

MINUTES

JOINT COMMITTEE ON HEALTH POLICY OVERSIGHT

April 28, 2006
Room 514-S—Statehouse

Members Present

Representative Melvin Neufeld, Chairperson
Senator Laura Kelly
Senator Roger Reitz
Representative Bill Feuerborn
Representative Peggy Mast

Members Absent

Senator Jim Barnett, Vice Chairperson
Senator David Haley
Senator Vicki Schmidt
Senator Susan Wagle
Representative Bob Bethell
Representative Brenda Landwehr
Representative Louis Ruiz

Staff Present

Terri Weber, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Melissa Calderwood, Kansas Legislative Research Department
Renaee Jefferies, Revisor of Statutes Office
Nikki Feuerborn, Administrative Assistant
Shirley Jepson, Committee Secretary

Conferee

Dr. Marcia Nielsen, Chairperson, Kansas Health Policy Authority

Chairperson Neufeld recognized Dr. Marcia Nielsen, Chairperson of the Kansas Health Policy Authority (KHPA), who presented an update on the activities of KHPA ([Attachment 1](#)). Dr. Nielsen noted that the Authority has made significant progress, citing some highlights:

- Selecting a general counsel;
- Drafting the KHPA bylaws;
- Selecting a vice-chairman of the Authority;
- Advancing a charter statement for a data consortium to advise the Authority on data issues;
- Determining a plan for a baseline analysis of health spending and health indicators;
- Beginning a study of comprehensive Medicaid reform for the State; and
- Developing a process to ensure stakeholder participation for health issues.

Dr. Nielsen noted that KHPA has not taken a formal position on any legislation before the Legislature this session until it is able to put a process in place to thoughtfully weigh issues important to the Authority. Dr. Nielsen stated that Dr. Robert Day, who has served as interim executive director, will be leaving on June 16, 2006. A subcommittee has been organized to conduct a search for the next executive director.

Dr. Nielsen indicated that a Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) between the Department of Administration and KHPA has been developed to use as KHPA assumes responsibility for the health programs described in statute.

With reference to earlier questions from the Committee concerning dental care, Dr. Nielsen indicated that, per the American Dental Association, in 2003, there were 1,397 dentists practicing in the State. According to the State Medicaid Plan, as of November 2005, 506 dentists are enrolled dental providers for Title XIX Medicaid and 367 dentists are enrolled dental providers for Title XXI State Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP). In response to an earlier question on how the Authority is interacting with the Kansas federal delegation, Dr. Nielsen stated that the Authority is working with the Kansas delegation in Washington, D.C. on important health policy issues and had met with the entire delegation earlier in the week.

Responding to a question from the Committee concerning the dental issue and communication problems between Healthwave and Medicaid, Dr. Nielsen stated that there is work toward an all EDS system by July 1, 2006. The Committee noted that it is important to look at setting up an intern program for dental assistants similar to the one set up for nurses in SB 480. The members of the Committee also noted their concern for the number of dentists in the State and felt it is important to address this issue, stating that dental and mental health have not been as important to the health care system in the past as they should have been.

Dr. Nielsen stated the goal of KHPA is to use data to improve health policy. The Authority is making progress on a system to merge data already collected and exploring the best way to make this data available to the consumer as well as researchers. Although there is considerable health care data already available, it is important to make sure the data is accurate and in a usable form. It is the intent of the Authority to request the introduction of legislation to change data collection laws to make the process consistent throughout the State.

Dr. Nielsen also stated that it is the intent of the Authority to use local recruiting firms to assist with the search for a new director. The Authority has requested the assistance of Dr. Day in writing

a job description which it feels is critical to the success of the search. The Search Subcommittee will meet before the end of April and plans to report to the full Board on a periodic basis. The Committee felt that the job description is extremely important and critical to the success of securing a director and the success of the Kansas Health Policy Authority.

Chairman Neufeld thanked Dr. Nielsen for her presentation.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:40 a.m. The next meeting of the Committee will be “on call of the Chairman.”

Prepared by Shirley Jepson
Edited by Terri Weber

Approved by Committee on:

August 23, 2006

(date)