

**Beneficiary Advisory Committee
DRAFT Meeting Minutes
Thursday, September 18, 2025**

The Beneficiary Advisory Committee (BAC) met on Thursday, September 18, 2025, from 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. CST at the South Omaha Branch Library in Omaha, Nebraska. The meeting was held in person for members with a call-in option also available to the public.

BAC members in attendance: Alissa Kern, Allison Sothan, Amber Corbin, Franck Toe, Erica Spears, Lori Wachter, Mary Phillips, Renae Wacker, Vanessa Chavez-Jurado

Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) employees in attendance: Catherine Kearney, Bailey Reigle, Celia Wightman, Jayda Moss, Jeshena Walker, Kris Radke, Matthew Ahern

Members of the public in attendance: Kelsey Arends (Nebraska Appleseed), SaVonni Yestanti

BAC members not in attendance: Arvoni Johnson

I. Openings and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at 12:30 p.m. CST.

- The [Open Meetings Act](#) was made available for attendees.
- Celia ran though roll call and meeting attendees introduced themselves.
- Members were asked to return the [conflict of interest policy form](#) for MAC and BAC members that was handed out at last meeting.

II. Follow-Ups from July Meeting

Document Translations

- Members can request online documents to be translated into other languages
- If you need a document translated, reach out to Celia and she can start the process
- When we have a better path to request documentation translation, we will share with the group

III. Heritage Health Presentation and Group Discussion

The Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC) Plan Management team share a presentation on Heritage Health, Nebraska Medicaid's managed care delivery system.

Non-emergency medical transportation (NEMT):

- Medicaid beneficiaries can request NEMT by calling their MCO.
 - This should ideally be done at least 3 days in advance.
- MCO numbers for NEMT:
 - Molina: 1-888-889-0421
 - Nebraska Total Care: 1-844-261-7834
 - United Healthcare: 1-833-583-5683

Dual Eligibility Special Needs Plans (DESNP)

- Coordination of both Medicaid and Medicare benefits

Managed care organization (MCO) enrollment and changes:

- MCO Comparison Chart: <https://www.neheritagehealth.com/healthplan/search>
- Medicaid beneficiaries can speak to a Talk to a Choice Counselor to help them choose the best MCO for them.
 - Monday-Friday, 7am-7pm CST by calling 1-888-255-2605
 - The call is free
- When assigned an MCO, beneficiaries have 90 days to switch to a different one.
- Open enrollment for Heritage Health is from November 1, 2025, to December 15, 2025.
 - During this time, Medicaid beneficiaries can change which MCO they are enrolled with.
- A "for cause" reason is a state-approved reason to change your Heritage Health plan outside of the annual open enrollment period.
 - 1. Identify a "for cause" reason. Some examples include:
 - Poor quality of care
 - Lack of access to covered medical services
 - Lack of access to medical providers
 - 2. Speak with a choice counselor
 - 3. Fill out and submit the change form
 - If your "for cause" reason is approved, you may need to fill out a Health Plan Change Form, which is usually included in your welcome packet. Then, you will need to mail the completed form to the Heritage Health Enrollment Center

The MCOs have quarterly member advisory committees

- Molina: <https://www.molinahealthcare.com/members/ne/en-us/mem/medicaid/resources/MAC.aspx>

- Nebraska Total Care:
<https://www.nebraskatotalcare.com/members/medicaid/resources/advisory-council.html>
- United Healthcare: <https://www.uhc.com/communityplan/nebraska>

Helpful resources:

- Online provider directory:
https://neheritagehealth.com/Files/Heritage_Health_Provider_Directory.pdf
- Online provider search: <https://www.neheritagehealth.com/healthplan/search>
- Plan management email: DHHS.heritagehealth@nebraska.gov

Meeting attendees shared feedback on their experience with the MCOs:

Strengths, Opportunities, and Barriers Discussion

- Strengths
 - Lots of positive experiences with their MCOs
- Barriers
 - Some beneficiaries have called MCOs regarding value-added services and have not gotten calls back
 - Calling to schedule transportation sometimes has issues
 - Care coordination regarding social determinants of health
 - Plan management shared that there is a survey in the welcome packet that is used to gauge beneficiaries' social determinants of health.
- Opportunities
 - Education about care coordination
 - Education about valued services
 - Improve the process for unhoused individuals
 - Disseminate information through news channels

Improving access for unhoused individuals

- Question: What is the procedure for sending paper information to unhoused individuals? How can social workers tap in to make this process easier?
 - Answer (from Plan Management team): Applicants/beneficiaries can often use a shelter as their temporary address.
 - The applicant/beneficiary and/or their social worker should make sure that their information is up to date with Nebraska Medicaid and their MCO.
- MCOs visit shelters periodically to share information.

