

**Washington Vaccine Association
Operations Committee Meeting
May 7, 2020; 12:30-1:30 p.m. PT**

I. Attendance. Participating in all or part of the meeting by telephone were the following individuals:

Members

SheAnne Allen, Department of Health
Michelle Baker, Zenith-American
Tammy Blair, Kaiser
Sue Bride, Premera
Maureen Brooks, Kaiser
Denise Buchanan, Cigna
Tracey Cardillo, Cigna
Nicole Carroll, United Healthcare
Susan Comers, Aetna
Steve Lam, PharmD, Regence
Thomas Messick, Premera
Kristi Severson, Kaiser

Angela Wilson, Providence

WVA

Julia G. Zell, Esq., Executive Director,
Chair

Helms & Company, Inc.

Patrick Miller, Principal
Lisa White, Customer and Financial Support
Specialist
Tony Mendez, Senior Consultant
Leslie Walker, CPA, Mason+Rich, PA

II. Welcome and Introductions

At 12:30 p.m., Chairperson Julia Zell called the meeting to order. Ms. Zell stated that the meeting was being recorded for the purpose of the minutes and then will be deleted. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the 2020-21 vaccine assessment grid, to provide an overview of operations changes, to discuss 2020 goals, and to review the draft Provider and Payer Guide that is being developed.

Calendar Consent Items

Chairperson Zell directed the Committees' attention to the consent item submitted for approval, the Committee meeting minutes of December 5, 2019. There being no questions or comments, the following items were put to a vote:

Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously

VOTED: To approve the minutes of the December 5, 2019, Operations Committee Meeting as presented.

III. 2020-21 Vaccine Assessment Grid

Mr. Miller reviewed a presentation in the meeting packet which provided an overview of the goals for and development process of the 2020-21 Vaccine Assessment Grid ("Grid"). The goals of the Grid are to provide stability in the pricing for the next few years, to reduce cash on hand levels based upon Board-approved goals, and to allow for reasonable reserves. The process included setting cash on hand goals for the next three years, developing a multi-year administrative budget, and developing a grid that would reduce the mark up on the Centers for Disease Control vaccine pricing. The administrative budget, cash flow projections based upon Board targets, and the Grid are now integrated into a unified model. The purpose of which is to allow the Board of Directors flexibility in setting a series of overall adjustment factors to produce different scenarios over a three-year time horizon. These scenarios drive the required burn down of cash and subsequently the amount of money the Grid needs to "raise" to meet the organization's obligations.

Mr. Miller pointed out on page 11 that WVA's cash reserves have been increasing in recent years as a result of overcollections shown on page 10. The Finance Committee and the Board have provided direction to reduce cash on hand in the coming years as shown on page 12. The Administrative Budget will be approved at the May 21 Finance Committee. The Administrative Budget categories have been reorganized this year as shown on pages 15 and 16, with additional investments being requested of the Board for provider and payer education efforts.

1
2 The cash flow model (pages 17-22) is new this year. It allows for three, three-year scenarios to be run based upon
3 “dials” set by the Board, including assessment grid markup, Department of Health (DOH) indirect fees, DOH cost
4 recovery fees, vaccine wastage, denials, and denial recoveries. The dials combined with the administrative budget
5 result in the amount of funds the Grid needs to “raise” to meet the organization’s obligations. Mr. Miller referred to
6 page 22 and reviewed the list of reasons for the WVA to hold some funds in contingency.
7

8 Mr. Miller turned to page 23 to review the Grid slides. They begin with a summary memo on pages 26-27 describing
9 the assumptions, the methodology, and the drop in Grid prices overall by 13.7% between the current Grid and the
10 2020-21 Grid. Pages 28-31 contain the proposed 2020-21 Grid. Mr. Miller stated that last year’s prices are in the gray
11 column and the coming year’s prices are in the green column. Additionally, on the last two pages are discontinued
12 NDCs and CPTs from prior Grid years.
13

