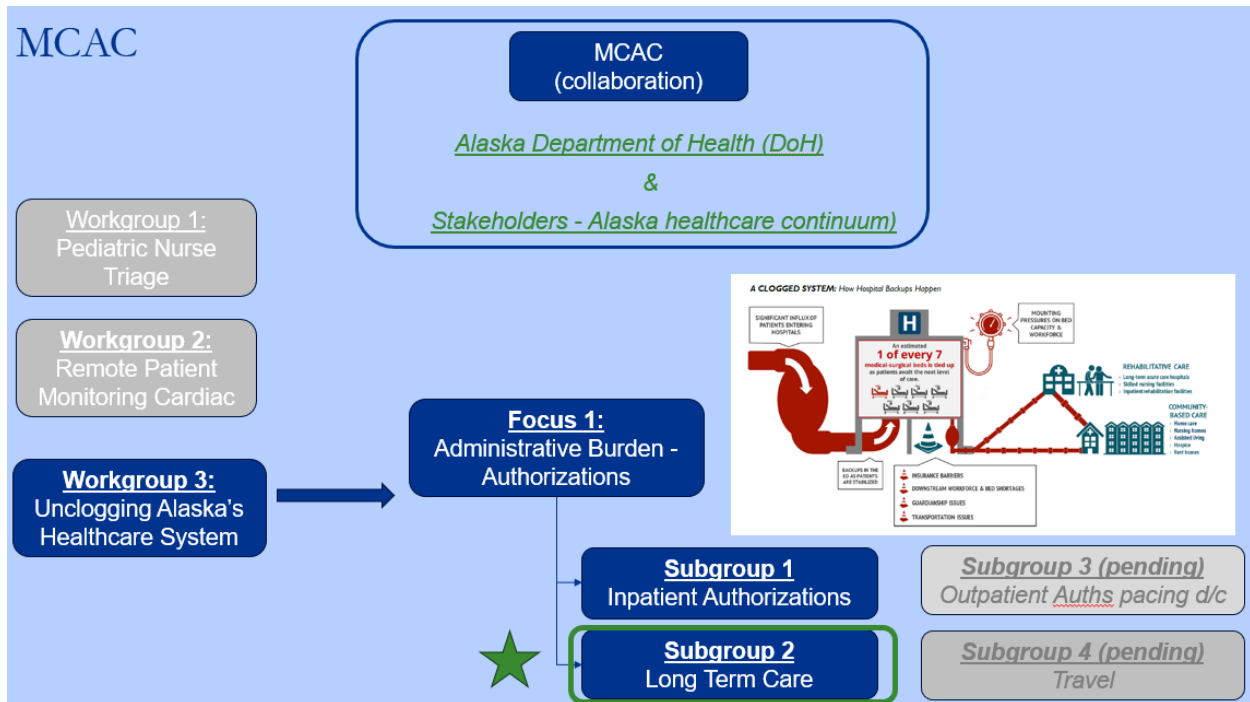
Recommendations under discussion and review:

- **Several short-term incremental improvements** have been identified that can be implemented immediately without impact to statute, regulation, department policy, or contractual relationships.
 - **Incremental** recommendations are being explored with varying timelines and progress in collaboration during workgroup sessions.
 - **Inpatient Authorizations and discharge gating Outpatient Authorizations:** Reviewing service authorization approval history, potentially removing some higher impact service authorization areas from service authorization list
 - **Long Term Care and Assisted Living Facility:** Focus on delays related to incomplete applications and information provided to approval authorities. Focus on partnering with DoH to develop robust tools and exemplified to educate

stakeholders to help improve successful submittal of information at start of application.

- **Longer term higher impact recommendations** are actively being discussed by the workgroup that would have potential impact on department contracts, policies, regulations and potentially statute.
 - **Longer term high impact recommendations**, given scope of transformative ideas being discussed, may benefit from enhanced DoH participation to provide guidance on what would be needed to explore and develop recommendations, outside bounds of current structure.
 - **Inpatient Authorizations and discharge gating Outpatient Authorizations:**
 - Review and lessons learned from Golden Ticket program
 - Adopting Medicare model for utilization management, eliminating need for prior authorizations; requires medical necessity definitions for services, along with audit process for utilization review controls
 - Review of proposed HB 187, focus on commercial; understand potential expansion to Medicaid processes
 - Medical necessity definitions that restrict access to services in Alaska adding to delays and clogging of healthcare system, more restrictive than Medicare, review SOW with Comagine
 - **Long Term Care and Assisted Living**
 - Review of waivers from other states that may simplify processes

Figure 1: MCAC Workgroup project scoping



Caption: Figure 1 outlines the connection between the workgroup “Unclogging Alaska’s Healthcare System” and the larger MCAC council, along with a drill into the initial focus areas of the workgroup. The figure shows the statewide MCAC collaborative council, which includes representatives from the AK DoH and AK healthcare community stakeholders. Under the larger council, at the time of this writing, the council officially had chartered three (3) dedicated workgroups to improve access to services for Medicaid recipients. The “Unclogging Alaska’s Healthcare System” is one of the 3 workgroups. The figure then goes on to show a picture of patient progression of care across the healthcare continuum, visually noting the extensive clogging of the healthcare system currently happening in acute settings, with patients in custodial care delaying moving back into the community and along the care continuum due to various “clogging” issues with our healthcare system. The figure then goes on to note that the first area of focus the group chose to work on is around “Reducing Administrative Burden – Authorizations.” The authorizations process causes delays in access to care for patients and clogging of the system. The figure then goes on to outline the 4 focus areas the group identified to work on including: inpatient authorizations, long term care and assisted living authorizations, outpatient authorizations that pace the ability to discharge inpatients (access to services such as IV infusions outpatient, wound pumps, oxygen etc., all can cause patients to stay in acute beds) and finally authorizations related to travel.