Montgomery Cares Advisory Board

March, 26, 2025 Meeting Notes

MCAB Members Present: Dr. Kathryn Kelly, Mark Foraker, Vahe Hovian, Huixing (Kate) Lu, Katherine McGrail, Leslie Richin, Karen Crist, Dr. Yuchi Huang, Dr. Khalfani Walker, Dr. Kisha Davis

MCAB Members Absent: Denise Kishel, Dr. Deborah Miller-Young, Beth Barrows, Wayne Swann

DHHS Staff: Ashley Miller, Melinda Fredericks, Dr. Nina Ashford, Sean Gibson, LaSonya Kelly, Magda Brown, Dr. Christopher Rogers, Arnecia Moody

County Council Staff: Tara Clemons Johnson

Primary Care Coalition: Dr. Veronica Vela, Marisol Ortiz, Fareed Anjum, Leslie Graham, Kristine Gallagher-Sargsyan

Guest: Charlotte Jenkins, Ana Maria Espinoza

Dr. Katheryn Kelly, MCAB Chair, called the meeting to order at 6:20 pm. Meeting held via video/teleconference.

Item		Action Follow-up	Person Assigned	Due Date
1.	Approval of Minutes – February 26,2025 Dr. Kathryn Kelly			
	Moved by: Mark Foraker Seconded by: Dr. Yuchi Huang The motion was passed unanimously.			
2.	 Montgomery Cares Advisory Board Chair Report TROIKA Update: TROIKA will meet with County Council in April 2025 to provide more information to Council members on why the Healthcare for the Uninsured Items identified in the County Executive's Budget Recommendations should remain in the FY26 budget as well as advocate for other items that were not included with the County Executive's Budget Recommendations for FY26. Easy Access to Comprehensive Healthcare Priority Action Team: Members of this team will provide input and recommendations that will be used in the development of the 2025-2028 Montgomery County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP). Time commitment for this team is Spring 2025 – Summer 2028. Dr. Kelly has offered to serve as MCAB representative on the Action Team and will provide updates to MCAB on the progress of the Action Team. Thank you, Dr. Kelly! 	Follow up with MCAB on items noted in this month's Chair Report	Dr. Kelly	At the April MCA B meeti ng

3.	 Health Officer Update Measles cases have been found in Prince George's County. The CDC and local health agencies are increasing efforts to control further spread of this disease through vaccination outreach. Montgomery County continues to closely monitor Bird Flu cases Update from this month's Health Officer Report, the County appears to be turning the corner on Influenza and other respiratory viruses as we enter Spring. Cases are beginning to level off and decline compared to the previous month. In Honor of National Public Health Week (April 7-13) the Department of Health and Human Services will be holding the first annual Dr. Ulder J. Tillman National Public Health Week Symposium on April 8 from 10am – 12 pm at the Temple Beth AMI, 14330 Travilah Road, Rockville, MD 20850. Questions: 			
	 Mark Foraker inquired if the public should consider boosters for Measles for people who have had the Measles before?? Are there other communicable diseases we should be on the lookout for? Dr. Davis responded that if an individual has previously had the measles, vaccination is not required, but individuals who are concerned can get their titers checked to ensure they still have immunity. No other immerging communicable diseases aside from those noted in the report to be on the lookout for at this time. Vaccines are 99% effective. Dr. Yuchi Huang asked if RSV virus rates are still high? Dr. Davis noted that rates have been high, but are starting to taper off and come down over the last few weeks. 			
4.	Healthcare for the Uninsured Report See Presentations Time was allotted for MCAB members to ask questions on the monthly HCU Report. Questions: - Dr. Yuchi Huang asked for the Montgomery Perinatal Program, why there was a decline in referrals in	Follow up and provide responses on MCAB program questions	Ashley Miller	By April 2025 MCA B meeti
	FY25 from August to September? The numbers appear to have remainder low ever since. Ashley will reach out to the program lead and provide an update at the next meeting. Ashley Miller presented on updated eligibility requirements for the Healthcare for the Uninsured Programs and the County Executive's FY26 Budget Recommendations. The presentation compared the FY26 budget recommendations to MCAB's FY26 priorities.	Schedule follow up meeting with Marisol Ortiz, Karen Crist and DHHS	Dr. Christoph er Rogers	Follo wing MCa rch MCA
	 Eligibility Policy Change Questions/Comments: Mark Foraker commended the presentation and emphasized the importance of the reimbursement rate increase to ensure patients get quality care. Noting the ultimate goal is for individuals to enroll in government programs, which offers the highest quality care. Dr. Yuchi Huang asked if other Counties had a similar program and what they were doing? Dr Kisha Davis responded that there are no other similar programs to this magnitude in the State. 			B Meet ing.

