



## RURAL HEALTH ADVISORY COMMISSION

NEBRASKA OFFICE OF RURAL HEALTH  
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### MINUTES of the

### Rural Health Advisory Commission (RHAC)

Friday August 19th, 2022

1:30 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Conference Room Lower Level B  
Nebraska State Office Building  
Lincoln, NE

#### 1. Call Meeting to Order; Open Meetings Act and Agenda Posted/Available for Download; Adopt Agenda; Approve Minutes from May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 Meeting

Chairman Marty Fattig called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. with the following members present: Marty Fattig, Jessye Goertz; Michael Greene, M.D.; Jeffrey Harrison, M.D.; Lynette Kramer, M.D.; Rebecca Schroeder, Ph.D.; Roger Wells, PA-C.

Guests in attendance: Travis Maloley, PharmD (speaker)

Mr. Fattig announced that the meeting notice had been posted to the DHHS website and sent out via email and USPS on August 5, 2022.\* Handouts, the open meetings act, and agenda were also posted on the DHHS website, with a link to these given on the agenda itself (<http://dhhs.ne.gov/Pages/Rural-Health-Advisory-Commission.aspx> - under "Documents"). Additionally, the open meetings act and meeting agenda were posted outside the meeting room.

*\*Sent as usual to: NE Rural Hospital CEOs, NE Certified Rural Health Clinic Directors, NE Local Public Health Departments, NE Community Action Partners, NE Community Health Centers/FQHCs, NE Professional Associations/Organizations, NE State Senators, the Offices of the Governor and Lt. Governor, and other rural interested groups and parties.*

Rebecca Schroeder, Ph.D. moved to approve the August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting agenda and Roger Well, PA-C seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthone, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. moved to approve the May 26<sup>th</sup>, 2022 meeting minutes and Lynette Kramer, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthone, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

## 2. Administrative Items

### *Commission Member Update*

In September, the following members are up for appointment/reappointment:

April Dexter – Amelia – (2017) – (Rural Nurse)  
Martin L. Fattig – Auburn – (2004) – (Rural Hospital Administration)  
Jessye A. Goertz – Brock – (2013) – (Consumer)  
VACANT – (2017) – (Rural Dentist)  
Lynette Kramer – Albion – (2018) – (Rural Physician)

Lynette Kramer, M.D., and Jessye Goertz will not be re-applying, so this will be their last meeting. Everyone thanked them for serving on the commission.

A press release has gone out for the current and soon to be vacant positions. Parties interested in serving on the commission can apply via the application located here: <https://governor.nebraska.gov/board-comm-req>. One application was received for the Rural Dentist position, but the individual does not work or reside in a rural area per the definition in state statute, and therefore does not qualify (Hastings).

Rachael Wolfe asked if the commission would support a change in the definition of “rural” per NE Revised Statutes Section 71-5653. Rather than “counties with a population of less than 15,000” a caveat could be added for determining eligibility of commission members; something like “areas outside a 50-mile radius of Lincoln and Omaha.” This would require an amendment to NE Revised Statutes Section 71-5653 (see Agenda Item 2A).

Hastings is not a shortage area for General Dentistry and is for Pediatric Dentistry (as is most of the state). Roger Wells, PA-C would be in favor of discussing this further to come up with some options. Lynette Kramer, M.D. mentioned that her preference is to avoid the possible issue of members working in but not living in rural communities. Mr. Fattig recommends taking all changes forward at the same time. He recommends discussing the matter more at the next meeting.

### *Other Announcements*

This is Tom Rauner’s last meeting as well as he will be retiring this fall. The chair gave him recognition and thanked him for his expertise and commitment over the years.

## 3. Rural Health Advisory Commission Recommendations

Roger Wells, PA-C introduced Travis Maloley, PharmD. Mr. Maloley owns the U-Save Pharmacy in Lexington and recently acquired the Milford Pharmacy as well, which is being used for remote dispensing. Mr. Wells asked Mr. Maloley to share his perspective on rural pharmacy.

Mr. Maloley remarked that telepharmacy and remote dispensing are going to be important in the future and referenced LB731; this states a remote dispensing pharmacy must be 10 driving miles from the nearest dispensing pharmacy and must have a certified pharmacy tech physically present.

There was some discussion about UNMC’s program for pharmacy techs. There is an online program as well. Margaret Brockman asked if the Kearney campus has a pharm tech program; they do not.

