



WISCONSIN LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL

HEALTH CARE ACCESS

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

August 24, 2010
10:00 a.m. – 3:25 p.m.

[The following is a summary of the August 24, 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 is available on our Web site at <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc>.]

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; Reps. John Townsend and Amy Sue Vruwink; and Public Members Sandy Anderson, Terry Brandenburg, Mary Lu Gerke, Curt Gielow, Ted A. Kay, Nathan Luedke, Greg Nycz, Roberta Riportella, Robert Schmidt, Sheldon Wasserman, and Earnestine Willis.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS EXCUSED: Public Members Bruce Colburn and Jeff Patterson.

COUNCIL STAFF PRESENT: Richard Sweet, Senior Staff Attorney and Heidi Frechette, Staff Attorney.

APPEARANCES: Sen. Fred A. Risser and Rep. Marlin D. Schneider, Co-Chairs, Joint Legislative Council; Terry C. Anderson, Director, Wisconsin Legislative Council; Richard Cooper, MD, Professor of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania; Jenni Sevenich, CEO, Westside Healthcare Association, Inc.; Tim Size, Executive Director, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative; Carl Getto, MD, Associate Dean for Hospital Affairs, University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health; Kenneth Simons, MD, Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Accreditation, Medical College of Wisconsin; and Marilyn Kaufman, PhD, RN, Nursing Program Chair, Lakeshore Technical College.

Opening Remarks

Senator Fred A. Risser and Representative Marlin D. Schneider, Co-Chairs, Joint Legislative Council, welcomed members to the Special Committee. The Co-Chairs cited the number of requests for creation of special committees and the number of individuals who had been nominated to serve, and thanked the Special Committee on Health Care Access members for agreeing to serve.

Mr. Terry C. Anderson, Director, Wisconsin Legislative Council, discussed administrative procedures related to committee membership.

Representative Fred Kessler, Chair of the Special Committee on Health Care Access, welcomed all the members. He shared his vision of the committee developing a 20-year plan to ensure that there are sufficient health care professionals and facilities in the state to meet the needs of Wisconsin citizens. Senator Luther Olsen, Vice-Chair of the committee, welcomed all in attendance and thanked the members of the committee for agreeing to work on this important issue.

Introduction of Committee Members

At the Chair's request, each committee member introduced themselves, described their interests in serving on the committee, and their experience working on the issues of health care and access.

Presentations by Invited Speakers

[Note: PowerPoint presentations and other documents referred to by the speakers are posted on the committee's Internet site.]

Richard Cooper, MD, Professor of Medicine, University of Pennsylvania

In his presentation Dr. Cooper made the following points:

- The solution to health care access issues a decade ago was expanding access to medical education.
- Today the problem is different because we are no longer just talking about future shortages but are experiencing shortages predicted 10 years ago.
- What is different from a decade ago is that academics and political bodies now acknowledge the shortage but are not willing to acknowledge the severity of the shortage.
- There is a shortage of specialists and primary care doctors so this has caused a change in practice and an increase of physician assistants, nurse practitioners, and other health professionals.
- Today's approach must address existing shortages and future shortages.
- A two-prong approach should be taken: (1) restructure clinical practices so they are more efficient and as inclusive of as many providers as possible; and (2) expand training programs to produce more physicians and health care professionals.

- There will be a continual transfer of responsibilities with the expansion of care, technology, and abilities so we need to anticipate additional/different tasks physicians will have in the future.
- Lack of medical schools in the United States has resulted in doctors being trained at medical schools in the Caribbean.
- One-third of medical students trained in the state remain and 2/3rds of residents trained in the state remain.
- The cost of health care is directly related to the high costs associated with poverty in the United States which has high income inequality. Health care can address some issues of poverty but not all.
- We need to look at expanding residencies which are largely funded by Medicare and create more that specifically address urban/rural issues.
- Expansion of medical education should be high priority. Michigan, Texas, Pennsylvania, and Arizona have all expanded medical education.
- We need to increase, by at least 5%, the training of PhD-trained nurses to keep up with the shortage.
- Federal regulations create inefficiency and will increase with new federal health reform legislation.
- Mental health is a huge issue because 1/3 to 1/2 of readmitted patients have a secondary mental health diagnosis.

