

WARREN COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

COMMITTEE: HEALTH SERVICES

DATE: OCTOBER 3, 2007

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:	OTHERS PRESENT:
SUPERVISORS MASON	REPRESENTING THE HEALTH SERVICES DEPARTMENT:
SHEEHAN	PATRICIA AUER, DIRECTOR, HEALTH SERVICES
HASKELL	GINELLE JONES, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, PUBLIC HEALTH
F. THOMAS	SHARON SCHALDONE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, HOME CARE
TESSIER	TAWN DRISCOLL, FISCAL MANAGER
SOKOL	WILLIAM THOMAS, CHAIRMAN
	HAL PAYNE, COMMISSIONER OF ADMINISTRATIVE & FISCAL
COMMITTEE MEMBER ABSENT:	SERVICES
SUPERVISOR CHAMPAGNE	JOAN SADY, CLERK OF THE BOARD
	SUPERVISOR KENNY
	AMANDA ALLEN, LEGISLATIVE OFFICE SPECIALIST

Mr. Mason called the meeting of the Health Services Committee to order at 9:30 a.m.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve the minutes from the August 24, 2007 Committee meeting, subject to correction by the Clerk of the Board.

Privilege of the floor was extended to Patricia Auer, Director of Health Services, who distributed copies of the agenda to the Committee members. *A copy of the agenda is also on file with the minutes.*

Beginning with the Pending Items portion of the agenda, Mrs. Auer reminded the Committee that an informational presentation on Transfats had been postponed at the August 1st Committee meeting. She said that although they were looking forward to making the presentation, at the request of Messrs. Mason and Payne it was being postponed once again, due to the lengthy agenda presented. Mrs. Auer noted that she anticipated making the presentation at the next month's Committee meeting.

Mrs. Auer apprised that the second pending item pertained to the pandemic flu planning efforts being performed by her Department and that documentation of their efforts was included in the agenda for the Committee's review. She said that from this document one could see that her Department continued to provide several meetings and outreach activities to the public.

The final pending item, Mrs. Auer stated was a follow-up to discussion in prior meetings regarding the vehicles offered for purchase under State contract. She reminded the Committee members that in their last meeting they had discussed a number of unfavorable issues her Department had experienced with the Ford Focus vehicle offered by State contract, in replacement of the Chevrolet Cavalier which was no longer manufactured. Mrs. Auer apprised that during this discussion Hal Payne, Commissioner of Administrative & Fiscal Services, had offered to discuss this matter with Julie Pacyna, Purchasing Agent, to determine if an alternate vehicle could be purchased, and also to express the Department's displeasure with the Ford Focus in hopes of altering the vehicles offered on State contract. Although she said she would certainly understand if he had not had the opportunity to discuss the matter with Mrs. Pacyna, since he had been engrossed in the Budget process, Mrs. Auer asked Mr. Payne if he had any update with regard to the matter.

Mr. Payne replied that he had conferred with Mrs. Pacyna, who had advised that if the 2008 State contract included the Ford Focus they could develop an RFP (Request for Proposal) to purchase the vehicle preferred by the Department. He added that Mrs. Pacyna had explained that it was not a requirement for the Department's vehicles to be purchased under State contract. Mrs. Auer thanked Mr. Payne for his assistance and she noted that she would contact DPW Fleet Maintenance to determine if they had any recommendations for a suitable replacement vehicle for the Ford Focus, as they were aware of the problematic issues surrounding this vehicle.

Proceeding with the New Business portion of the agenda, Mrs. Auer apprised that flu shot season was fast approaching and they were not anticipating any shortages of vaccine for the year. She stated that unless the Committee wished to recommend otherwise, the Health Department would once again plan to charge County employees \$20 per flu vaccination. Mrs. Auer noted that a resolution was not necessary in relation to this matter as there had been no change in the previously agreed upon vaccination fee. However, she stated, the opportunity might arise to offer free flu vaccinations to County employees and Supervisors if the Department was willing and chosen to perform a POD (Point of Distribution) drill for the State; in which case, doses of the flu vaccination would be donated free of charge.

