Coalition Board Meeting Minutes
Monday, July 29, 2019
11:00 am – 12:00 pm ET

Present: Steve Smith, AAHPM; Edo Banach, NHPCO; Diane Meier, CAPC; Sean Morrison, NPCRC
Absent: Ginger Marshall, HPNA
Staff: Amy Melnick

I. Coalition Strategic Priorities:

A. Quality: Lead the strategic Implementation of national palliative care guidelines and other activities with key stakeholders to drive quality

New/Late-breaking: HHS Announces Quality Summit to Streamline and Improve Quality Programs across Government: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Deputy Secretary Eric Hargan announced the formation of the Quality Summit (QS), which will bring together key industry stakeholders and government leaders to discuss how current quality programs administered by HHS can be further evaluated, adapted, and ultimately streamlined to deliver a value-based care model focused on improving outcomes for American patients. Nomination Deadline, July 31, 2019.

Discussion: The Quality Workgroup strongly agreed that this was a great opportunity for a recognized, representative from the hospice and palliative community to be nominated to attend. The workgroup unanimously recommended that Sean Morrison be the Coalition nominee for this opportunity. Sean has accepted the offer to be nominated. On late Friday, SWHPN, who does not have a representative on the Quality Workgroup, recommended Deborah Waldrop to be nominated, as well. She, too, is a great nomination in her own right as a social worker. The Quality Workgroup feels we should concentrate on one nomination. Amy asked the Board for their comments and feedback. The Board wanted to know Amy’s recommendation and any anticipated reaction from not nominating Deborah.

Board Decision: The Board decided to follow the recommendation of the Quality Workgroup, who are our chosen organizational experts in the area of Quality, to nominate Sean Morrison for this opportunity. Amy will do outreach to SWHPN, Deborah Waldrop, and follow-up with Sean to get the necessary information to submit his nomination.

Related NQF Side note: Before closing this topic, Sean made a related side note about resigning his co-chair position on the NQF Geriatrics and Palliative Care Workgroup. He has, recently, accepted the co-chair position for the NQF MAP Hospital Workgroup which is significant opportunity for the hospice and palliative care field. He is unable to chair both. The Coalition would do a news alerts and tweet about the news once officially posted on the NQF website.

1. WHO Withdrawal of Guidance Documents

Discussion: Many Board members have received requests from the International Association for Hospice and Palliative Care to endorse a letter/position statement regarding a WHO opioid guidance document and objecting to a withdrawal of WHO opioid guidance documents based on Congressional misinformation. Board discussed issues and implications.
- AAHPM, after an internal process, signed onto the letter. AAHPM felt that it aligned with many of the things that they have stated although AAHPM may have worded some statements differently.
NHPCO confirmed sign on as well, for the purpose of solidarity.

There was concern that Members of Congress “got it wrong” and that the Coalition should respond and show solidarity with the field on this topic along with the international community. This could have negative implications on many underdeveloped countries where there is limited access to opioids. Concerns were also expressed that some Members of Congress would misinterpret our support for this initiative.

Amy has introduced the Coalition to the IAHPC and they are aware of the Coalition and how we operate. In the future, we anticipate getting request directly.

**Board Decision:** Since Ginger was unable to make the meeting, Amy was asked to email all Board members the necessary information to review and do a vote of yes or no. *In a subsequent email vote, the Board voted to support and sign this letter endorsing the position statement.*

2. CareLab/University of WA/Tony Back Proposal (John Hartford Foundation):

As discussed with the Board previously, the Coalition has been invited to participate as a stakeholder in this project and Amy has been invited to attend a meeting in New York City on Sept 4 and 5 as part of the John A. Hartford Foundation grant given to the University of WA, *Building Public Engagement and Access to Palliative & End-of-Life Care.* A confidential DRAFT document was sent to Board members before the meeting to review for the discussion. Tony is interested in discussing with the Coalition a larger, more visible role for the Coalition focused on wider stakeholder engagement.

**Discussion/Decided:** What does the Coalition participation look like? How is the Board feeling about the project?

- Prior discussions included Amy attending 3 (1.5 day) meetings over the course of 3 years (1 per year) / important to be at the table
- Participating on monthly 1-hour conference calls with project team
- Coalition would receive $10,000 per year for 3 years (all travel is covered)
  - Tony would have an opportunity to present to the Coalition periodically (likely twice per year at most)
  - Tony Back is preparing a more detailed explanation for the Coalition which has not yet been received.

**Board Comments:** Overall, the Board would be supportive of a Coalition role equal to those of the other organizations with compensation to align with that role; All Board member agree that the Coalition should be involved in this project but a larger role should be created for the Coalition.

*(Sean no longer on call, rest of agenda is FYI as Board quorum is lacking)*


**Discuss:** On July 9, the Office of Inspector General released two reports (links below) detailing deficiencies in the hospice program and making specific recommendations. The Coalition Board had an opportunity to discuss this report, implications for the field and possible need for Coalition response and/or education. Board discussed that this report an opportunity to advocate for needed improvements and enhancements to the program to improve program integrity. NHPCO has talked to Congress and CMS and plan to talk with OIG. The field should expect enhanced oversight from this report. NHPCO wants to make sure it is smart oversight. Judi Lund Person and Hannah Moore will be participating on the Coalition’s August 8th call to provide information to the entire Coalition and will work with the Coalition to build consensus around program integrity recommendations.

*Hospice Deficiencies Pose Risks to Medicare Beneficiaries*

NCHPC Board Meeting Minutes, July 29, 2019
Safeguards Must Be Strengthened To Protect Medicare Hospice Beneficiaries From Harm
2019: Vulnerabilities in Hospice Care

(Edo no longer on call.)

4. NCP Communications: Key Message Document
Inform/Discuss/Decide:

Attached is our current “messaging” regarding the NCP Guidelines. All proactive outreach has ceased as the grant concluded on 7/15. Based on our last Board conversation, there was discussion in revising NCP messaging. Please review the key message document prior to our call and send any suggested revisions to me in advance by 7/25/19. No written feedback was received.

5. MACRA Palliative Care Measures Project: Inform

• Continuation of funding submitted to CMS: Year 1 grant ends Sept 15th, 2nd year begins (130K for Coalition to focus on stakeholder engagement)

II. Coalition Operations:
A. Financial Report: Inform/Discuss, Steve Smith, Treasurer: Board will have an opportunity to review Coalition financial report and ask questions. No Board discussion.

B. New Member Potential: Supportive Care Coalition Board will be voting in September re: membership in our Coalition.

The SCC has a unique process for approving membership. One of their committees has voted yes in favor of joining the Coalition. They have another committee voting later this month. If that committee votes, yes to becoming a member of the Coalition, then, their Board will do a final vote in October for 2020 membership. Amy wanted to check in with the Board to make sure everyone was still in agreement with SCC joining the Coalition. Recommendation to add to the October Board agenda.

C. Next In-Person Board Meeting: NHPCO, Alexandria, VA, Dinner, Wednesday, October 2nd, 6:30PM, Thursday, October 3rd (8:30am-4:00PM). Inform/Discuss:

a. Brief calls (one on one w/Amy) have been scheduled to better prepare for our in-person October meeting and ID agenda items. Please begin to think of any items for discussion.

b. Note: Board Treasurer, Steve Smith, will be departing AAHPM in March 2020, and a new Treasurer will need to be identified for 2020.