



# CDC Report

Board Meeting ~ Oakland

January 2007

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## • LEGISLATIVE REPORT

Michael Arnold delivered the legislative report. All newly elected Legislators have now been sworn into office. The Governor's proposed budget will require approximately \$140 billion for the fiscal year. The Governor has developed a Health Reform package to help cover the six million Californians who are uninsured. The amount estimated to be necessary for this coverage will be \$10-12 billion annually. The Governor's plan calls for shared responsibility that will include, but not be limited to the following:

- Mandate for individual insurance
- Employers (more than 10 employees) will be required to either provide healthcare coverage or pay up to 4% of payroll to the State
- HMOs and insurers will be required to guarantee coverage and renewal and will be required to cap administrative costs at 15%
- Hospitals will be required to pay 4% of revenue to the State and physicians, 2% of revenue as a "fee."

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## Quick Links...

- [Our Website](#)
- [Meeting Information](#)

Michael Arnold stated that this will be difficult to pull together. There are ten bills currently on the CDC "radar" a copy of the CDC Legislative Status Report can be found on our website at: [http://www.caldialysis.org/status\\_report.htm](http://www.caldialysis.org/status_report.htm) All bills CDC is watching are health reform or healthcare coverage

related. The deadline for introduction of new legislation is February 1, 2007, and new bills must be in by January 26. Michael stated that there are many new Legislators and facilities should invite them for visits.

## • REGULATORY REPORT

The *Department of Public Health* (formerly the Department of Health Services) has been responsive to our complaints regarding lengthy wait times for license and certification visits. We supported them in their request for additional staff and they committed to improved timeliness. Los Angeles County remains the worst area. Ann Robar stated that the DPH visits have been timely for WellBound, but there is a hang-up in processing the paperwork between the State and CMS which has required regular follow-up. In conversation with Scott Vivona of the State Department of Public Health, Michael Arnold was able to obtain the following information.

1. The Department has negotiated with CMS to bring ESRD training to California. The training is set for February 2007 and will add to the Department's ability to re-certify facilities as well as perform initial licensure surveys.
2. California will be a pilot state for the STAR certification survey. This survey will use a computer tablet that guides the surveyor through the ESRD certification process. This should improve consistency in surveys. San Diego will be the pilot area.
3. Since September 2006, Licensing and Certification has conducted 9 initial licensing and 10 initial certification surveys. There are currently 12 license and 14 certification surveys to perform but the majority of these still have missing paperwork.

Michael stated that the Governor has decided that departments of government including Licensing and Certification should be self-supporting and should not require monies from the general fund. Therefore, there has been a "right-sizing" of license fees. A detailed analysis will be published on February 1, 2007. The fee for dialysis facilities was previously 0.003X operating costs for the previous year or about \$1500 for most facilities. CDC requested this amount. The new recommended fee structure is proposed at \$2434.85 Michael reminded those attending that the annual license fee for dialysis clinics in 1985 was \$2000 We will evaluate the fee structure when it is released in February and Michael will send it out to Board members in advance of the February meeting.

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*Technician Training.* Sheryl Paukert stated that she and Dr. Paukert had concerns regarding people applying for employment with them who, having been trained in a

specific program, had no hands-on patient experience. Lino Alphonso, owner of the Hemodialysis Training School, stated that the technicians trained at their school use artificial arms for cannulation and role-play emergency situations. The program has been approved by the State as a Patient Care Technician training program. They have had 110 graduates to date and 80% are employed. He stated that a facility in Union City has agreed to allow his students to come in and set up their dialysis machines. He further stated that he feels that he has not had support for his program from members of the CDC. A lengthy discussion ensued involving attendees at the meeting and the general feeling seemed to be that simulating patient situations, whether cannulation, emergencies or complications, cannot replicate real patient care. It was suggested that CDC revisit regulatory language around PCT training. Some people in attendance agreed to speak with Mr. Alphonso regarding potential hands-on training in their facilities.

## • **NRAA REPORT**

Mike Paget reported for Cindy LaMunyon and stated that NRAA has a new information resource available in the form of InfoSource Webcasts. These are currently available to anyone, not just NRAA members. The current webcast is on the topic of Medicare Dialysis Reimbursement. The NRAA calculator has been up-dated for the 2007 composite rate increase. MedPAC has recommended a 1.2% increase in the composite rate for 2008.