Ginelle Jones, Assistant Director of Public Health, pointed out that up to 1,000 vaccine doses could be received; however, she said, they planned to request only 300 because at the last employee vaccination clinic only 150 doses had been used. Similarly, she pointed out that a past drill held at ACC (Adirondack Community College) for the general public had netted only slightly more than 100 participants. Ms. Jones said that they felt the best placement for the drill would be at the Health Offices located within the Municipal Center because all of the employees would be available for the free vaccines if they chose to receive them. She stated that there would be some requirements attributed to the drill, such as "just-in-time" training where job descriptions would be given to the volunteers shortly before the drill, as if it were an actual pandemic outbreak. Ms. Jones apprised that notification from the State would not be received until October 31st as to whether or not Warren County was being chosen as a POD drill site.

Mr. Payne asked if the POD drill could be held at the Westmount Health Facility instead, allowing flu vaccinations to be administered to the residents, as well as County staff. He noted that the County currently had to paid for the vaccinations and if doses donated by the State could be used it would save County dollars. Ms. Jones replied that she was unsure if the State would be receptive to this suggestion because they might consider the residents a lesser risk in a pandemic situation as access to the residents was limited and would be further restricted if an outbreak were to occur.

Pursuant to discussion on the matter, it was the consensus of the Committee that Ms. Jones should inquire with the State as to whether or not the donated vaccinations for the POD drill could be distributed to both employees and residents of the Westmount Health Facility.

Proceeding with a review of the remaining new business items, Mrs. Auer apprised that the agenda included several resolution requests, the first of which was to amend Resolution No. 199 of 2007 to alter the contracts held respectively with Karen Kowalczyk, for physical therapy services, and Judy Caimano, for speech therapy services, to allow for the provision of services in a group setting. She explained that this provision had been made in a number of other therapist contracts because when services could be provided in a group they were less expensive. Mrs. Auer advised that these particular therapists aided many children in the northern part of the County and it would be advantageous to have this service delivery option available.

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. F. Thomas and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend Resolution No. 199 of 2007 as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that the next request was to authorize a new contract with Melissa Price to provide speech therapy services. She said that the contract would assist in meeting patient demands and would generate revenue, as each visit made was a billable service.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request for a new contract with Melissa Price to provide speech therapy services and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Similarly, Mrs. Auer stated that a request for a new contract with Linda Donnaruma, to provide occupational therapy services was also included in the agenda. She noted that this contract would also produce revenue because visits were considered billable services.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to approve the request for a new contract with Linda Donnaruma for occupational therapy services and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that the next request was for Committee approval to allow Cathy DuFour, Quality Assurance Public Health Nurse, to attend a training workshop at the Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY on November 8 - 9, 2007 regarding Diagnostic Coding. She stated that knowledge of appropriate coding was especially important in maximizing revenues and driving quality outcome improvements. Mrs. Auer added that at the completion of the program Ms. DuFour would take the Homecare Coding Specialist Diagnosis Certification Exam. She noted that the cost for the program was \$229 and was available within the existing Budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to authorize Cathy DuFour to attend the training workshop scheduled for November 8 - 9, 2007 on Diagnostic Coding, as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Mrs. Auer presented a request for referral to the Personnel Committee for consideration in allowing the ability to backfill all Registered Nursing positions, once approved by the Health Services and Personnel Committees, at the appropriate grade, according to the newly recruited nurse's educational and experience levels, and to amend the Department's Table of Organization accordingly. She advised that this request came in response to the confusion caused at a recent Personnel Committee meeting with respect to reclassifying nursing positions to meet the occupants experience level. Furthermore, Mrs. Auer explained, in the past month she had requested permission to backfill a Community Health Nurse position and to reclassify it to a Registered Nurse position if they were unable to recruit a Community Health Nurse. She said that there had been only one applicant, a Public Health Nurse, and although they wanted to hire her, the applicant was not willing to take the position unless she was given credit for her degree, in light of the fact that she was leaving a position at a hospital and would already be taking a substantial salary decrease. Mrs. Auer stated that it was a critical time for the nursing profession, given the shortage, and the recruiting and retaining process in itself was a challenge. She said that their mission was to provide the best and most qualified professionals to care for the Warren County citizens and this process would be made much easier

by having the ability to place the nurses in the positions best suiting their experience level, rather than reclassifying the positions.

