



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

HEALTH CARE ACCESS

Legislative Council Conference Room
One East Main Street, Suite 401
Madison, WI

November 22, 2010
10:00 a.m. – 1:40 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the November 22, 2010 meeting of the Special Committee on Health Care Access. The file copy of this summary has appended to it a copy of each document prepared for or submitted to the committee during the meeting. A digital recording of the meeting, PowerPoint presentations, and other documents referred to by the speakers are posted on the committee's Internet site at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/committees/study/2010/ACCESS/index.html>.]

Call to Order and Roll Call

Chair Kessler called the meeting to order. The roll was called and it was determined that a quorum was present.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
PRESENT:

Rep. Fred Kessler, Chair; Sen. Luther Olsen, Vice-Chair; Rep. John Townsend; and Public Members Sandy Anderson, Terry Brandenburg, Bruce Colburn, Curt Gielow, Nathan Luedke, Greg Nycz, Dr. Jeff Patterson, Roberta Riportella, Robert Schmidt, Dr. Sheldon Wasserman, and Dr. Earnestine Willis.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS
EXCUSED:

Rep. Amy Sue Vruwink; and Public Members Mary Lu Gerke and Ted A. Kay.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT:

Richard Sweet, Senior Staff Attorney, and Heidi Frechette, Staff Attorney.

APPEARANCES:

Patricia Schroeder, Dean, School of Nursing, Alverno College.

DISCUSSION OF MEMO NO. 1, *POTENTIAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION IN THE AREAS OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS; PUBLIC HEALTH; LICENSURE, SCOPE OF PRACTICE, AND RELATED ISSUES; AND OTHER HEALTH CARE ACCESS ISSUES.*

Prior to discussion of Memo No. 1, Chair Kessler asked that Patricia Schroeder, Dean of the School of Nursing at Alverno College, address the committee. Dean Schroeder mentioned the Institute of Medicine (IOM) report on nursing, including the projection that there will be one million too few nurses by the year 2020. She noted that half of practicing nurses are currently 50 years of age or older, and that for nurse faculty, the average age is 56 in both the United States and in Wisconsin. She added that people who graduate from schools of nursing often make more initially than the faculty who taught them.

Dean Schroeder mentioned that there are 26 full-time equivalent faculty members and about 40 part-time faculty members at Alverno. She stated that Alverno may be the largest nursing school in Wisconsin, but it is not clear because there is a lack of data on this. At the request of Chair Kessler, the committee received copies of the summary of the IOM report.

Following Dean Schroeder's comments, Chair Kessler noted that he had met with representatives of the Department of Health Services (DHS) on the issue of collecting workforce data. Mr. Sweet described the proposal advanced by DHS, including collecting workforce data on dentists, psychiatrists, and other physicians. This data collection would be in addition to the nurse workforce data mandated by the 2009-11 Biennial Budget Act, 2009 Wisconsin Act 28.

Mr. Gielow suggested that the workforce data proposal include pharmacists, and stated that Wisconsin has an acute shortage of pharmacists. Ms. Anderson suggested that the proposal also include physician assistants (PAs) and dental hygienists.

Nancy McKenney of DHS noted that there is a need to redesignate health professional shortage areas (HPSAs) every four years and the data is needed to do this. She stated that Wisconsin is number 47 among the various states in terms of the amount of federal dollars received related to HPSAs. Ms. Riportella added that DHS staff are needed to assist communities in requesting HPSAs status.

Chair Kessler noted that the current nurse workforce data activity is funded through a \$4.00 license fee on the biennial nurse's license. Mr. Gielow and Dr. Wasserman stated that they object to taxing provider groups for collection of data from those groups.

Ms. McKenney stated that she will share with the committee the most recent nurse workforce data report and noted that the next one is due in February. In addition, the committee requested that DHS provide it with information regarding costs at the local level to apply for HPSA status. In addition, Chair Kessler asked that DHS provide information about what would be a reasonable staff level with regard to data collection and analysis.

Dr. Wasserman suggested that the data collection be done electronically, rather than by paper copies being sent through the mail. Tom Ryan of the Department of Regulation and Licensing (DRL) mentioned that DRL uses an on-line process for license renewal and collects workforce data regarding nurses by an on-line process.

