



Board of Trustees
Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation
Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
1 Lower Navy Hill Road Navy Hill, Saipan, MP 96950



CHCC Board of Trustees
Wednesday, November 10, 2021 5:30 pm
CHCC Conference Room 3

Present: Lauri B. Ogunoro, Chair/Edward Deleon Guerrero, Vice Chair/Polly Masga, Trustee/Corinne Santos, Trustee/Esther Muna, CEO/Perlie Santos, CFO/Stephen Anson, AAG/Trinidad Diaz/ Krishna Sebangiol/Tiffany Sablan/Evita Kawai

- I. Meeting called to order at 5:30 pm.
- II. Quorum was determined with four Trustees present.
- III. Approval of Agenda: A request was made to reschedule the CEO's Evaluation. It was decided to see how quickly the discussion on the other items on the Agenda will take. Should enough time be available, the discussion will take place, if not it will be rescheduled. With this noted change, a motion was made to approve the Agenda. Motion was seconded. Agenda is approved.
- IV. Public Comments: None
- V. Adoption of Minutes: Motions was made to approve meeting Minutes from 9/14/21, 9/16/21, 9/20/21, 9/23/21, 10/4/21, 10/12/21, and 10/20/21. Motion was seconded. Listed minutes were approved.
- VI. Credentials Privileges – new and renewal applicants were introduced as follows below. All were approved by a majority vote from the Trustees.

New Applicants:

- 1) Ry Hayler, Physician Assistant/ER – No issues presented. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved for two (2) years.
- 2) Dr. Peter Gregor, Cardiologist - No issues presented. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved up to October 31, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 3) Sumer Ackley, Nurse Practitioner/FCC - No issues present. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved for one (1) year.
- 4) Dr. Jennifer Yolles, Psychiatry – No issues presented. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved up to November 30, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 5) Dr. Phillip Plager, Pediatrician/Locum - No issues presented. Anticipated start date - December, 2021. Privileges approved for 90 days.
- 6) Dr. Wen-Yu “Vicky” Haines, Surgery – No issues presented. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved up to October 31, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.

- 7) Brynna Lynch, Certified Nurse Midwife – No issues presented. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved up to May 26, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 8) Camille Paul, Physician Assistant/FCC – No issues presented. Provider will be evaluated after 90 days. Privileges approved up to October 31, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.

Renewal Applicants:

- 9) Dr. Mark Wallace, Otolaryngology – No issues presented. Privileges approved up to December 31, 2022, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 10) Dr. Thomas Austin, Orthopedic Surgery – No issues presented. Privileges approved up to March 30, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 11) Dr. Glenda George, Clinical Psychology – No issues presented. Privileges approved up to September 30, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 12) Dr. Martin Rohringer, Emergency Medicine – No issues presented. Privileges approved up to August 31, 2023, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 13) Roca Sablan, Certified Nurse Midwife – No issues presented. Privileges approved up to March 3, 2022, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.
- 14) Dr. John Tudela, Internal Medicine – No issues presented. Privileges approved up to November 30, 2022, at which time the License from the Health Professions Licensing Board will expire.

*Will work on having the start/expiration date and date of license issued coincide, or through the license expiration date.

VII. Reports

A. Management & Operation

Expansion of Operations: Medical Referral – Working with off island Providers to improve patient outcome after returning from off island referral. Met with Aetna to see what other services they have to offer – at this time being utilized as claims processing. Spoke about Clinical Integrated Network – having a case manager follow through for patients being referred; case management is provided; cost is incorporated. Will have a follow up meeting. Cardiology Specialty – Privileges for Cardiologist approved by the Board. MRI Funding - \$10M from ARPA budgeted. Hopefully reduce medical referral cost for MRI. FQHC Lookalike – application will be considered with competition; will be given the same review as KHCC. Employee Wellness – cancer screening for employees ongoing.

Workforce: Retention – addressing harassment and bullying. Average turnover rate is 11.6% between 2017 and 2021. Competing with others to retain staff – reviewing and updating salaries. Youth Intern Program – hired youth interns; some are seeing the hospital and how it operates for the first time.