Motion was made by Mr. Sheehan, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request for consideration in filling nursing positions at the appropriate grades as reflected above, and refer same to the Personnel Committee. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that the next request was for Committee approval to allow two WIC (Women, Infants and Children) Program staff to attend the Annual WIC conference scheduled for October 28 - 31, 2007 at the Desmond Hotel in Albany, NY. She noted that this was an important conference that would provide for mandated annual training requirements. Mrs. Auer apprised that the cost for attendance was \$540 for both staff members and that fee included registration fees and meals and the funding was available within the existing WIC Budget.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the travel for two WIC Program staff to attend the Annual WIC conference as reflected above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer apprised that the next agenda item referred to a request for a new contract with Senior Whole Health to allow reimbursement for approved services provided to patients enrolled in their programs. She explained that Senior Whole Health was a new management Medicare and Medicaid coordinated care model intending to begin marketing their programs in Warren County and the Department needed to be listed with Senior Whole Health to receive appropriate reimbursement for services covered within their program. Mrs. Auer added that she had participated in a teleconference with this group to ensure that their program would not affect the LTHHCP (Long Term Home Health Care Program) services provided by the Health Department in any way.

Motion was made by Mr. F. Thomas, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request for a new contract with Senior Whole Health as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Moving on, Mrs. Auer advised that the agenda included a request for permission to apply for an "Achieve Initiative Grant" funded by the Division of Adult and Community Health within the Centers of Disease Control and Prevention in connection with the Glens Falls YMCA. She noted that the grant total was \$80,000 and would be split evenly between each of the two agencies. Mrs. Auer stated that the application deadline was October 12, 2007, and the awards would be announced no later than December 15, 2007. She said that according to grant specifications, the local Health Department needed to act as the lead agency to qualify for the grant.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request for permission to apply for grant funding as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer stated that the next agenda item pertained to a request to amend Resolution No. 251 of 2007 in order to update the contract held with MVP Health Plan, Inc. Medicare Advantage Amendment to include the MVP Gold Medicare Advantage Program in the Ancillary Provider Agreement section. She explained

that this was a new offering of MVP and the amendment to the current contract would allow her Department to secure reimbursement for services provided to patients participating in this program.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve the request for an amendment to Resolution No. 251 of 2007 as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer apprised that a request for an amendment to Resolution No. 271 of 2006 comprised the next agenda item. She explained that the amendment was necessary to update the contract held with North Country Home Services and to establish the Personal Care Aide rates set by Medicaid for the period January 1, 2007 through December 31, 2007. She added that the rates had been received by North Country Home Services on October 1, 2007, which was very late, and were as follows:

- Personal Care Aide 1 (Homemaker tasks) \$20.35/hr
(increased from 2006 rate of \$19.62/hr)
- Personal Care Aide 2 (Personal Care Aide tasks) \$20.65/hr
(increased from 2006 rate of \$19.96/hr)

Motion was made by Mr. Tessier, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to amend Resolution No. 271 of 2006 as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Proceeding, Mrs. Auer stated that the next agenda item referred to a request for a new contract with Plattsburgh State University. She explained that the contract would authorize an affiliation agreement allowing University nursing students to perform clinical observations in a form approved by the County Attorney. Mrs. Auer noted that a similar agreement had previously been in place but the University had recently forwarded an updated version. She said that there were a couple of minor concerns with the agreement as they had to be sure that the wording was appropriate and also expressed, without discriminating, that people with certain disabilities, such as those wheelchair bound, could not participate in the observation program.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to approve the request for a new contract with Plattsburgh State University as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that a request to increase the fee for Childbirth Education Classes from \$35 to \$45 per session was included in the agenda. She noted that the fee for the classes had not changed since 2004; however, she said, it had increased periodically twice in the past, each time by \$10 increments. Mrs. Auer added that fee adjustments would continue to be made for those individuals unable to pay.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the request to increase the fee for Childbirth Education Classes as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Continuing, Mrs. Auer stated that the next request listed was for a new contract with Behan Communications, Inc. to provide an advertising campaign for the Tobacco Control Program at a cost of