Handouts from Dr. Cooper can be accessed at:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/committees/study/2010/ACCESS/index.html>.

Jenni Sevenich, CEO, Westside Healthcare Association, Inc.

Ms. Sevenich presented material which can be found at:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/committees/study/2010/ACCESS/index.html>.

In her presentation, Ms. Sevenich emphasized the following:

- Her clinic serves 7,000 of the 70,000 individuals who need health care in the area.
- There are enough doctors in the area but they are not evenly distributed throughout the City of Milwaukee.
- There is a need for additional minority health care providers to overcome barriers created by cultural differences and fear.

Tim Size, Executive Director, Rural Wisconsin Health Cooperative

Mr. Size presented material which can be found at:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/committees/study/2010/ACCESS/index.html>.

In his presentation, Mr. Size stressed the following:

- There are fewer health care providers and more patients and this disparity will only grow over time.
- There is a need for a more even distribution of physicians throughout the state.
- The Wisconsin Academy for Rural Medicine (WARM) program is a success story and we need more programs like it.

Carl Getto, MD, Associate Dean for Hospital Affairs, University of Wisconsin (UW) School of Medicine and Public Health

In his presentation, Dr. Getto:

- Provided a summary of the report, “Who Will Care for Our Patients? 2008 Update: Taking Action to Fight a Growing Physician Shortage in Wisconsin,” which may be found at: <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/committees/study/2010/ACCESS/index.html>.
- Stated that misdistribution of physicians in Wisconsin is most acute in primary care and that the supply of physicians will not keep up with demand.
- Stated that average debt of a graduating medical student is \$144,000.
- Encouraged the state to maintain a favorable malpractice climate.
- Recommended that the committee look at ways to increase residency opportunities in the state.
- Suggested that the committee look at ways to expand the WARM program which places residents in rural health care settings.
- Stated that the UW School of Medicine and Public Health did not have room to expand because it was at capacity and this should be looked at along with the possibility of opening a third medical school in the state.

Kenneth Simons, MD, Associate Dean for Graduate Medical Education and Accreditation, Medical College of Wisconsin

Dr. Simons covered points in a handout which can be found at:

<http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/committees/study/2010/ACCESS/index.html>.

Dr. Simons made the following points:

- The cut in capitation payments in 2003 has led to a decline in Wisconsin students attending the Medical College of Wisconsin.
- The Medical College of Wisconsin is the third largest private medical school in the United States and is at capacity.
- Medicare pays for residencies but does not provide enough funding to cover the need. Wisconsin should consider an insurance tax like New York has to fund residencies.

Marilyn Kaufman, PhD, RN, Nursing Program Chair, Lakeshore Technical College

Dr. Kaufman presented the committee with written recommendations regarding the nursing shortage in the state and made the following points:

- There is a considerable shortage of PhD-level nurses and a borderline shortage at the Master's level.
- Nurses tend to seek a new degree a decade after receiving their previous degree, so we need to look at ways to fast-track education.
- They are currently utilizing adjunct faculty to meet the shortage of educators.
- We need a market-based approach for faculty salaries to retain nurse educators.

Other Business

Chair Kessler discussed the possibility of reviewing statutory language to see what would need to be addressed if the committee wanted to address the creation of a third medical school in the state. He suggested the committee consider creating a structure to address the problem of health care access that will last for many years and remain flexible to accommodate change.

Melinda Herrera, a summer intern with Representative John Townsend, presented the committee with statistical research she did on health care in the state.

Plans for Future Meetings

The committee will hold its next meeting on **October 1, 2010**, at a location in **central Wisconsin**. A subsequent meeting will be on **October 22, 2010**, in **Milwaukee**.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 3:25 p.m.

HJF;jb;wu