Mike reminded attendees that the NRAA Annual Spring Meeting is going to be held in Washington, D.C. May 15-16, 2007. The "Day on the Hill" is scheduled for the afternoon of the 15th. The program content is not yet set.

NRAA has a new "Job Board" which is a career link through the internet. It is a service similar to Monster.com. Currently, there is a 20% discount for those using the service in addition to a discount for NRAA members. A large volume discount is also available. The service is free to the jobseeker and the employer pays the fee. The service went live on September 1, 2006 and the fee is \$199 per position per month. It is located on the [www.nraa.org](http://www.nraa.org) website under "NRAA Career" link.

## • **KIDNEY CARE PARTNERS REPORT**

Sue Vogel reported that KCP has a robust agenda for the year. The priorities were defined on a hand-out distributed to those attending and include, but are not limited to:

- Enact the Kidney Care Quality and Education Act (new name).
- Maintain support for the current EPO monitoring policy.

- Launch Phase II of the Kidney Care Quality Initiative.
- Be involved with the development of the performance measures for the Pay for Performance initiative.

Marc Chow added that there is a new Congress and an excellent opportunity for passage of dialysis legislation. The new draft of the Kidney Care Quality and Education Act contain a number of provisions which include but not limited to:

- Support HHS public and patient education initiatives regarding kidney disease (H.R. 1298 § 301)
- Support Medicare coverage of CKD patient education services for all Stage IV CKD patients (expanded version of H.R. 1298 § 302)
- Institute of Medicine Home Dialysis Study (H.R. 1298 § 402)
- Technician Certification (H.R. 1298 § 103)
- Establish a 3-year demonstration quality performance incentive payment program that begins on 01/01/2008.
- Establishing an annual increase in the composite rate for dialysis facilities for 2008, 2009, and 2010, equal to the CMS ESRD market-basket amount for those years.

He further stated that there have to be financial off- sets for any new law, so called "payfors".

## • NETWORK REPORT

Darlene Rogers, the Executive Director for the new Western Pacific Renal Network, LLC, delivered the report. She stated that ESRD Network #15 was awarded the contract for operating Network #17 and the new Network is up and running. Vernon Silva, LCSW, has been hired as the Director of Patient Services, and Allsion Kregness has stayed on as the Director of Operations. The Network is looking for two nephrology nurses to train for CQI. The first MRB meeting was held last fall and the Network is looking for new members, especially patients. The first event for the new Network is the education meeting that will follow this meeting from noon to 4 pm on the topic of Conflict in the Dialysis Facility. Network #17 is partnering with U.C. Davis on St. Patrick's Day to hold a Cannulation Conference in support of the Fistula First initiative. CEUs will be offered for the event. For more information contact the Network at: (415) 897-2400.

## • MEDICARE / MED-CAL REPORT

The EPO code for dates of service effective January 2007 is Q4081 and the minimum billable increment is now

100u. There is a Medicare edit for facility Zip Code in the electronic files effective January 1, 2007. Any claims that were sitting in RTP status (unpaid and pending for additional information) prior to January 1, will RTP for the Zip Code. To resolve the issue, enter the facility Zip Code in the DDE and F9 the claim. The Wage Area Index (WAI) for the composite rate increased to 50/50% effective January 1, 2007. There will be a 1.6% increase in the composite rate effective April 1, 2007.

*Medi-Cal* - No up-date.

- **PROGRAM REPORT**

The Program Committee has almost finalized the 2007 CDC Annual Meeting program which will be held at the Hotel Zoso (the old Marquis Hotel) in Palm Springs April 26-28.

- **OTHER BUSINESS**

**2007 Meeting Dates**

February 16, 2007 ~ Los Angeles

March 27, 2007 (Tue) ~ Sacramento- Legislative Day (No Board Meeting)

April 26-28 ~Palm Springs - Annual Meeting

May 18, 2007 ~ Sacramento

June 15, 2007 ~ Los Angeles

- **NEXT BOARD MEETING**

February 16, 2007 ~ Los Angeles

For more information and a registration form, please visit our web site at: [www.caldialysis.org/next\\_meeting.htm](http://www.caldialysis.org/next_meeting.htm)

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