

**State Advisory Council on Quality Care at the End of Life  
Minutes from April 13, 2007 Meeting**

**Meeting time and place:** April 13, 2007, 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; Dr. Timothy Keay; Mr. Mike Lachance (Secretary of Aging's designee); Senator Mike Lenett; Dr. Steve Levenson; Mr. Ted Meyerson; Rev. Dan Mindling; Mr. Jack Schwartz (Attorney General's designee); Ms. Catherine Stavelly.

**Others present:** Dr. Barbara Blaylock; Ms. Gail Katz; Mr. Ethan Moore.

Dr. Cynda Rushton convened the meeting at 10:00 and welcomed the Council members and guests. Mr. Lachance conveyed greetings from the new Secretary of Aging, Gloria Lawlah. Upon his arrival, Senator Mike Lenett, newly appointed as the representative of the Senate of Maryland on the Council, expressed his commitment to the Council's mission and his desire to learn about and help support its activities.

The first portion of the meeting was devoted to current items of interest raised by Council members and guests. Dr. Blaylock summarized for the Council the public education and outreach effort set to take place at numerous sites across Montgomery County on April 19, 2007, "Advance Directive Day." Council members were interested in an assessment of how the day went and discussing possible steps to extend the activity beyond Montgomery County. This follow-up discussion will be an agenda item at the next meeting. Dr. Keay reported the continuation of a federal grant to the University of Maryland aimed at educating medical residents about end-of-life and palliative care and developing demonstrated competencies. Mr. Schwartz reported that the Maryland Proxy Guide was serving as a model for similar guides in at least two other states.

The next portion of the meeting was a review and discussion of three bills passed by the General Assembly in its 2007 Session. On House Bill 214, renaming the Patient's Plan of Care form, some members suggested that the Attorney General's issuance of the renamed form would be a good opportunity to remind health care facilities of the importance of the underlying decision-making process and the educational resources currently available to assist them. Mr. Schwartz indicated that, in a few weeks, he would circulate the revised form for an informal round of comment before initiating the formal process to amend the applicable regulations. On House Bill 682, concerning compliance with EMS/DNR orders, some members voiced concern that the bill would not have its intended effect if, as has been speculated, EMS/DNR bracelets are frequently cut off in the ambulance or upon the patient's arrival at a hospital. Mr. Schwartz indicated that he would inquire about the extent of this problem and report back to the Council.

On House Bill 797, calling on the Council and the Maryland Health Care Commission to study various issues related to pediatric palliative care, members commented on the importance of a sound design for the analysis, especially with respect to identifying barriers to accessing appropriate services, and emphasized that the ultimate report should address the implications of the findings for other populations (e.g., geriatric care needs). Dr. Rushton invited Council members to participate in the development of study's planning via an informal working group.

The last item of discussion concerned end-of-life care for members of racial and other minority groups. Council members observed that a recent *Washington Post* article (Rob Stein, "At the End of Life, a Racial Divide," March 12, 2007), reflected well-known issues about trust, the message conveyed (or perceived) by promotion of advance directives, the misconception of palliative care as amounting to a deprivation of care, and the role of class as well as race. The Council decided to continue its exploration of its potential role in addressing these issues at its next meeting, with invited guests contributing their perspective.

The Council set its next meeting for Friday, September 7, 2007, at 10:00 at the Department of Aging.

No further items of business having been presented, Dr. Rushton adjourned the meeting at 12:00.