IV. Group Expectations – Bylaws and Governance **Bylaws drafting – Purpose of the BAC**

- MLTC staff passed out copies of the Medicaid Advisory Committee (MAC) bylaws and asked members to review “Article III. Purpose” of the [MAC Bylaws](#)
- MAC Bylaws, Article III. Purpose:
 - “to formulate and recommend policies, analyze and recommend changes in programs, and review services provided to recipients
 - to interpret stakeholder opinions and needs regarding services
 - to provide a two-way channel of communication among the individuals, organizations, and facilities in Nebraska interested in care and services
 - to review health plan marketing materials, including but not limited to member handbooks and member information letters and notices
 - to facilitate the representative process, create public understanding, and ensure that services meet the needs of Nebraskans served at a reasonable cost to the taxpayers; and,
 - to review or act in accordance with any other applicable law or directive.”
- BAC members were asked to consider any “purposes” they might suggest being reflected in the BAC’s bylaws.

Quorum

- Quorum will be six BAC members (the majority).
- Without quorum, committees are unable to conduct official meetings, per the [Open Meetings Act](#).
- It’s important for BAC members to email DHHS.MACandBAC@nebraska.gov ahead of meetings if they won’t be able to attend so that BAC members don’t travel for meetings if we are unable to meet quorum.

BAC Governance

- Responsibilities of **chair**:
 1. Call meetings to order and close
 2. Request motions to vote
 3. Facilitate meetings by announcing agenda items
- Responsibilities of **vice chair**:
 1. Facilitate meetings in the absence of the chair
 2. Step into the chair role after the chair’s term expires (i.e., serve one year as vice chair and one year as chair)
- Responsibilities of **chair and vice chair**:
 1. Attend MAC meetings as BAC representatives
 2. Attend an additional meeting (about an hour long) via Webex every other month
 3. Help set the agenda for BAC meetings (this is discussed at the additional meeting)
 4. Communicate closely with MLTC staff to give feedback on BAC administration

BAC Coordination with the MAC

- January 2026 - May 2026 – 3 BAC representatives:
 - Chair
 - Vice chair
 - 1 additional BAC representative
- July 2026 - May 2027 – 4 BAC representatives
 - Chair
 - Vice chair
 - 2 additional BAC representatives
- July 2027 - forward – 5 BAC representatives
 - Chair
 - Vice chair
 - 3 additional BAC representative

Leadership and BAC Representative Terms Lengths

(These term lengths apply only to the duration the BAC member will serve in their leadership position, not to the duration they will serve on the committee)

- Chair
 - 1 year in position (January – November)
 - Cannot serve consecutive terms in same position
- Vice chair
 - 1 year in position (January – November)
 - 1 year vice chair, then transition to chair
 - Cannot serve consecutive terms in same position
- BAC representatives
 - 1 year in position (July – May)
 - Can serve consecutive terms as BAC representative
 - The representative selected in November will serve an extra half-term
as BAC rep. due to MAC vacancy (November 2025 – May 2027)

General BAC Member Term Lengths

- We will start with staggered term lengths so that all BAC seats don't turn over at the same time.
 - Half of member will serve 2-year terms
 - Half of members will serve 3-year terms
- Thereafter, all new members will serve 3-year terms.
- The elected vice chair will automatically be assigned a 3-year term due to the expectation that they will become chairperson in January 2027.

Leadership Election Process

- Candidates will submit an interest form:
<https://forms.monday.com/forms/50900bc2ce9c319554c3b1c7f3584b1e?r=use1>
 - Explains qualifications and why they're interested in the role

- Must complete the form by **October 27**
- DHHS.MACandBAC@nebraska.gov will email BAC members with the information collected from the form
 - BAC member should review this form prior to the November meeting to inform their decision
- Candidates will have the chance to give a brief statement at the November meeting before voting takes place
- BAC members will vote for representatives in November
- The elected representatives will be asked to attend the MAC meeting that afternoon, from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m.

BAC Member Discussion

- Having only two- and three-year terms could be intimidating for some potential applicants as it's a long commitment – one BAC member suggests the option for one-year term lengths.

V. Open Discussion / Public Comment

There were no open discussion items or public comments.

VI. Confirm the Next Meeting Time and Location

The next meeting will be held on Thursday, November 20, 2025, from 12:30 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. in Lincoln, Nebraska at the Charles H. Gere Branch Library (2400 S 56th St, Lincoln, NE 685060).

The November meeting will be in person with virtual (Webex) and telephone call-in options for BAC members and members of the public.

VII. Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by the committee at 2:10 p.m. CST.