

Idaho Immunization Assessment Board
Board Meeting Minutes
Friday, March 16, 2012
Department of Insurance

Board Members Present:

- Richard Rainey, M.D. – Regence BlueShield of Idaho – Chair
- Jack Myers – Blue Cross of Idaho – Vice Chair
- Dr. Pat Sellers – AmeriBen/IEC Group
- Tom Donovan, Deputy Director DOI
- Christine Hahn, M.D. – Department of Health & Welfare
- Sen. Melinda Smyser – Idaho Senate
- Pat Armstrong – Idaho Sand and Gravel
- Ted Epperly, M.D. - Family Practice Residency

Board Members Absent:

- Bill Deal, Director, DOI
- Rep. Jeff Thompson

Others Present:

- Sandy Metro – DOI
- Mitch Scoggins - Immunization Program Manager (H&W)
- Tamarie Olson
- Gina McBride, Consumer Services Bureau Chief, DOI

Call to Order: Chairman Rainey called the meeting to order when a quorum was met at 1:10 p.m.

Approval of Minutes from 9/12/11

MOTION: Mr. Myers moved that the minutes of the meeting of 9/12/11 meeting be approved as written. Mr. Armstrong seconded the motion. Motion passed on a voice vote.

Reports – Update of survey & billings

Sandy Metro reported to the Board that most of the companies had returned their 2012 surveys for this year. She noted that Anthem had not yet reported its 2012 survey response. The Simplot Company paid approximately \$200,000 for its 2010-11 and 2011-12 assessments several months ago. Mr. Myers confirmed that Blue Cross of Idaho is including Simplot members in its 2012 survey results. The Chairman noted that it was important that everyone involved in the immunization process be able to keep track of current projected and actual assessment receipts. Dr. Hahn agreed.

Dr. Hahn reported that there were some companies who over-reported their initial 2011 survey responses and then the Department of Insurance approved downward revisions of those initial 2011 survey responses without advising the Board or the Department of Health and Welfare of the downward revisions. This resulted in an unexpected almost \$1 million shortfall that was partially offset by the payment from Simplot referenced earlier. Ms. Metro said that there was only one company that requested a refund, the others asked for reduced assessments based on revised survey responses. The Department procedure was for the company to make a written request for a revised survey response and include copies of pertinent documents

The Chairman noted that a \$1million shortfall was almost 10% of the budget, a significant amount. The Chairman emphasized that this problem must be addressed so that this situation would not arise in the future and asked the Department of Insurance to submit current projected and actual assessment receipts with its regular report at each meeting.

There was considerable discussion among the Board members that the DOI should have advised it of these survey revisions. The Chairman noted that any significant changes in assessment receipts should be brought to the Board's attention, since the impact on the budget could be considerable. The Plan of Operation seems to indicate that the Board must be made aware of any changes in assessments, and must give its approval. Accurate information on any companies requesting a lower assessment may be useful information, and it should be reviewed by the Board. Ms. Metro noted that some of the revisions were made prior to the Board meetings, and waiting for the next Board meeting could cause a delay in responding to a revision request. The Board expressed its willingness to meet more frequently if necessary, including by teleconference.

Ms. McBride noted that the Plan of Operation provides for a six-month period for a company to challenge its assessment.

Mr. Donovan said that it was his opinion that there was no need to change the Plan of Operation. Some sort of communication to the carriers should be considered emphasizing that accurate survey responses are essential to developing an accurate assessment amount. He suggested that any over-payments be adjusted in the following year, rather than simply allowing a lower assessment.

Dr. Hahn suggested sending a letter to all companies indicating the need for submission of accurate information. There should be an earlier deadline in the letter by which companies need to respond of the intent to revise their survey results. The Chairman suggested a deadline of 4/6/12.

It appears that the Plan of Operation needs to be changed to address this issue. There should be a deadline earlier than six months for reporting revised survey results. An additional possible change would be that any refunds due a company would be made by a reduction of the following year's assessment.

