

State Advisory Council on Quality Care at the End of Life Minutes from January 22, 2010 Meeting

Meeting time and place: January 22, 2010, 10:00 a.m., in the Department of Aging's Conference Room, 301 West Preston Street, Room 1008A.

Council members present: Catherine Boyne, Chair; Melinda Sauders; Mary Lynn McPherson; Ted Meyerson; Karen Kaufman; Steve Levenson; Gail Amalia Katz; Catherine Stavely; Karren Pope-Onwukwe Mike LaChance (Secretary of Aging's designee); Paul Ballard (Attorney General's designee); Cari Watrous (Secretary of Disabilities' designee); Gloria Ramsey (via speakerphone).

Catherine Boyne convened the meeting at 10:00 AM and welcomed Council members.

Paul Ballard discussed the workgroup on hospice, palliative care, and end of life counseling. The workgroup studied ways to increase awareness of and access to hospice and palliative care programs and end of life counseling. The workgroup concluded that education was needed for practitioners and the public, recommending an educational campaign centered around a bill of rights for end of life care. He suggested that there should be educational materials accompanying the bill of rights. The workgroup also recommended that quality indicators be developed by CMS and the Maryland Health Care Commission to measure the effects of educational efforts. He recounted his meeting with Delegate Hammen, Delegate Bobo, and representatives from the workgroup to brief the delegates on the workgroup's study. Delegate Hammen suggested that the workgroup continue and develop an action plan to implement the recommendations.

The Council suggested that it go ahead and move forward with implementing the recommendations for an educational campaign and seek grants. This way, the legislature would not have to appropriate funds for the educational campaign. Dr. Levenson noted that there is a real need for accountability, not just education, to insure that people are informed of their right to make choices and that those choices are honored by health care providers. Gail Katz and Karen Kaufman noted that staff would need to be educated about the bill of rights so that they can explain the bill of rights to patients. Lynn McPherson suggested that hospice groups could prepare a user guide for the bill of rights.

Dr. Levenson reported on the POLST (Physician's Orders for Life-Sustaining Treatments) workgroup. The workgroup recommends that the POLST form be used in Maryland to insure that patients' wishes for treatment are implemented. The workgroup developed a draft POLST order that incorporates much of the existing Life-Sustaining Treatments Options form but converts those wishes to

physician's orders. MIEMMS and other relevant organizations and associations would need to be consulted prior to seeking legislative authorization. The idea would be to have one POLST form that could serve the same function as a DNR order form, be also applicable to other life-sustaining treatments, and be universally accepted by EMS personnel and all health care providers and facilities.

Catherine Boyne reported on the pediatrics workgroup, noting that Gilcrest Hospice, the University of Maryland, and Johns Hopkins are 90 % of the way towards completing a business plan for providing pediatric hospice and palliative care services.

Ms. Boyne announced she will be leaving the Council. The Council thanked her for her work.

Mr. Ballard updated the Council on membership. The Governor appointed Rabbi Michael Safra to fill the religious vacancy on the Council. The Council still has vacancies for the managed care industry, health insurance industry, and nursing home industry positions.

No further items of business having been presented, Ms. Boyne adjourned the meeting at noon.