



South Dakota
Department of
Social Services

DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES

DIVISION OF MEDICAL SERVICES

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**South Dakota Medicaid
Thursday, July 23, 2026
Beneficiary Advisory Council Meeting Minutes**

Beneficiary Advisory Council (BAC) Attendees

Bethany Curtis, Mikki Donelson, Alex Helvin, Barry Gravatt, Samara Contreras

Could Not Attend: Jeannette Wellman

Other Attendees

Matthew Ballard, Dr. Clarissa Barnes, Sarah Houska, Mary Johnle, Ashley Lauing, Heather Petermann, Chris Soukup, Ben May.

Welcome and Overview

Ashley Lauing, Policy Strategy Manager with South Dakota Medicaid (DSS), welcomed the BAC members.

Heather Petermann, Director, DSS, thanked the BAC members for their time, guidance, and role in shaping policy.

Review April 2026 Meeting Minutes

Ashley Lauing reviewed the April 2026 meeting minutes and asked for questions or corrections. Hearing none, the BAC accepted the minutes as presented. The April 2026 minutes can be found online at [the BAC website](#).

Annual Report

Ashley Lauing reviewed changes to the annual report submitted via email and asked for a motion to approve the annual report. The annual report will be posted on [the BAC website](#).

- Julie Kopp, motioned to approve.
 - Alex Helvin, second.
 - Vote passed unanimously.

HR1 Website Overview

Mary Johnle detailed the changes coming to the [HR1 website](#), including where it's located on the website, where to locate information and upcoming town hall meetings.

Comments/Questions:

- Samara C. will Spanish versions of materials be made available
 - Spanish and English versions will be available, once translation has been made.
- Julie Kopp asked where she could direct folks for more information if they are worried about changes?
 - Encourage others to visit the website or to outreach their local office.

CHIP State Plan Goals

Ashley Lauing discussed different metrics the division uses to measure access and healthcare utilization for Medicaid. Matthew Ballard discussed the background on CHIP state plan goals and the new goals the State is looking to adopt. The division asked for feedback on these goals. Slides can be found online at [the BAC website](#).

Comments/Questions:

- Q. Samara. I have been working with children without immigration status. Will you guys have coverage available if a kid needs Medicaid/CHIP for an emergency situation?
 - You need to qualify for a coverage group and have an emergency. Medical records are reviewed to verify the emergency. Coverage is limited to the emergency. If you think someone may be eligible, encourage them to apply for an official determination.
- Bethany. Regarding the dental metric – can you explain what that metric is asking?
 - This measure is for whether an individual received any dental/oral care. Oral care can include a fluoride varnish in a medical clinic setting.
- Barry. Down the road is there going to be a promotion on wellness visits to increase use?
 - We send a well-child letter ([example](#)) around the recipients birthday as well as reminder letters. Our [recipient handbook](#) also has a road map for when to get a well-child checkup. We are open to feedback on how to further promote well-child visits

Juvenile Justice Targeted Case Management

Ben May provided an update on the Juvenile Justice Targeted Case Management efforts. Slides can be found online at [the BAC website](#).

Comments/Questions:

- Q. Gravatt. Is there some plan for services past the 60 days?
 - A. The key part during those 60 days is connecting them to other needed Medicaid services and supports. Examples could include with community mental health centers, community health workers, or other necessary Medicaid covered services.

Closing Remarks

- Ashley Lauring indicated that we received some questions regarding the news coverage that Medicaid had a surplus from the previous fiscal year. There were members asking why Medicaid couldn't use the funds to pay providers directly or to add services.
 - The Medicaid budget is based on estimated eligibles and estimated associated utilization for currently covered service categories. The budget is utilized to reimburse healthcare providers for actual services rendered. Actual number of eligibles and their associated medical costs can fluctuate year to year and may not align exactly to the budget appropriated to the department. Significant changes to the program that will incur ongoing year-over-year expenses generally require a special appropriation from the legislature.
- The DOJ memorandum regarding the Olmstead Act was also discussed. The State will continue to monitor the topic. The State does not currently plan to make changes to home and community-based services based on the memorandum.

Future Meetings:

- 10/22/2026 – Pierre – Kneip Building
- 01/28/2027 – Virtual