Mr. Maloley went on to explain that remote dispensing sites must have real time communication with a non-remote dispensing pharmacy (Lexington serves as this site for Milford). They are required to offer counseling with each prescription; they use an iPad to accomplish this. He explained how telepharmacy works at their site, remarking that it’s more efficient for the pharmacist, there has not been patient pushback, and the town is glad to have been able to keep a pharmacy. Independent retail pharmacy has become more difficult, particularly in rural

areas. Twenty five percent of independent pharmacies have closed since 2010, and when a pharmacy leaves a small town, patient health suffers. Hospitals are buying many of these pharmacies and have been able to make it work so far, but Mr. Maloley sees this becoming more difficult over the next decade. Telepharmacy is a way to keep these small towns alive.

Mr. Maloley then discussed PBMs (pharmacy benefits managers), explaining these as the middlemen between insurance companies and pharmacies. He also introduced the idea of DIR fees (direct and indirect remuneration fees). In 2009-10 these fees were created, as of today there has been an 107% increase. Mr. Maloley doesn't believe all the metrics used are fair or that the fees go back into lowering premiums and copays. LB767 has some PBM regulation and passed last spring.

Mr. Maloley remarked he need for more DIR regulation is his biggest concern. These are generally charged six months after the fact, and in 2024 it will start to come out at point of sale. At that point, he expects a huge decline in small and rural pharmacies due to insufficient cashflow being revealed at point of sale. While he thinks telepharmacy can step in to help out, they still need more DIR regulation, and he hopes the commission can do some advocacy on this topic.

Lynette Kramer, M.D. asked about 340B. Mr. Maloley stated that it's helpful, but that they worry about losing that too.

Roger Wells, PA-C asked how many telepharmacies Mr. Maloley could run. He stated that three would probably be the most his Lexington pharmacy could manage. Mr. Maloley finished up by stating that without rural pharmacy, the whole system would start to crumble.

#### **4. Rural Health Systems & Professional Incentive Act Program Updates**

##### *Review Governor-Designated Eligible Areas for Medicare Certified Rural Health Clinics – map update*

Tom Rauner stated that every three years these areas are reassessed using existing guidelines. The guidelines are a slight modification of family practice guidelines used for loan repayment shortage area designation; Rural Health Clinic employees are pulled from the data to avoid a yo-yo effect. The Governor signs off before the map goes to regional and federal levels and is then approved. Office of Rural Health (ORH) has been doing this since the 1990s and Mr. Rauner wanted to present it to the RHAC for informational purposes, but there was no official vote or approval required.

##### *Shortage Area Requests*

Rachael Wolfe presented the two counties that had applied for re-assessment. Both were found to qualify.

Holt County requested re-assessment as a shortage area for General Dentistry. Upon review by ORH (verified by HPTS), they do qualify.

Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. moved to approve the designation of Holt County as a shortage area for General Dentistry. Michael Greene, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthone, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

Cherry County requested re-assessment as a shortage area for Pharmacy. Upon review by ORH (verified by HPTS), they do qualify.

Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. moved to approve the designation of Cherry County as a shortage area for Pharmacy. Lynette Kramer, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthone, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

### *Budget Update*

Ms. Wolfe then gave a budget update, stating that the total spent in FY2021-22 (which ended June 30, 2022) was about \$1.7 million (\$1,729,250.65) out of the total General Fund allotment of \$2.18 million (\$2,180,723.00). This means about \$450,000 was carried over to the current year.

Total currently obligated for FY2022-23 is \$1.5 million out of the anticipated General Fund allotment plus carryover of \$2.6 million total. Just over \$1 million remains to be obligated for the fiscal year that began in July, and Cash Spending Authority was increased sufficiently to spend this. These funds will be used for awards that require a match and, as discussed at the last meeting, potentially as match for the federally funded NHSC SLRP program (for doctorate level providers, on a year-by-year basis, as funding levels allow).

ARPA funds of \$5 million made available for loan repayment with no match required have almost all been obligated.

Based on applications received, it would be beneficial to look at amending the existing statute to make “no match” awards a standard option, at least for certain providers that have historically had difficulty getting community match (mainly behavioral health providers and dentists). Allowing providers to participate more than once could also be beneficial. Tom Rauner spoke about PRISM surveys – these are surveys ORH sends to loan repayment recipients that measure provider satisfaction; over twenty states do this. Nebraska has a 70-80% response rate. Most providers anticipate remaining in an area for fifteen years though they’re only receiving funding for three. Retention is longer for the state program than for federal programs.

