

Framework for the Montana Health Policy Council
For use by the Coverage Committee of the Montana Health Forum
9.10.08

Mission

The mission of the Montana Health Policy Council is to engage the public in discussions, conduct research and propose strategies and legislation that result in all residents having access to quality health services at costs that are affordable.

Charge

- Present legislature with proposals for health care reform consistent with the mission statement above and the state Health Care Policy in 50-4-104, MCA.
- Solicit and incubate ideas for health care reform through five workgroups open to public participation.
- Encourage representation of stakeholders in the workgroups

Health Policy Council appointments, composition, terms.

- The health policy council is a principal subdivision of the Montana Legislature and shall be administratively attached within the legislative services division. Additional staff and funding should be appropriated to the legislative services division to provide staff and resources for the Health Policy Council and its workgroups. The health policy council will be composed of 10 legislators; five members from the Senate and five from the House appointed by the legislative leadership of each party in each chamber.
 - The health policy council is evenly bipartisan. Initially from the Senate there will be 3 Republicans and 2 Democrats; from the House there will be 3 Democrats and 2 Republicans. At the end of each two-year term the House and Senate Chamber split will change.
 - Council members serve 2-year terms, concurrent with the state legislative bienniums.
 - Vacancies will be appointed by legislative leadership of the respective party in which there is a vacancy.
 - Chair and Vice Chair of the Council shall be elected by majority vote.

Health Policy Work Groups

- There will be five work groups to focus on developing proposals and analyzing issues related to: consumer engagement, coverage, delivery system, value, and transparency.
- Two legislators will participate in each workgroup, a Democrat and Republican representing House and Senate.
- Anyone from the public may participate in the meetings and activities of the work groups. Legislative Services Division shall maintain an interested persons list for each work group to provide notice and information regarding the meetings of the workgroups and the combined workgroups. The general public shall be notified of the meetings and focus of work group activities to encourage public participation.
- Goals of work groups first biennium:
 1. Consumer Engagement – to create incentives for prevention, partnerships between employers, providers, government and

insurers to provide appropriate health care coverage to employees, and simplify information for consumers about personal health, health care benefits, and navigating the health care system.

2. Coverage - to provide access to affordable adequate health care coverage options for all Montanans.
 3. Delivery system – address issues related to access to health care providers and worker shortages.
 4. Value – encourage use of nationally developed evidence-based medicine standards in Montana; and implement Medicare pay for performance standards, and disease registries for epidemiological analysis. Consider medical-legal issues, how to reduce duplication of medical procedures.
 5. Transparency – create accessible public information about health care prices and quality, and how to support health information technology.
- Work groups shall recommend health policy proposals to the Health Policy Council for consideration.
 - To the extent that individuals and groups representing low income stakeholders require financial assistance to fully participate in the work groups, the Council shall arrange for such assistance according to criteria adopted by the Council in rule.

Powers of the Health Policy Council and its workgroups

- Conduct studies, surveys, research and analyses relating to health care systems and health care quality.
- Make and furnish studies, reports on studies and recommendations with respect to matters of policy and legislation as the legislature requests.
- Analyze legislative proposals in health care areas and assist in preparations of reports for use by legislative committees, administrative agencies and the public.
- Consult with and assist legislators who are preparing health care legislation.
- Work with the State Auditor’s Office on issues related to health insurance.
- Work with DPHHS on improving public health programs.
- By majority vote of the Health Policy Council members, legislation may be drafted for consideration by the Montana Legislature.
- Apply for grant funds to further the work of the Council.

Term of Health Policy Council

- Six years with sunset