\$7,766.20 to be paid at the completion of the project. She apprised that an RFP for this campaign had been developed and distributed to four agencies, with only two of them responding. Mrs. Auer explained that the other responding party had been Stratton Partners, located in Round Lake, New York, and they had offered the services requested at a cost of \$8,692; copies of the RFP were available for those Committee members interested in reviewing it, she added. Mrs. Auer advised that the Tobacco Control Program campaign had been conducted annually for the past few years as part of the Department's efforts to decrease tobacco use and educate the public about the health hazards associated with it. She noted that funding for the initiative was provided from the tobacco settlement allocated to the Health Services Department annually to assure these important efforts continued, as the results of tobacco use directly impacted health care costs.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Tessier and carried unanimously to approve the request for a new contract with Behan Communications, Inc. as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

The next request, Mrs. Auer advised, was to authorize a Business Associate Agreement with Glens Falls Hospital to allow a nurse to be assigned in a liaison role to maximize patient referrals and facilitate complicated patient discharges. She stated that this would not require any new staff and would use an existing nurse to travel to the hospital to ensure that patients of the Health Services Department were not overlooked or discharged when it was unsafe for the patient, such as those that lived alone or were too sick to care for themselves.

Motion was made by Mr. Sokol, seconded by Mr. Haskell and carried unanimously to approve the request for a Business Associate Agreement with Glens Falls Hospital as outlined above and the necessary resolution was authorized for the October 19th Board meeting. *A copy of the request is on file with the minutes.*

Mrs. Auer advised that new circumstances had arisen with respect to the WIC special grant award discussed at a prior meeting. She reminded the Committee that they had been awarded \$107,000 in grant funding, of which approximately \$60,000 had been received. Mrs. Auer explained that recently she had received a letter from the State advising that they may not be able to forward the balance of the grant funds promised because they were no longer available, through no fault of Warren County WIC staff. She apprised that she had contacted the State questioning their ability to withdraw the promised funding, but had not received a satisfactory explanation. Mrs. Auer said that she had also spoken with Mr. Payne and the Assistant County Attorney, Trish Nenninger, with respect to the matter, and they had determined that the best course of action was to suggest that the Committee invite a representative from the New York State WIC Program to attend their next meeting to provide further information on the lack of funds to the Committee. She said that upon this determination she had contacted the State again, to update them on the situation, and was advised that she should "sit tight" because they were trying to get the funds and anticipated that the funds granted would be realized.

Discussion ensued with respect to the matter.

It was the consensus of the Committee that if the WIC funding promised was not received, a letter signed by the Chairman of the Board should be forwarded to the State WIC Department asking them to attend a Committee meeting to explain the lack of funding.

Mrs. Auer apprised that Sharon Schaldone, Assistant Director of Home Care, had been asked to participate with four other individuals from various agencies across New York State and two members of the Home Care Association in a meeting on October 5th with the New York State Department of Health to discuss reimbursement options for Telehealth Services. She said that Ms. Schaldone had done exemplary work in bringing this initiative to fruition for Warren County residents. Mrs. Auer added that Ms. Schaldone deserved commendation for her efforts and would now have the opportunity to provide input in shaping methodologies toward increasing revenues for this important health care service.

The agenda also included a request to authorize travel to attend the Home Care Association Clinical & Technology Conference November 7 - 8, 2007 in Albany, NY, Mrs. Auer apprised. She noted that two supervisory employees and one wound care nurse would be attending the conference at a total cost of \$455 for all three attendees, including meal costs. Funding was available within the existing Budget to facilitate this travel, Mrs. Auer added.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to approve the request for three staff members to attend the Home Care Association Clinical & Technology Conference as outlined above. *A copy of the Authorization to Attend Meeting or Convention is on file with the minutes.*

Privilege of the floor was extended to Tawn Driscoll, Fiscal Manager, who apprised that a request for transfer of funds was included in the agenda. She noted that the request actually included three separate transfers, which were as follows:

<u>From Code:</u>	<u>To Code:</u>	<u>Amount:</u>
A.4013.220 WIC - Office Equip.	A.4013.410 WIC - Supplies Exp.	\$ 197
A.4013.260 WIC - Other Equip.	A.4013.410 WIC - Supplies Exp.	416
A.4018.0020.260 Family Health - Other Equip.	A.4018.0020.410 Family Health - Supplies	\$ 500
A.4189.130 Bioterrorism - Part Time Salaries	A.4189.110 Bioterrorism - Regular Salaries	\$ 1,500

Referring to the transfer of funds from Code A.4189.130 (Bioterrorism - Part Time Salaries), Ms. Driscoll explained that there were two full time employees falling under the Regular Salaries code which required more funding than the part time employee, and therefore the additional funds were needed in Code A.4189.110 (Bioterrorism - Regular Salaries).