Judy Warmuth from the Wisconsin Hospital Association responded to a question from the committee as to whether data should be collected about a provider's home address, primary work site, or all work sites. She mentioned that for nurses, information is collected about the primary work site and for all other work sites. Mr. Nycz added that the providers covered should include those provider groups that are necessary in order for an area to obtain HPSA designation. After further discussion, the committee, by unanimous consent, asked that staff draft the workforce collection proposal involving physicians, dentists, pharmacists, PAs, and dental hygienists, and other provider groups necessary for HPSA designation; that the information be collected electronically, if possible; that it be collected at time of initial licensure and license renewal; that it be collected by DRL but shared with DHS and the Department of Workforce Development (DWD); that those agencies be involved in designing the survey; and that the process be funded through existing licensure fees.

Following a break, the committee discussed two issues regarding licensure--increasing reciprocal recognition of licenses for health professionals and consolidating all licensure and certification of health professionals into DRL. Mr. Nycz noted that if Marshfield Clinic hires a dentist whose wife is foreign-trained, the wife will not be able to practice in Wisconsin but can practice in Minnesota. Ms. Anderson clarified that on the second recommendation, she was not proposing to eliminate the examining boards and affiliated credentialing boards in DRL, but rather suggested that health care provider licenses issued by DHS could be transferred to DRL. Mr. Sweet clarified that this would involve emergency medical technicians (EMTs), first responders, and certified nurse assistants (CNAs).

Dr. Patterson discussed the potential recommendation on page 2 of the Memo regarding encouraging the federal government to lift the freeze on the number of Medicare-supported residency programs. He mentioned that both the Wisconsin Academy of Rural Medicine (WARM) and the Training in Urban Medicine in Public Health (TRIUMPH) programs resulted in more physicians at the University of Wisconsin (UW) going into primary care. He added that if the committee decides to recommend a lift in the freeze of residencies, it should be specific to primary care. He stated that otherwise, the lift may just result in more specialty residencies.

Chair Kessler and Senator Olsen asked that staff draft a letter to be signed by members of the committee to Wisconsin's congressional delegation and the federal Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS).

In response to a question from Chair Kessler as to the feasibility of increasing both the WARM and TRIUMPH programs by 10 slots, Mr. Gielow stated that the testimony at an earlier meeting of the committee indicated that there would be trouble filling additional slots. Chair Kessler asked that this issue be held until the next meeting of the committee.

The committee next discussed the potential recommendation on page 5 of the Memo to allow pharmacists to give vaccines to persons under 18 years of age. Senator Olsen pointed out that dentists are allowed to give shots in the mouth, but are not allowed to give a flu shot. Dr. Patterson noted that if pharmacists and dentists give flu shots, there is a need to integrate this information into patients' medical records.

After further discussion, Chair Kessler asked that staff prepare a draft to retain the current statutes to allow pharmacists to give vaccines to persons 18 years or older, to add that pharmacists may give flu shots to persons age 12 and over, and to provide that dentists be given the same authority as

pharmacists with regard to vaccines. In response to a question from staff, the committee clarified that the Dentistry Examining Board would approve any necessary training in order for dentists to have this authority.

The committee next discussed the recommendation on page 5 of the Memo to allow physicians to supervise more than two PAs. Current administrative rules allow physicians to supervise only two PAs. Tom Ryan of DRL indicated that the Medical Examining Board (MEB) is looking at a rule change to allow physician supervision of more PAs than is allowed under current rule. He indicated that he could provide the committee information about the potential rule change at its next meeting.

The committee next discussed the proposal to establish a school for doctors of osteopathy (DOs). Mr. Nycz questioned whether there would be sufficient residencies for additional students, since it is already difficult to place medical students in residencies in Wisconsin. Representative Townsend stated that there appeared to be a lack of teachers and physical capacity for such a program. Chair Kessler indicated that if the state assists such a program with bonding, we need to make sure that there are conditions attached, such as serving rural areas and inner cities in Wisconsin.

Plans for Future Meetings

The committee will hold its next meeting on *Friday, January 7, 2011, at 10:00 a.m., in the Legislative Council Large Conference Room, One East Main Street, Suite 401, Madison.*

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 1:40 p.m.

RNS:jb;ksm