Dr. Hahn volunteered to draft revisions to the Plan of Operation to address these issues.

Financial Update from DOI & DHW

Ms. Olson reported to the Board that SChip funds from the previous year had helped to offset the shortfall caused by over-reporting survey results. She said that the Department can also borrow federal funds to help offset the shortfall, but these funds will have to be re-paid. There was some concern that the reported 45.3% (Idaho children receiving the non-VFC state supplied vaccine) may not be an accurate percentage perhaps contributing to the fact that the Department had extra monies on hand. Mr. Donovan reiterated that accurate information on the surveys is imperative and is necessary if the Board is to make budgetary decisions. The Chairman pointed out that budgets are based on survey responses, and the DOI needs to report both projected and actual assessment receipts.

Legislative Update

Mr. Tom Donovan, Deputy Director of the Department of Insurance told the committee that H423, the DOI legislation dealing with health insurance rates, was defeated in committee. The replacement legislation, H652 has no reference to the immunization assessment. H652 will have no impact on the Immunization Board.

A member of the committee inquired about another proposed bill (H599) and its impact on possible Health Insurance Exchange legislation. He noted that H599 does not affect an Insurance Exchange since an Insurance Exchange requires that all companies listed be licensed to do business in Idaho.

Tricare update

In Director Deal's absence, Deputy Director Donovan reported that the Director had not received any response from the Idaho Congressional delegation.

Mitch Scoggins, Department of Health and Welfare, said that he had continued informal communication with other states who also had difficulties with TriCare. He said that Washington and perhaps other states had received payments from TriCare, primarily on a case-by-case basis. There was some sense that these payments might have been accidental, and not Tri-Care policy.

New Business – HPV Vaccine & 2012 assessments

Dr. Hahn presented her figures on the approximate number of males who would be eligible to receive HPV vaccines. Because the HPV recommendation for males has changed from a permissive to a “full” recommendation, it is difficult to make an accurate prediction. Her department used figures from VFC-eligible males who have received the vaccine and also used a rate comparable to females receiving the vaccine. Mr. Scoggins said that a figure of \$562,708 was budgeted for the vaccine. Members of the committee were concerned that the figures used to calculate this amount could prove to be inaccurate.

New Business: Funding Influenza Vaccine

Mr. Scoggins said that his agency expected that all pediatric providers would be supplied with the vaccine. He noted that the flu vaccine is very different from other vaccines. It cannot be held over to another year, it has to be pre-ordered before the flu season, and the actual use of the vaccine can vary wildly depending on many factors. Intense media exposure could create more vaccine utilization. The severity of the flu season varies from year to year. Dr. Epperly pointed out that children are vectors for flu transmission.. If children are adequately immunized against flu, the chances are much better that adults will be protected too.

Members of the committee agreed with Mr. Scoggins calculation of flu vaccine cost.

New Business: March Expiration Of Board Member Terms And Possible Reappointment To Board

The Chairman said that he asked whether Mr. Myers and Mr. Armstrong had interest in being re-appointed to the Board. Mr. Armstrong said that he would be willing to be reappointed until the end of April 2012 to increase the chance that there would be a quorum for the vote on the current year’s assessment, but he did not wish to serve another term. The Director could request that the President Pro Tem reappoint Sen. Smyser for a term to end in November; the Speaker of the House could do the same for Rep. Thompson.

New Business: Sunset Clause

Dr. Hahn suggested that the Board begin to study this question early and ask for input from insurers.

Next meeting

The next meeting will be April 11, 2012 at 1:30 p.m at the DOI, Conf Rm A.

Adjournment

MOTION: Mr. Myers moved that the Board adjourn. Mr. Armstrong seconded. Motion passed on a voice vote.

The meeting adjourned at 4:00 p.m.

Minutes by Teresa Jones

Idaho Department of Insurance

Revised by Chairman, Rich Rainey