## **5. CLOSED SESSION**

Rebecca Schroeder, Ph.D. moved to go to Closed Session for the purpose of review and discussion of accounts receivable, loan repayment program applications, and other confidential information, and for the prevention of needless injury to the reputation of the individuals at 2:36 p.m.

Jessye Goertz seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthonie, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

Marty Fattig announced that the commission would go into Closed Session at 2:36 p.m.

*It was announced that guests should leave room and that the public comment period would take place after the Closed Session.*

## **6. OPEN SESSION**

Michael Greene, M.D. moved to go into Open Session at 2:46 p.m. and Lynette Kramer, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthonie, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

Michael Greene, M.D. moved to approve the 64 loan repayment applications with estimated loan repayment start dates and loan repayment amounts as indicated or as determined by Office of Rural Health staff, based on issuance of license and/or loan documentation, practice time in the shortage area, and the availability of funds for the state match. Jeffrey Harrison, M.D. seconded the motion. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthonie, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.

First Name:	Last Name:	Date application submitted	Profession:	Specialty:	Site 1 County:	State Award Amount:	SLRP Minimum Award Amount:	SLRP Maximum Award Amount:	State Start Date:	SLRP Start Date:
Jackie	Ondracek	5/24/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Int. Med.	Hall	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Nicole	Hall	5/24/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Buffalo	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Aaron	McCoy	5/25/2022	DDS/DMD	General	Douglas	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$200,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Mackenzie	Boon	5/26/2022	Psychologist		Hall	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$80,607.26	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Heather	Calkins	5/27/2022	Psychologist		Hall	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Jessica	Parr	5/31/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Madison	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$59,200.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Teal	Hunt	6/1/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Boone	\$7,200.00	\$50,000.00	\$77,193.42	10/1/2022	9/1/2022
Hope	Hansen	6/1/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Surgery	Morrill	\$49,051.20			10/1/2022	
Tracey	Hamor	6/2/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Child/Adolescent Psych	Hall	\$6,000.00			10/1/2022	
Amy	Theesen	6/2/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Int. Med.	Hall	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Cheryl	Blankenship/Porterfield	6/2/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Adams	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Christiana	Howell	6/3/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Buffalo	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Arynne	Horton	6/6/2022	Psychologist		Gage	\$57,418.78	\$57,418.78	\$57,418.78	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Brandy	Elrod	6/6/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Hall	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Henry	Derbes III	6/8/2022	MD/DO	FP	Dundy	\$36,000.00	\$100,000.00	\$200,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Kylee	Lienemann	6/10/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Int. Med.	Buffalo	\$31,500.00			10/1/2022	
Chelsea	Sedlacek-Bergmeier	6/10/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Gage	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Richard	Poppe	6/20/2022	MD/DO	FP	Merrick	\$104,004.00	\$100,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Heather	Talbott	6/20/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Lancaster	\$0.00	\$43,750.00	\$87,500.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Chelsea	Lambert	6/21/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Dodge	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Darcie	Kennedy	6/21/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Red Willow	\$0.00			1/1/2024	
Samantha	Andrews	6/21/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Red Willow	\$0.00			1/1/2023	
Emily	Mahon	6/24/2022	Physician Assistant	FP	Burt	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Emily	Laffin	6/28/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Dakota	\$0.00	\$37,500.00	\$42,654.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Aaron	Youngberg	6/29/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Dakota	\$0.00	\$25,000.00	\$50,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Scott	Gordon	6/30/2022	MD/DO	Gen. Int. Med.	Adams	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Mikensie	Wright	7/5/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Adams	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$75,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Brianna	Beam	7/6/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Webster	\$63,443.82			10/1/2022	
Jennifer	Schiermeyer	7/7/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Brown	\$75,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$50,000.00	6/1/2023	6/1/2023
Ashley	Attoungble	7/14/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Gage	\$9,135.82			10/1/2022	
Jessica	Sotelo	7/14/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Madison	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$99,475.96	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
April	TRUE	7/14/2022	Pharmacist		Fillmore	\$90,000.00			10/1/2022	
Brione	Rezac	7/14/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Madison	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Sean	Stanek	7/15/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Otoe	\$24,000.00			10/1/2022	
Janice	Sherman	7/16/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Clay	\$15,406.27			10/1/2022	
Chris	LaRose	7/18/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Sheridan	\$75,000.00			10/1/2022	
Devin	Scott	7/18/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Int. Med.	Hall	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Jenna	Johnson	7/18/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Child/Adolescent Psych	Madison	\$56,372.06	\$50,000.00	\$56,372.06	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Michelle	Bittner	7/20/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Platte	\$0.00	\$40,000.00	\$67,393.35	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Ryan	Nielsen	7/21/2022	Physician Assistant	Gen. Int. Med.	Hall	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Theresa	Arnett Nickolaus	7/21/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Hamilton	\$0.00	\$37,500.00	\$65,081.68	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Melissa	Barrett	7/22/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Psychiatry	Otoe	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Kelcey	Jeppson	7/22/2022	DDS/DMD	General	Thayer	\$70,144.50			10/1/2022	
Kyla	Conway	7/25/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Valley	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$98,050.26	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Heidi	Bergen	7/25/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Clay	\$0.00	\$25,000.00	\$32,586.38	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Jose	Bajo	7/25/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Int. Med.	Hall	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Kristen	Neuhalfen	7/26/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Madison	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Hailey	Heiderman	7/26/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Madison	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Zachary	Keller	7/27/2022	MD/DO	Psychiatry	Buffalo	\$0.00	\$100,000.00	\$200,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Leontyne	Evans	7/28/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Douglas		\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00		2/1/2023
Jackie	Schantz	7/29/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Madison	\$0.00	\$50,000.00	\$61,967.12	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Adriana	Arroyo-Herrera	8/1/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Hall	\$0.00	\$45,000.00	\$75,664.64	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Lindsey	Teten	8/1/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Psychiatry	Otoe	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Elizabeth	Holloway	8/1/2022	DDS/DMD	General	Holt	\$180,000.00			10/1/2022	
Ana	Taylor	8/2/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Saline	\$18,000.00			10/1/2022	
Kelly	Theisen	8/3/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Lancaster		\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00		9/1/2023
Natalie	Bussard	8/5/2022	DDS/DMD	Pediatric	Lincoln	\$0.00			10/1/2022	
Nicholas	Kolar	8/9/2022	Physician Assistant	Gen. Int. Med.	Buffalo	\$30,000.00			10/1/2022	
Katherine	Kimmerling	8/9/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Lancaster		\$2,461.88	\$2,461.88		9/1/2023
Rochelle	Herrada	8/9/2022	Nurse Practitioner	Gen. Int. Med.	Buffalo	\$30,000.00			10/1/2022	
Joshua	Edgar	8/9/2022	MD/DO	Gen. Int. Med.	Dodge	\$56,947.78			8/1/2023	
Kirsten	McGill	8/11/2022	Licensed Mental Health Professional		Fillmore	\$60,000.00	\$50,000.00	\$100,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Hillary	Goodwin	8/12/2022	Nurse Practitioner	FP	Brown	\$45,000.00	\$45,000.00	\$90,000.00	10/1/2022	9/1/2023
Alexandra	Duff	8/12/2022	Masters Level Alcohol and Drug Abuse		Hall		\$50,000.00	\$81,086.72		9/1/2023