Increase in new hires under federal grants. The Epidemiology Laboratory Capacity (ELC) grant is being utilized to fund a lot of the different sections – Contact Tracing, Mental Health Crisis and others. A lot going on – refresher training for supervisors and managers. Safety courses for staff. The LPNs that were brought back were shifted to the operating room to help out.

Building Infrastructure – office space needed. A lot of the grants being received include office rental.

Looking at the MCATS location for more permanent structure on this site; multi-level parking is being planned. Looking for funding through the USDA – it requires some matching fund – will request from the Governor to match. Build Back Better Act – infrastructure money for hospitals, but because of the BYRD Act it is not specifically for hospitals. Will continue lobbying with the Governor before the Act is approved. MSO in Lower Base to be moved to Navy Hill area – during typhoons assets get damaged.

Department Highlights: Nursing – a lot of resignations and new hires; shortage in Med-Surg; reclassifying positions – differential pay for critical areas. Travel Nurses are at the testing stations – paid by the CNMI Government; requesting for a contract to allow them to work in the hospital as well; 24 hours on call at Kanoa; checks on patients and does wellness checks. Registered Nurses undergoing

training and getting certified; incentive for retention. Medical Staff Providers recruitment is challenging; hard to convince some, but some are successful. RHC physician resigned; have someone currently that is training a PA. Presumptive Eligibility (PE) increase of walk-in patients; busier now. PE will end January 30.

Tinian Health Center (THC): Telepharmacy now fully operational; equipment upgrades done; with the fiber optic connection, communication with the computers work well. THC helps RHC when they have nursing staff shortage.

Rota Health Center (RHC): Biofire received, which detects all kinds of respiratory illness; other equipment received are refrigerators, and freezers for the Laboratory, Nurses station and Immunization Clinic; paid by ELC and Immunization Program.

Revenue Cycle: Hired additional staffing for billing so that billings are up to date. Hired for Patient Access and Patient Registration; upped their duties and responsibilities. Added a Registrar at the Physical Therapy Department. Gaia – software that processes claims at the dialysis section. They handle claims and reconciliation that increases revenue collection for dialysis. Billings and Collections for Tinian and Rota will be centralized and handled by the staff in Saipan.

Health Information Technology: THC and RHC network upgrade completed. Have direct connection to CHCC with the underwater fiber optic connection, and full server backup facility in case of a disaster to protect data.

Lab Network Expansion: allow analyzer and interfacing versus manual interfacing. EHR Implementation – bar code administration to reduce errors will be implanted. Will have available Application Interface for Dialysis and Oncology soon. CHCC Domain – it is HIPPA compliant and encryption enabled for secured communication.

Community Guidance Center: some services offered under this section are Systems of Cares; Health Transition; Treatment and Recovery; Wellness Clinic; Suicide Prevention; COVID19 Programs- they provide wellness checks on patients that are in quarantine and isolation. Seeing a good number of clients using CGC services. Age group 10 to 14 years - a lot are seeking care. Opioid Initiative – memorandum of agreement has been signed.

B. Financial Statement: Update is based on the full fiscal year for last year. Budget was underspent – budgeted \$63M in revenues; projecting to spend \$96M – asked central government to fund the difference- only received \$67K. Revenue for last year was \$86M – Medicaid match was at a higher rate. Presumptive Eligibility (PE) was also included. Gaia – Hemo Dialysis revenue collection is faster. \$86M in Revenue – spent \$88M. Deficit \$2.1M. Should the project Worksheet 21 FEMA for COVID activities been timely received, there would be no deficit. Still pending receipt of \$2.2M from FEMA. Deficit will be funded – project Worksheet approved by FEMA - \$500 not approved. Saipan operations is subsidizing unfunded mandates. Payments decreased – uninsured became eligible for PE. Medicaid increased due to excellent cost reporting. Slight increase from third party payers – Aetna - \$11.2M, as well as collection on hemo dialysis bills (Gaia). Slight decrease on other payers due to PE - \$6M. Over \$14M increase from insurance. Grants Management Office makes sure that the 10% indirect cost is collected on federally funded activities - \$1.1M. FEMA reimbursement of \$3.4M – approval of worksheet 21 was late. Provider Relief Funding - \$1.8M. Transfers received from the CNMI for CUC - \$1.9M. Other revenues \$1.7M.

