PRIMARY CARE ADVISORY COUNCIL (PCAC)
MINUTES
February 19, 2015
9:30 a.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:

On the Phone:
Betsy Aiello
Chuck Duarte
Stacy Woodbury

Carson City:
Nancy Hook

Elko:
Gerald Ackerman

Las Vegas:
Dr. Amir Qureshi, Chairperson
Dr. Susan Van Beuge, Vice Chairperson

DIVISION OF PUBLIC AND BEHAVIORAL HEALTH STAFF PRESENT:
Laura Hale, Manager, Primary Care Office (PCO)
Scott Jones, Health Resources Analyst, PCO

Others Present:
Linda Anderson, Deputy Attorney General
Angela Iserhott, In Patient Consultants of Nevada (IPC)
Carolyn Weaver, IPC
Andrew Shackelford, Attorney, Fragomen Worldwide
Lynnette Daniels, Nevada State Board of Medical Examiners
Jaimie Ross, ED, PACT Coalition

Dr. Qureshi called the meeting to order at 9:40 a.m.

1. Roll call and confirmation of quorum.
L. Hale read the roll call and stated there was a quorum present.

2. Approval of the minutes from the September 18, 2014 meeting of the PCAC.

C. Duarte identified a typo on page two referring to G. Aiello, which should be B. Aiello.

B. Aiello identified a correction to reverse the motion and second for item 5 on page three; should be motion from Dr. Van Beuge, with second from B. Aiello.

Dr. Van Beuge motioned to approve the minutes with the corrections.

Motion: Dr. Van Beuge
Second: Gerald Ackerman
Motion passed unanimously

3. Recommendation to the Administrator for the Division of Public and Behavioral Health regarding J-1 Physician Visa Waiver Letter of Support for Dr. Jacqueline Ostia King.

S. Jones presented information on the application.

Mr. Chairman, InPatient Consultants of Nevada (IPC) has requested support for a J-1 visa waiver for Dr. Jacqueline Ostia King, MD, an internal medicine physician, to provide hospitalist care at Desert Springs Hospital Medical Center in Las Vegas, Nevada. IPC supplies hospitalist physicians to Desert Springs Hospital Medical Center who provide in-patient primary medical care services to their patients. IPC remains the employer of such physicians at all times and in all respects.

Based on the projected number of admissions that IPC services, IPC would require a total of 12 physicians to staff the agreement/contract and patients with six of these physicians dedicated to Desert Springs. IPC currently has 9 physicians hired with only four physicians dedicated to Desert Springs. IPC has a new agreement with Desert Springs to provide services for all patients admitted through the emergency department and they average 113 patients per day.

IPC has undertaken extensive recruitment efforts to hire a US primary care physician including "national advertisements, online recruitment and utilization of private search firms". They have posted advertisements for the needed positions starting in May of 2012 and have not been able to recruit the needed hospitalist physicians.

Dr. King earned a Medical Doctor degree from the University of Santo Tomas in the Philippines. Dr. King will be completing her Critical Care-Internal Medicine fellowship at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center on June 30, 2015.

IPC accepts all patients regardless of ability to pay, takes Medicaid, Medicare and uses a sliding-fee scale based on federal poverty guidelines to discount services to low-income uninsured persons. IPC does not post notice of the sliding fee scale policy because IPC does not maintain the waiting room. IPC does provide a letter to its patients regarding the sliding scale policy. IPC's policy does not contain a minimum fee. If a patient is unable to pay the fee based on the schedule and appropriate documentation, the fee will be written off with appropriate approvals. Statistics provided in the letter of request demonstrate an average of 68% of patients served at Desert Springs are either uninsured, have Medicare or are Medicaid eligible.

The contract does not have a clause providing a maximum number of hours.

The Attorney is Andrew Shackelford, 3003 N. Central Ave., Suite 1200, Phoenix AZ 85012, 602-266-1825

B. Aiello asked if it is common to do a 12-hour shift with seven days on, then seven days off.

Dr. Qureshi noted that IPC has a contract with the hospital to see all unassigned patients, and the 12 hour shifts at night support 24/7 coverage, with inpatient hospitalists.

Carolyn Weaver introduced herself as the Director of Business Development, for IPC recruitment, and added that this shift is common and is the physician's preference. She also noted that it supports consistent care, and makes it easier on the hospital.

Andrew Shackelford introduced himself as the Attorney representing IPC on immigration and J-1 issues.

Dr. Qureshi asked why IPC is hiring a sub-specialist into their contractual program for internal medicine hospitalists.

C. Weaver noted that Dr. King's husband also works here, and Dr. King will be working as an internal medicine hospitalist, even though she is a qualified specialist.

L. Hale asked if the application materials reviewed by S. Jones specified the need for a hospitalist or a specialist, in order to demonstrate the level of need.

S. Jones clarified that the application materials specified the need for a hospitalist.

G. Ackerman pointed out that it's a benefit to have a candidate with higher qualifications who is willing to work in internal medicine.

Dr. Van Beuge asked if there would be any outpatient care.

S. Jones thought it would only be inpatient care; C. Weaver confirmed this.

Motion: Gerald Ackerman
Second: Chuck Duarte
Motion passed unanimously

4. Recommendation to the Administrator for the Division of Public and Behavioral Health regarding J-1 Physician Visa Waiver Letter of Support for Dr. Karam Batieha.

S. Jones presented information on the application.

Mr. Chairman, InPatient Consultants of Nevada (IPC) has also requested support for a J-1 visa waiver for Dr. Karam Batieha, MD, an internal medicine physician, to provide hospitalist care at Desert Springs Hospital Medical Center in Las Vegas, Nevada.

Dr. Batieha earned a degree in medicine and surgery from the Jordan University of Science and Technology. Dr. Batieha will be completing an Internal Medicine Residency Program at the University of Nevada School of Medicine on July 1, 2015.

His contract does not have a clause providing a maximum number of hours. The information for both IPC and Desert Springs Hospital are the same as for Dr. King.

G. Ackerman stated "Let's keep one of our own," in reference to Dr. Batieha's enrollment at University of Nevada School of Medicine.

Motion: Gerald Ackerman
Second: Nancy Hook
Motion passed unanimously

5. Update on PCO staffing, regulations and grant activity

L. Hale noted the addition of Scott Jones and the great work he has been doing in the few months since he started with the PCO. An intern will be coming on from the end of February through the beginning of April to assist with provider data collection and management as part of the shortage designation process. She also asked members for any recommendations to help with provider data collection.

Assembly Bill 39 to remove the $500 cap on application fees is scheduled for hearing. This will help the PCO support program administration and oversight, including site visits to ensure program compliance, which in turn, supports recruitment efforts.

The current PCO grant from the federal Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA) is in the first year of a five-year period. This grant does not fully support the two staff in the PCO, so additional support is provided from other programs in the Division of Public and Behavioral Health: Maternal and Child Health, and Health Care Quality and Compliance.

Due to vacancy savings, carry-over funds from the HRSA/PCO grant were utilized for in-state travel to conduct site visits and outreach for National Health Service Corps programs.

G. Ackerman suggested presentations on the J-1 program, in addition to National Health Service Corps, to some of the rural hospitals and clinics who have had staff turnover and may not be aware of this opportunity. He can provide contacts, if needed.

The next meeting is scheduled for May 21st. There are two more potential J-1 applications coming, based on current inquiries.

6. Public Comment

There were no public comments. The meeting adjourned at 10:05 a.m.

RA