

# Meeting Minutes: Health Care Workforce & Education Committee

November 1, 2023

## Committee Member Attendance

- Bradley Benson –M Health-Fairview
- Susan Culican –University of Minnesota
- David Dahlen – Mayo Clinic
- Roger Dearth – Mayo Clinic
- Kelly Frisch— HealthPartners
- Badrinath Konety --Allina
- Kimberly Lakhan – College of St. Scholastica
- Deborah Mayland-Poyzer – Fairview Health System
- Rebecca McGill – St. Catherine University
- Miranda Gilmore – Fraser Integrated Healthcare
- Robert Miner – Allina Health/Abbott Northwestern
- Christine Mueller –University of Minnesota
- Nate Mussell —Fairview
- Peter Nalin – University of Minnesota Medical School, Duluth campus
- Michelle Noltimier, Chair – HealthPartners Institute
- Sheila Riggs – University of Minnesota
- Thomas Satre – Vice Chair – CentraCare Health
- Troy Taubenheim – Chair - Metro Minnesota Council on GME
- Meghan Walsh –Hennepin County Medical Center

Not in Attendance:

- Kathleen Macken – Allina Health
- Lynda Welage –University of Minnesota

**Health Department Staff:** Kelsey Besse, Cirrie Byrnes, Susan Castellano, Megan Loew, Nitika Moibi, Zora Radosevich, Diane Reger, Melissa Stevens, Madison Weirick

**Department of Human Services Staff:** Susan Hammersten

## Agenda Items

- Welcome – Troy Taubenheim, Chair
  - Introductions
  - Committee Transition from MERC to Health Care Workforce & Education – Zora Radosevich, MDH
- Governor’s Task Force – Dr. Meghan Walsh
- State Programs/Grant Updates
  - Office of Rural Health & Primary Care Program Updates – Zora Radosevich, MDH
  - Review of State Funded Pipeline Programs
  - Non-MERC Clinical Experience Programming
  - Primary Care Residency & IMG Clinical Experience
  - Medical Education & Research Cost Grant – Diane Reger, MDH
    - Medicaid Medical Education Component – Susan Hammersten, DHS
- Future Meetings
  - 2024 dates – February 7, May 1, August 7, November 6 – all web-based teleconference, 1 – 3 p.m.
  - Submit topics to committee chairs or [health.merc@state.mn.us](mailto:health.merc@state.mn.us).

## Meeting Notes

**Welcome and Introductions:** Troy Taubenheim, chair, called the meeting to order at 1:02 p.m.

### **Committee Transition from MERC to Health Care Workforce & Education – Zora Radosevich**

Ms. Radosevich stressed that the committee’s focus will remain clinical needs of the health care workforce and asked members to consider what their role can be during this transition. Committee member terms will be paused, including two members who currently have served their three terms (Kathleen Macken and Troy Taubenheim). Please contact MERC staff at [health.merc@state.mn.us](mailto:health.merc@state.mn.us) with questions or if not able to continue membership. It was also announced that both Troy Taubenheim, Chair, and Thomas Satre, Vice Chair, will stay in those roles during the transition. The one-year cycle and MERC Operating Guidelines will be reviewed further down the road.

### **Governor’s Task Force – Meghan Walsh**

Dr. Walsh presented committee members with an update on the activities of the Governor’s Task Force on Academic Health at the University of Minnesota. She explained that the charge of the 16-member task force is to develop recommendations to support five key responsibilities. Meetings began October 5 with final recommendations to be finalized by January 10, 2024. The next step for the Task Force will be to develop a problem statement. Some committee members expressed interest in exploring if they can have any discussions with this Task Force especially surrounding the cost of training and looking into maximizing the money given by the state to educate providers. It was felt that there is great potential to utilize IMG participants for the health care pipeline. Also, the need to expand beyond medical practice and include dental and other disciplines was discussed.

## **State Programs/Grant Updates –Zora Radosevich, MDH**

State Funded Pipelines Programs: Ms. Radosevich reviewed the Home Community Based Services (HCBS) Scholarship and Loan Forgiveness programs offered through the Office of Rural Health and Primary Care. She mentioned that the Rural Health Advisory Committee (RHAC) within the ORHPC will be exploring ways that high school students are introduced to EMT and CNA roles and health care professions, in general. She also explained the role of the FQHC Apprenticeship Grant which will help expand the apprenticeship program that currently supports medical and dental assistants.

Non-MERC Clinical Experience Programming: Ms. Radosevich explained that even though Medicaid is not at the center of this programming, there may be the potential to use the MERC Portal. Priorities will be determined, and new training sites sought or expanded. There was \$5.6 million available this first year, and funding will be decreased in subsequent cycles.

Primary Care Residency Grants: Applications are being accepted through November 3.

Rural Family Medicine Residency Grant Program: Step 1 applications being accepted through November 8. Step 2 applications will be accepted through November 27.

IMG Clinical Experience Grant Program: The RFP is in development. Several committee members expressed thoughts that the goal for IMG and Primary Care residency programs should be that participants practice in rural areas to strengthen the pipeline. Some members also expressed concern that this grant program sometimes only partially funds participants.

## **Medical Education & Research Costs (MERC) Grant – Diane Reger, MDH and Susan Hammersten, DHS**

Medicaid Medical Education Component: Ms. Hammersten explained that there are currently two processes for MERC funding taking place. The first Proxy Period is available to eligible hospitals and affiliates based on an average using historical MERC data from training year 2020 and 2021. Diane Reger will be providing the initial dollar figures to DHS and a rate calculator will determine how much monies are received. Susan mentioned that funding will not be exact, but including the payments in the hospital's rates will carry less of an administrative burden. While rates will be paid out in an 18-month period, they will be consistent with two years of funding (\$99,104,000 in total). This will go into effect January 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025. Report of paid claims will be available to hospitals starting February 2025.

The transition period will continue with combining MERC training year 2021 and 2022 when rates are again set for July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2027.

Medical Education and Research Cost (MERC) Grant Update: Diane Reger reviewed the MERC Application Workflow. She reported that for Step 1 of the MERC 2024 Funding/FY2022 Training Cycle, applications were submitted through 26 sponsoring institutions, 330 teaching programs and 2,204 training site applications. Under the new legislation, all sites that qualify for Step 1 and Step 2 will be eligible for Cigarette Tax/Match totaling \$7,575,500. While funding from the General Fund and Health Care Access Fund totaling \$2 million will be limited to those sites that are not hospitals or affiliates of a hospital system.

- Teaching program accreditations are currently being checked.

- Clinical training sites will be required to complete Step 2 expenditure reporting beginning November 15. Deadline for submission is December 15.
- Please submit any questions to MERC staff at [health.merc@state.mn.us](mailto:health.merc@state.mn.us).

With no further business, Chair Troy Taubenheim adjourned the meeting at 2:48 p.m.

## Next Meeting

February 7, 2024, from 1 – 3 pm, via Teams.

- Agenda and call-in information will be posted on the [committee website](#) a week before the meeting. Submit possible agenda items to the Committee Chair and/or MERC staff at [health.merc@state.mn.us](mailto:health.merc@state.mn.us).