14 Chairperson Zell asked if anyone had comments or would like to see anything else on the Grid or the forecasting
15 model. Ms. Blair stated that she likes the reduced fees and the listing of the discontinued codes on grid. Chairperson
16 Zell stated that we could color code the grids by year in the future. Mr. Miller reviewed that if members of the
17 Committee had ideas on Grid dissemination to please email info@wavaccine.org. Chairperson Zell stated that the
18 Grid will be sent to payers, third-party administrators, providers and other stakeholders and that a communication
19 plan had been established.
20

21 Chairperson Zell asked if there were any more comments or questions prior to taking a vote to approve the 2020-21
22 Grid. There being no questions or comments, the following items were put to a vote:
23

24 Upon motion duly made and seconded, it was unanimously
25

26 **VOTED:** To approve the 2020-21 Vaccine Assessment Grid as presented.
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28 **IV. Operations Update**

29 Chairperson Zell reminded the Committee that there was an Administrator change to Helms & Company, Inc. effective
30 January 1, 2020.
31

32 **V. Administrator Change**

33 Mr. Miller proceeded to review slides 33-36. He described the automation processes for data capture and analysis that
34 were implemented in January. Existing processes for providers and payers have not changed. What has changed is the
35 image conversion to electronic form of all explanation of benefits (EOB), checks, and correspondence sent to the
36 lockbox, and the receipt of electronic remittance advices (ERA) from payers via several clearinghouses. All lockbox
37 data back to July 1, 2019 has been imported to date. More than 50 payers are currently submitting ERAs and it is
38 expected that ultimately ~110 of the ~350 identified so far will do so. This is allowing procedure code-level tracking
39 of dosage-based assessments (DBA) at the payer level which is improving the WVA’s accounting processes and
40 creating a database for analytic functions. These data will be used to audit payers’ adherence with the vaccine
41 assessment grid in real time starting July 1. They are also now being used to identify denials that should be reversed.
42 The WVA previously thought there was a 3% denial rate, but the data we have so far shows that it is closer to 11%.
43 Reducing denials will be a big focus in the upcoming fiscal year.
44

45 Mr. Miller also reviewed a set of three principles that Helms & Company, Inc. is working under with Chairperson Zell
46 in her role as Executive Director: 1) *Go up stream to close gaps* in the DBA open system and fix processes to improve
47 data quality and reduce operational loads, 2) *Transparency and accountability* of finances and operations, and 3)
48 *Partnerships* with payers, providers, Department of Health, and other stakeholders.
49

50 **VI. 2020 Goals**

51 Mr. Miller reviewed page 36 of the handout. It contains a grid by workstream and quarter of goals and activities for
52 the remainder of the current calendar year. The first quarter is mostly in blue text with checkmarks indicating

1 completion. The second quarter in green text shows different efforts in progress underway. The last two columns are
2 for future work. This grid is being used with the Board as a communication tool tracking progress of major efforts.
3 There were no questions or comments.
4

5 **VII. Provider and Payer Guide**

6 Mr. Miller and Ms. Zell review pages 38-43 of the meeting materials containing the “Provider and Payer Guide –
7 Private Insurance Billing” which is to be distributed to payers and providers in June. It is an update of the document
8 currently on the website and contains information on how the WVA works, the billing process from providers to
9 payers, and a set of takeaways for each providers and payers with billing guidance. Ms. Blair commented that she
10 liked the overall refresh of the document and the need to provide process guidance to payers and providers. Ms.
11 Bride commented on how complicated it is, and she asked how providers obtain the information. Mr. Miller replied
12 that the Department of Health onboards new providers, and that we are working together. He stated that the coming
13 fiscal year budget for the WVA contains a request for a part-time person to work with providers and payers on the
14 ground in Washington.
15

16 **VIII. Other Matters from Committee Members**

17
18 Tammy Blair from Kaiser announced her retirement and introduced Kristi Severson to the Committee. All
19 congratulated Tammy and thanked her for her service.
20

21 **IX. Closing**

22 The meeting adjourned at 1:30pm PT.