

**State Advisory Council on Quality Care at the End of Life
Minutes from February 24, 2006 Meeting**

Meeting time and place: February 24, 2006, 10:00 a.m., in the Department of Aging's Conference Room, 301 West Preston Street, 10th floor.

Council members present: Dr. Cynda Rushton, Chair; Ms. Ruth Eger; Ms. Marguerite Patricia Gilner; Ms. Karen Kauffman; Dr. Timothy Keay; Ms. Wendy Kronmiller (Secretary of Health and Mental Hygiene's designee); Rev. John Daniel Mindling; Mr. Ted Meyerson; Mr. Jack Schwartz (Attorney General's designee); Mr. Michael Lachance (Secretary of Aging's designee); Ms. Catherine Stavelly.

Others present: Dr. Lynn Hallarman; Ms. Gail Mansell; Ms. Marie Savage; Mr. Howard Sollins.

Dr. Cynda Rushton convened the meeting at 10:00 and welcomed the Council members and guests. Mr. Lachance greeted attendees on behalf of Secretary Jean Roesser and the Department of Aging.

Council members shared various items of information, including upcoming events. The first topic of substantive discussion followed Dr. Rushton's report on the subcommittee to examine a Medicaid model of pediatric palliative care that would not be tied to a six-month prognosis requirement or a specific election to forgo curative efforts. The discussion centered around limiting such an effort to pediatric patients. The informal consensus was that this effort ought to retain its pediatric focus, because of the particular characteristics and needs of children with life-threatening illness, but that many of the same considerations would apply in an adult population. Consequently, the Council's initiative should be understood as a starting point for a broader effort to eliminate these barriers to excellent care.

Mr. Schwartz and Mr. Myerson then reported on the hearings about, and the current status of, bills of interest to the Council. Of the advance directive registry bills, House Bill 23, which the Council opposed, received an unfavorable report. The Administration's bills, House Bill 319 and Senate Bill 236, on which the Council took no position, have not yet been reported out by the respective committees, but the bills were widely supported at their hearings. The Attorney General's proposal to update the statutory advance directive form, House Bill 592/Senate Bill 369, which the Council supported, was also widely supported. However, the aspect of the bill that would authorize certifications of incapacity to be done by one physician and one psychologist is controversial. **Council action:** *By consensus, the Council indicated its willingness to study the issue of incapacity certifications, should the General Assembly request it to do so.*

Discussion then turned to the agenda item on the Council's progress and priorities. **Council action:** *By consensus, the Council agreed that (1) it should seek sources of data that would enable an updating of the elements in the Last Acts report card; (2) it should convene another stakeholders' conference, preferably in early November 2006; and (3) the conference should involve both a review of the Council's accomplishments and a focus on the needs of vulnerable populations as the Council moves forward.*

The Council set its next meeting for Friday, June 16, 2006, at 10:00 at the Department of Aging.

No further items of business having been presented, Dr. Rushton adjourned the meeting at 11:50.