Grants Management Update: COVID activities: \$9.2M spent – funded by HRSA funding, FEMA reimbursement already approved, and pending reimbursement by FEMA - \$25K pending request for reimbursement.

Federal Funding – 2019 prior to COVID19 \$24M in federal funds received; 2020 received \$37M; 2021 received \$56M - for program specific activities with performance measures to be met.

CDC ELC Program – received \$13M in grants. Breakdown of related COVID funding: COVAX Operations - \$5.5M; Behavioral Health COVID/Disaster Programs - \$4.7M; Drive Thru Pharmacy Project - \$1.7M; Laboratory Expansion Project - \$581K; HRSA Student Loan Repayment Program - \$500K.

Revenue/Collection Update: 2019 a total of \$56M was billed – excluding Medicaid and Medicare; 2020 \$47M; and 2021 \$27M significant decrease from prior years due to PE. Collection increased from private insurance from 43% to 52%.

- C. COVID-19 Update: Vaccination operation is ongoing for children ages 5 to 11 years old; seeing about 100 children getting vaccinated a day. Adults getting vaccination 300 to 400 a day. With all the ongoing activities workforce is stretched out – testing falling behind schedule with an increase in testing for inbound travelers, tourist bubble, school and community base testing, close contact testing and diagnostic testing. A lot of effort in detecting, quarantine, and contact tracing. Epidemiologist will present to the school board for schools to open. Aligned with CDC guidelines and new protocols for international travelers. CDC funding possibly available for the next year and a half.
 - D. Medicaid Issues: FMAP rate at 83% up to 12/3/21. Haven't been paid for October and November. Build Back Better Act has not been passed. This bill provides a permanent fix to the Medicaid allotment to the territories and medical assistance percentage.
 - E. CUC Update: CHCC continues to make payment, with the central government paying the agreed amount. SB22-62 - Senator Hofschneider's bill to change the power, water and waste water rate to commercial rate is still pending. Once this bill is passed CHCC will be able to pay bills without default.
 - F. CMS & ECRI Dashboard Update: annual review is still being conducted. CHCC staff doing a great job in ensuring that everything remains in compliance with the conditions of participation. Having issues with not enough Respiratory Technicians (RT). Reassessing and reevaluating salaries. CFO working with HR to come up with acceptable salary – cannot match US rate. Dietary – some disciplinary action taken against some of the staff. Issues due to lack of training. Dietary Director has improved the staff with corrections on the spot. Communications – getting more interest in our media coverage.
 - G. QAPI Report: Nursing issues – HR Philippines hire are challenging. Pain management documentation is low – staffing need continuous support. Compliance rate for Providers on antibiotic orders is low. Preoperative, antimicrobial prophylaxis is low – due to nursing issues, which the differential rate can help resolve; some surgeries do not need the order. It will be corrected. Maintenance – working on temp hire; facilities engineer to reassess infrastructure and make recommendation. Antibiotic stewardship – Chief Pharmacist will work with Providers to improve the number. Reporting has improved with document sharing with Office 365.
 - H. ESRD Update: Continues to do vaccination, as well as testing. COVID19 restrictions still in place – caregivers must remain outside. Network 17's initiative participation – function like CMS. Doing training on the OR system. Biomed Department is fully staffed to support the dialysis operations; annual fire and evacuation drill completed. The CAHPS results received; implemented plan of corrections to increase patient satisfaction score. New contract for ER dialysis awarded. New dialysis machines are expected in the 1st quarter of 2022. Awarded contract for peritoneal dialysis supplies and PD cyclers. NP Licensure for this unit was resolved.
- VIII. Old Business
- A. Update on Strategic Planning: new and updated version of the mission, vision statement and value statement approved by a majority vote from the Trustees.
- IX. New Business
- A. Election of Officers: Trustee Corinne Santos nominated Vice Chair, Edward Deleon Guerrero for the position of Chairman, and Trustee Polly Masga for the position of Vice Chair. Both nominations were seconded. The Trustees by a majority vote approved, Edward Deleon Guerrero, Chairman and Polly Masga, Vice Chair.
 - B. CEO Evaluation: A motion was made to reschedule the CEO's Evaluation for another day. Motion was seconded. CEO's Evaluation to be rescheduled is approved.
- X. Executive Session: None
- XI. Announcement: None
- XII. Adjournment: 7:43 pm