Overview of the Rural Health Delivery Work Group
to
The Maryland Medicaid Advisory Committee

July 27, 2017

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SB 707 Freestanding Medical Facilities- Certificate of Need, Rates and Definitions

- Legislation established a process for a hospital to convert to an FMF
- Broadened the definition of hospital services to include observation stays and other outpatient services offered at the FMF, as determined by HSCRC in regulations.
- Defined the findings MHCC must reach before issuing the exemption from CON review for a conversion
- Legislative debate highlighted significant public concern about the appropriateness of health system changes in rural communities
- Established a moratorium on hospital conversions in Kent County until July 2020
- Established a Rural Health Delivery Workgroup and submit recommendations in October 2017

SB 707 – Rural Health Delivery Workgroup

- Membership
  - General Assembly Members
  - Secretary of MDH
  - CEOs of rural hospitals
  - Providers, consumers, local government, business, and labor

- Charge
  - Assess rural health care needs in the five Mid Shore counties
  - hold public hearings to gain community input regarding the health care needs
  - Identify policy options developed through Workgroup meetings, through public input, and from the study
  - Specifically recommend policies that address:
    - the health care needs of residents of the five study counties. and
    - approaches to improve the health care delivery system in the five Mid Shore counties
    - Recommendations on economic development, health care work force, vulnerable populations, transportation,

- Issue a report by October 1, 2017

Rural Health Delivery Study

- Examine challenges to the delivery of health care in the Mid Shore area, including:
    - the limited availability of health care providers and services;
    - the special needs of vulnerable populations;
    - transportation barriers; and
    - the economic impact of the closure, partial closure, or conversion of a health care facility;
- Identify opportunities created by telehealth and the Maryland all–payer model contract for restructuring the delivery of health care services; and
- Develop policy options for addressing the health care needs of residents of, and improving the health care delivery system in, the five study counties

Findings

- People prefer to access essential care close to where they live.
- People have significant pride in their own communities. "Regional" has negative connotations to some.
- Supply of primary care, behavioral health, and specialty providers is uneven and critically low for some vulnerable populations.
- Health literacy is a major barrier to all, but especially elderly and people with chronic conditions.
- Residents believe that the quality of care they receive is lower than on the Western Shore.
- Disconnect between opinion leaders and consumers on benefits of competition among health systems.
- Access to acute care services is a major concern, but residents in the five jurisdictions have different perceptions of what that means.

Overview of Recommendations

- Rural Community Health Complex Demonstration Project
  - Provide for primary care services and other services as close to a community as possible
  - Take advantage of established health care facilities (build on what is in place and breakdown some silos)
  - Establish Patient-Centered Technology Hub
  - Establish a Rural Health Planning Collaborative to support the development of the complexes

- Supporting Recommendations
  - Establish a definition of a Special Rural Hospital that would have some additional protections under the All Payer Model
  - Workforce Development -- Create incentives to expand primary care and behavioral health workforce in the community, define role of community health workers
  - Expand access to behavioral health, substance abuse services, and adult dental health services

- Reduce Transportation Barriers
  - Expand programs such as the Mobile Integrated Community Health (MICH) program that brings care into the home
  - Expand use of telemedicine and mHealth
  - Standardize medical non-emergency transport across Maryland counties.

Learn More: http://mhcc.maryland.gov/mhcc/pages/home/workgroups/workgroups_rural_health.aspx
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