Note: If award amount is blank for a particular program, provider does not qualify for that program. If \$0 is listed, applicant only qualified for the state program and listed no match. Because most of the ARPA funds had already been obligated, they were added to a waitlist to allow time for them to find a match or to potentially be funded in the case of another provider's withdrawal.

## **7. Review Current Federal & State Legislative Activities Impacting Rural Health**

Roger Wells, PA-C remarked that he just returned from Washington, D.C. He stated that pharmacy and workforce are the major issues being discussed. The National Rural Health Association is looking at initiatives for the future (5-10 years from now).

Marty Fattig spoke to commission about a bill had been passed in Iowa allowing a county to declare EMS an essential service like law and fire. Mr. Fattig called the Iowa Hospital Association to get a copy of the bill. They told him it took 20 years to get the bill passed. The bill states that a county, by the county commissioners, can declare EMS an essential service. If commissioners say yes, the people vote on it, then 75 cents per 1000 dollars assessment will go towards EMS in that county. Mr. Fattig remarked that when you call 911, you assume someone will come, but in many parts of the state, that's just not true. He stated that something will need to be done to shore up the system, as relying on volunteers is not going to work going forward." Mr. Fattig will send a copy of the bill to anyone who's interested. Dr. Harrison remarked that the average age of an EMT in Nebraska is 65.

## **8. Public Comment**

No guests remaining.

## **9. Adjourn**

Roger Wells, PA-C moved to adjourn at 3:00 p.m., and no second is necessary. Deb Stoltenberg initiated roll call vote. YES: Fattig, Goertz, Greene, Harrison, Kramer, Schroeder, Wells. ABSTAIN: None. EXCUSED: Anthone, Dawson, Dexter, Hunt, Wallman. Motion carried.