	 Kate Lu noted MCares patients most often seek help when there are urgent needs. Clinics work with new patients to educate the importance of regular check-ups and preventive care. She also inquired if there was a possibility that people would move to Montgomery County to be able to get care through the MCares program in light of the new Access to Care Act, changes in the Federal Administration and the eligibility policy change. Dr. Christopher Rogers responded that DHHS will be monitoring enrollment and participation rates to see the impact of these changes. Yuchi Huang noted it is important to continue to advocate for and make clear to increase the reimbursement rate to \$175 and increase encounters to accommodate possible higher enrollment from the policy change. FY26 County Executive Recommendations Questions/Comments: Karen Crist inquired if the increased funding for behavioral health would include evaluation services? Marisol Ortiz responded that it would not. Dr. Christopher Rogers will schedule a follow up meeting between Marisol Ortiz, Karen Crist and DHHS to discuss this item further. 			
5.	Reconcile MCAB Priorities For County Council Letter – April Submission- Next Steps MCAB Based on the release of the County Executive's FY26 Budget Recommendations that Board was asked to provide feedback on any changes they would like in advance of the submission of the MCAB FY26 Priorities Letter to County Council. A copy of the FY26 MCAB Priorities Letter that was sent to the County Executive was circulated prior to the meeting. Mark Foraker recommended that the priorities remain the same as the letter that was submitted in Fall 2024. Members present agreed. Based on the County Executive's FY26 recommendations, Dr. Kathryn Kelly noted that it is important to continue to establish more clear lines of communication with the County Executive Office and County Council. She noted the importance of the County Executive attending the September MCAB Retreat and attendance by County Council representatives and monthly MCAB meetings. She encouraged the Board to continue making connections and establishing strong communication lines to ensure priorities are being considered and dire needs are being met. Karen Crist recommended updating the language in the letter that goes to County Council to open the language	Email feedback on the MCAB FY26 County Council Letter draft	MCAB	Prior to the April 2025 MCA B meeti ng.
	up to reflect recent national events and be more inclusive of other immigrant groups. MCAB Chair, Vice Chair and Legislative Liaison will work to update the draft letter with these language suggestions. Board members should email Ashley Miller with any other comments or changes for the FY26 draft County Council Letter. An updated draft will be shared at the April meeting. MCAB will review the changes and vote to finalize the Letter at the April meeting.			

6.	MCAB Definition of Success	Dr. Kathryn Kelly	Email Feedback	MCAB	Prior
	MCAB members continued the discussion to develop a definition of success for MCAB. Vice Chair provided the Board with priority considerations and questions to consider at I Members were asked to reflect and bring responses to the March meeting for discussion. Why did you want to join MCAB? What HCU Program focus areas were you hoping to it that influence/changes be measured? What are your core goals as a Board member you at the next year?	ast month's meeting. Questions included: influence? How can	no Definition of Success – comments and priorities		to April 2025 MCA b meeti ng.
	Dr. Kathryn Kelly noted the work of MCAB aligns with her passions and were one of the join the Board. Through her work on MCAB she would like to shine a light on Healthcar and hopes to share resources among the members an different clinics represented.				
	Mark Foraker shared that he has spent 24 years making headway in the nonprofit sector, Mercy Clinic. Through MCAB he would like to work to improve community and patient see MCAB priorities advance. Given the rich array of representation and skills on the Bo participate in knowledge sharing with the Board and hopes to gain new perspectives and	outcomes and outcomes to			
	Dr. Khalfani Walker shared that he joined the Board as a way to learn more about healther in Montgomery County and to find ways to better serve his patients and the residents of I County. He wants to see the community succeed and be part of the solution to assist the County vulnerable residents.	Montgomery			
	Kate Lu wants to give a voice and unique perspective to the Asian population of Montgo which makes up 17%., as well as those uninsured and underinsured.	mery County,			
	Dr. Yuchi Huang shared a quote from Dr. Davis, noting that when the neighborhood and improves, everybody improves. He noted that the goal should be to keep everyone health basic needs of residents in the community. Health is a process and not an end point. The be addressing the root cause. More emphasis and goals need to be tied to prevention.	ny and satisfy			
	Karen Crist noted the importance of advocacy and accountability. Through MCAB she h positive impact in the community and share resources, trends and network with others to behavioral health outcomes of the County.				
	Vahe Hovian views his membership on the Board as a privilege and opportunity. Throug hopes to help others and amplify the voices of all groups. He also supports focus and adv prevention in the context of MCAB.				
	Following the discussion members are asked to email Ashley Miller with additional thou feedback ahead of the April meeting. The definition of success discussion will continue a meeting.				

7.	Board Representative Updates	MCAB	
	MCAB member Vahe Hovian (PCC representative) noted that success is where advocacy finds priori working to create better alignment across programs and the safety-net.	ity. PCC is	
	Karen Crist noted that DHHS Behavioral Health and Crisis Services is looking at offering CME's thr Child and Adolescent Health Clinic. The clinic would provide substance abuse prevention and training providers. They are looking into partners.		
	Dr. Kelly noted that the Montgomery County Medical Society went to Capitol Hill to advocate for no cuts to Medicare and Medicaid programs. There will also be a Lobby Day in Annapolis against preauthorizations.		
	Kate Lu shared there will be an open house for the new clinic location for CCACC on 3/28/2025. Kate will share the invitation with Board members following the meeting.	е	
8.	April 23, 2025 Agenda and Next Steps Dr. Kath	ryn Kelly	
	Next meeting will be on Wednesday, April 23, 2025 and will be held virtually.		

9.	Meeting Adjournment	Dr. Kathryn Kelly		
	The meeting was adjourned at 7:54 pm Moved by: Mark Foraker Seconded by: Dr. Yuchi Huang			

Respectfully submitted,

Khalfani Walker Khalfani Walker (May 1, 2025 16:32 EDT)

Khalfani Walker, DMD

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