RSA 126-A:13
Health and Human Services Oversight Committee
April 19, 2019
LOB 205

Present: Representatives Weber, Campion, MacKay, McMahon,
Absent: Representative Nordgren; Senators Fuller-Clark, Rosenwald and Bradley

1. Call to Order/Approval of Minutes

Rep. Weber called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM.

The minutes of the March 22, 2019 meeting were reviewed and approved.

2. Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Annual Report; *Michelle Ricco Jonas; PDMP Program Manager & Mark Cioffi, Program Data Analyst*

Ms. Jonas reviewed the annual report for the committee, and Mr. Cioffi reviewed the data tables and charts. Registration numbers have increased by 24%. Inquiries are up by 154% due to legislative mandate to query the system.

Rep. Campion asked for an explanation of the "delegate" user role. Ms. Jonas explained that there were licensed delegates, such as RNs and pharmacy techs and unlicensed delegates, such as administrative staff. Rep. Weber asked why delegates were aggregated together into a category, since both prescribers and pharmacists could have delegates. Ms. Jonas explained that in practice almost all delegates are for prescribers.

Rep. McMahon asked if there was currently 100% participation with the program. Ms. Jonas explained that they are currently in the process of conducting an audit to get that information. One of the problems with their current EMLO software is that it doesn't match DEA license numbers with NH license numbers. They are working on comparing and reconciling the lists. Rep. McMahon asked if there was any double counting in situations where a prescriber and delegate call on the same patient, and Ms. Jonas said that could potentially occur.

Rep. McMahon asked if there was anything that could be done legislatively to assist the program meet its goals. Ms. Jonas answered that they are working on electronic health record integration so that checking the PDMP can be better integrated into workflows. There will be a study over the summer, and they are hoping to hire a staff person who can coordinate statewide.

Rep. McMahon asked why there had been a reduction in prescriptions over the past two years? Ms. Jonas answered that new rules went into effect in January of 2017, and there have been other concurrent efforts to curb over-prescribing. However, the information presented is only partial, and until it is combined with other state level data no confident conclusions can be made. Rep. Weber commented that even though the number of prescriptions is decreasing, the length of the average prescription is increasing. Ms. Jonas replied that that could be due to a shift in prescription patterns around a higher average patient age, and a different set of medical conditions – but that it was uncertain, and this is why other data sets need to be linked before drawing conclusions.

Rep. Weber asked if the number of prescriptions per county correlated with the number of providers available? Mr. Cioffi said he didn't know. Ms. Jonas said that some patients may go out of county for prescriptions.

Rep. Weber observed that 84.5% of the population receiving a prescription had a prior prescription within the past 90 days. Rep. McMahon asked what that might mean? Ms. Jonas said it indicated that most prescriptions were for the management of chronic pain, rather than for short term acute pain management.

Rep. Weber asked what happens if a patient exceeds ten prescriptions from ten providers? Ms. Jonas answered that it depended on the circumstances. A new State threshold of three by three had been set to trigger a medical alert. Current state law defines doctor shopping as two by two, and law enforcement had raised concerns that that is potentially too low a bar. The statute might need to be adjusted.

Rep. Campion asked if Dartmouth or UNH could perhaps get engaged to amplify the value of the data by engaging in targeted research? Ms. Jonas replied that many State agencies struggle with sharing identified data in order to get public health analysis, and they needed help with that. Rep. McMahon asked if that meant legislation or rulemaking. Ms. Jonas explained that there was a legislative component that addressed it in SB 120 initially, but it made the bill too complicated. That piece will be brought separately as a bill next year.

[Rep. MacKay left the meeting]

3. Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) Report; *Chris Santaniello, Director of the Division of Economic and Housing Stability and Lynn Wilder from the Division of Family Assistance*

Ms. Santaniello reviewed the 2018 TANF report with the committee. Due to an increase in funding in 2017 eligibility has shifted from 39% to 60% of the poverty line. With more working families connected to the program as a result, an economic analysis is underway of how to structure the program so that recipients don't reach a benefit cliff, where working more or being paid a little more result in a disadvantage due to the withdrawal of benefits. Ms. Wilder explained that expanding eligibility has had a secondary benefit in that the screening process identifies people with problems involving domestic violence, substance abuse, PTSD and mental health, and they are then connected to community services.

Rep. Campion asked if the program had any legislative needs. Ms. Santaniello replied that following the benefit cliff analysis there would likely be actionable recommendations.

4. DD and ABD Waitlist Quarterly Report; *Chris Santaniello, Director of the Division of Economic and Housing Stability and Deb Scheetz, Director of the Division of Long Term Supports and Services*

Ms. Scheetz informed the committee that there were zero individuals on the waitlist and reviewed past waitlist numbers.

Ms. Santaniello explained that changes last year allowing for more flexible carry forward and allocation of funds had been very beneficial. Previously there were two buckets of money, for waiting and maintenance. Now, there is one fund. Previously funds were allocated to each area agency, now they are allocated by the Department.

5. Continued from March Meeting – PTSD and TBI Annual Report; *Commandant Margaret Labrecque, NH Veteran's Home and Amy Cook, Bureau of Community Based Military Programs*

Ms. Cook explained to the committee the role of the Bureau of Community Based Military Programs. Priority areas are better state coordination of services and information, creating a resource center to provide centralized access for veterans, service members and their families, and access to mental health services. She explained to the committee the VA/SAMHSA Governor's challenge for the prevention of suicide among service members, veterans and their families. There will be an implementation academy in Washington D.C. in May.

Rep. Weber expressed continued concern that the information provided through The Doorway was not convenient and useful as yet, and suggested that perhaps asking about veteran status should be added as standard procedure for operators.

Commandant LaBrecque informed the committee that the commission's second survey was almost finalized and would be going out shortly. She will share it and its results with the committee.

5. Commissioner's Update; *Commissioner Meyers and Assistant Commissioner Pristow*

Mr. Williams explained that Commissioner Meyers was under the weather and couldn't attend. Assistant Commissioner Pristow believed Commissioner Meyers would be attending, so he did not attend. One of them will be at the May meeting to speak to the committee about the implementation of MCM and the hub and spoke treatment model.

6. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 11:23 AM. The next meeting will be held on May 17th at 10 AM.

Respectfully submitted,

Rep. Polly Campion,
Grafton District 12

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