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sheehan and carried unanimously to approve the transfer requests and refer same to the Finance Committee. *A copy of the Transfer of Funds request is on file with the minutes.*

Ms. Driscoll advised that a copy of the Summary of Revenues and Expenditures as of September 27, 2007 was included in the agenda. She noted that during the prior week they had completed the billing for June of 2007 for both the CHHA (Certified Home Health Agency) and LTHHCP programs and those figures were reflected in the report. Ms. Driscoll pointed out that they were still experiencing issues with overages in overtime costs as \$96,488 had been budgeted for 2007 and \$138,647 had been spent to date. She added that this was an issue raised in the 2008 Budget negotiations to avoid overages in 2008. As for regular and part-time salaries, Ms. Driscoll apprised that they were on track in both of these areas, as reflected in the report

and she noted that all of the other items listed appeared to be appropriately accumulated thus far for 2007, as well. Ms. Driscoll pointed out that the Employee Benefits line pertained to Workmen's Compensation costs, as per Mr. Sokol's request.

Mr. Payne noted that the revenues received so far appeared to be much lower than budgeted and he asked why. Ms. Driscoll replied that the revenues were received on a quarterly basis and traditionally were received behind schedule, as a 60-day waiting period was instituted for Medicare reimbursement. Additionally, she noted, a considerable amount of the anticipated revenues were received during flu season, which had not yet occurred for 2007. Mr. Payne asked if Ms. Driscoll felt the revenues anticipated would be received and she replied affirmatively.

Mr. Mason noted that there had been several instances in other Departments where funds anticipated from the State were received on a considerably delayed basis and he asked if all of the anticipated revenues had been received for 2006 and Ms. Driscoll replied affirmatively.

Discussion ensued.

Referring to the report of Free and Reduced Care, which was included in the agenda and is on file with the minutes, Ms. Schaldone apprised that for the months of June and July of 2007 the majority of the clients treated resulted from walk-in and PAT (Pre-Admission Teaching) visits, which were not covered by Medicare and most private insurances did not cover either. She said that the PAT visits were primarily physical therapy visits performed in the patients home and were needed as a result of joint replacement surgeries. Additionally, Ms. Schaldone said that free or reduced care was provided for those patients unable to meet their Medicaid spend-down costs.

Ms. Schaldone apprised that the Free Care total had been slightly higher during the month of June because there had been services to one patient totaling approximately \$1,900. She explained that services had been rendered to a Romanian immigrant, brought to the Country and sponsored by a local church group, to receive free medical care for a knee replacement procedure. Short term nursing and physical therapy services had been provided to this patient subsequent to her surgery, Ms. Schaldone noted.

In summary, Ms. Schaldone pointed out that as a Certified Agency they were required to provide 3.3% of total operating costs in free care annually, which was approximately \$159,555, based on 2006 total costs. She noted that to date only \$74,695.84 had been accumulated for free care and she did not anticipate meeting the specified limit for 2007.

Mr. Haskell stated that he was very appreciative of the rabies vaccination clinic that had been held recently in the Town of Thurman and he said that there had been a considerable turnout for the event. Mrs. Auer thanked Mr. Haskell for his comment and stated that rabies vaccination was a very serious matter. She noted that there had been two positive rabies reports so far in 2007.

Discussion ensued.

Ms. Auer stated that her final agenda item pertained to a request for an executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular individual.

Motion was made by Mr. Haskell, seconded by Mr. Sokol and carried unanimously to declare executive session to discuss the employment history of a particular person pursuant to Section 105(f) of the Public Officers Law.

Executive session was held from 10:05 a.m. to 10:25 a.m.

Messrs. W. Thomas and Kenny entered the meeting at 10:10 a.m.

Upon reconvening, Mr. Mason announced that no action would be taken pursuant to executive session.

As there was no further business to come before the Health Services Committee, on motion made by Mr. F. Thomas and seconded by Mr. Haskell, Mr. Mason adjourned the meeting at 10:26 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Amanda Allen, Legislative Office Specialist