

Office of Health Strategy
Draft Meeting Minutes
February 18, 2025 | 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.
[Zoom Meeting Recording](#)

ATTENDANCE

BY ELECTRONIC DEVICE:

Ellen Andrews	Kathy Holt	Cassandra Murphy
Kurt Barwis	Manisha Juthani	Susan Rich Bye
Joanne Borduas	Alan Kaye	Shelley Ann Stokes Sweatt
Mehul Dalal	Paul Lombardo	Nicole Taylor
Tiffany Donelson	Laura Manzione	Anthony Yoder
Collen Harrington	Danielle Morgan	

IN PERSON:

N/A

ABSENT:

Deidre Gifford	Dr. James Cardon	Hassam Saada
Robyn Anderson	Claudio Gualtieri	Jordan Scheff

OTHER PARTICIPANTS:

Elisa Neira, OHS	Cindy Dubuque-Gallo, OHS	Ron Ciesones, OHS
Olga Armah, OHS		

WELCOME AND CALL TO ORDER

The regularly scheduled meeting of the Healthcare Cabinet was held Tuesday, February 18, 2025, via Zoom. The meeting was called to order by Elisa Neira at 2:04 p.m. Attendance was taken by roll call and quorum was reached.

APPROVAL OF NOVEMBER 19, 2025

The motion was made to approve November 19, 2024, minutes by Tiffany Donelson and second by Ellen Andrews. Motion carried with fourteen (14) members voting in favor and one (1) member abstaining.

HOSPITAL FINANCIAL STABILITY REPORT PRESENTATION

Olga Armah, Manager of Research & Planning and Ron Ciesones, Principal Health Care Analyst presented the Hospital Financial Stability FY 2023 report.

Discussion focused on system fees and user fees, with concerns over their increase in 2023. Ellen Andrews inquired whether user fees mentioned in the presentation were the same as system fees. Olga explained that user fees are a hospitals tax the state levies on hospitals based on their 2016 net revenue, while system fees are transactions between a hospital and its health system. Kurt Barwis raised concern with the ratio used, expressing that it may not fairly represent the true cost-to-reimbursement ratio for the state Medicaid program. Olga added that the payment-to-cost ratio being discussed focuses on hospital operations, excluding physician and affiliate services payments, which follow a different

schedule. Specifically, it addresses all payments made directly to hospitals. The user fee is calculated based on all net revenue, not just Medicaid net revenue. Alan Kaye questioned how the financial data presented should be used for policy decisions considering it is 2023 data. Ellen Andrews questioned if hospital margins were returning to historical trends prior to COVID. Ron provided the 2019 operating and total margins for comparison.

To view the presentation, please start at the 14:09 mark in the recording. The link is provided at the beginning of the document.

Next Steps:

OHS to provide historical financial trends pre-dating COVID in future updates to help assess healthcare system profitability and financial stability.

OHS LEGISLATIVE PREVIEW

Cindy Dubuque-Gallo, Legislative Liaison, presented updates on OHS' legislative package. Ellen Andrews raised concerns about decision-making authority for the agency without going back to the legislature, and historical transparency issues in past legislative decisions, particularly regarding how cost-cutting measures were determined. Boyd Jackson highlighted that key Performance Improvement Plan (PIP) questions will need to be addressed in future legislative proposals. Lara Manzione raised concerns about the expedited review process lacking opportunities for public comments and hearings. Cindy explains that the applicant can apply for expedited review if there's a significant unmet need but OHS won't expedite applications arbitrarily. Boyd Jackson mentions that public comments can influence expedited reviews and emphasizes the balance between participation and efficiency; explaining that some applications might be suitable for expedited review due to lower risk (i.e., CT scanners and MRIs).

To view the presentation, please start at the 51:12 mark in the recording. The link is provided at the beginning of the document.

AHEAD UPDATES

Elisa Neira, Senior Director, Health Equity provided an overview of the AHEAD Model highlighting progress and expected outcomes.

Next Steps:

OHS to continue monitoring the model's implementation and provide periodic updates at future meetings.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no public comments.

MEETING ADJOURNMENT

Motion to adjourn was made by Nicole Taylor and seconded by Joanne Borduas. The motion passed unanimously by voice vote. The meeting was adjourned at 3:28 p.m. The next meeting is scheduled for March 25, 2025, at 2:00 p.m.

**In accordance with FOIA requirements re: meetings held by solely by electronic-means (remote) R= attended remotely, IP= attended in person, X= unable to attend*

UPCOMING MEETINGS:

March 25, 2025, | May 27, 2025