

## **CRT & Wheelchair Repair Advisory Council**

### **MEETING MINUTES**

Tuesday, October 22, 2024

11:00 AM in Room 1B of the LOB and Zoom and YouTube Live

#### **I. Convene Meeting**

The meeting was called to order at 11:11AM by Co-Chairman, Jonathan Slifka.

#### **II. Roll Call:**

Members: Co-Chair Jonathan Slifka, Co-Chair, Maureen Amirault, Michelle Johnson, Sheldon Toubman, David Morgana, Diane Racicot, Farrah Garland, Darrell Ruopp, Joseph Shortt, Ginny Mahoney, Adam Prizio, Shirley Skyers-Thomas, Jim Carson

Absent: None

Guests: Gary Gilberti, NuMotion

#### **III. Comments from Co-Chairs**

The yearly report is due no later than January 1, 2025. The advisory council has only met a couple of times, because of this, the report will be brief.

LCO responded to questions asked by a Ranking Member of the Human Services Committee:

1. Confirm when the 10-day clock begins, the advisory council believes that the after prior authorization and when all parts are received. LCO confirmed the council's understanding that the clock begins after prior authorization and parts are delivered.
2. Are scooters included under the bill? LCO answered that only wheelchairs are included in the bill.
3. Year-end reporting, is it correct that reporting is only for Medicaid recipients only? LCO answered that yes reporting is only for Medicaid recipients.

Mr. Toubman stated that just because the statute requires only Medicaid numbers to be reported does not mean that the Council can't ask the industry to report on all repair numbers. Mr. Toubman found that the other statements of interpretation from the LCO were indefensible, stating that the LCO report contradicts the interpretation from OLR.

Chair Slifka stated that Rep. Gilcrest has offered to set up a meeting with LCO and certain legislators to discuss discrepancies with the bill at a future advisory council meeting. Mr. Toubman stated that he wanted OLR to be at that meeting.

#### **IV. Approval of Meeting Minutes – September 25<sup>th</sup>**

Mr. Slifka asked for a motion to approve the September 25<sup>th</sup> meeting minutes as presented. Motion was made by Mr. Prizio and was seconded by Ms. Mahoney. The Motion passed with 13 yeas, 0 nays, 0 abstaining.

#### **V. Data Presentation and Discussion**

##### Office of Healthcare Advocate

Mr. Prizio reported that there were no complaint cases for the month. He stated that a reason why OHA doesn't have any new complaints is because people are still not aware of the law.

##### Industry Report

NSM: Ms. Racicot presented NSM's report for October. She clarified that the reporting being presented is for all insurance recipients and the previous interpretation of the ten-day repair window. Ms. Racicot pointed out that the last spreadsheet in her report contains info for all DME, not specifically equipment covered by the law. Additionally, when it comes to nursing facilities, they have to work around the nursing facility schedule and sometimes are only able to visit once day a week or even month.

Total orders: 438; orders that missed one component of the timeline: 122; added more employees in response to the bill being implemented.

NuMotion: Mr. Gilberti presented NuMotion's report for October. Using raw data, in Q3 of 2023, the time to complete an order from when a phone call is made was 60 days. Since then, they've reduced that number by 27 days in Q3 of 2024. If you remove prior authorization and order time, that number goes down from 40 days to 20 days since Q3 of 2023. There's been an uptick in orders, but they have been maintaining a 3-day from the receipt of call to the actual evaluation. Supply chains have also improved since COVID-19 and the median receipt of delivery has been within compliance of the bill.

During discussion, Ms. Johnson wrote in the chat that with the LCO interpretation of the bill, it seems that people who use scooters are being punished.

Discussion continued with staff numbers; Mr. Toubman asked the industry representatives to add staffing numbers to their monthly report.

## **VI. Discussion on Compliance in the Field**

Mr. Toubman inquired about the industry's willingness to inform its customers about the bill. Mr. Slifka reminded Mr. Toubman that the bill does not require the industry representatives to educate their clients on the bill. Mr. Toubman stated that although this is true, it is appropriate as part of the council's monitoring function to ask for this and to note if the industry is refusing a request from the council. Mr. Slifka stated that this was not required as part of the legislation. Ms. Racicot responded that she was offended by the view that the industry is being uncooperative. The industry is working to hit the timelines laid out in the bill. Mr. Toubman then asked DSS if they would send out notification about the new law. Ginny Mahoney said she would check and report back. Mr. Prizio stated that if DSS will send out a notice, OHA will coordinate with them.

Mr. Morgana asked a few questions to Mr. Gilberti and Ms. Racicot regarding repairs to the number of technicians each company currently has. Ms. Racicot said they currently have 14 technicians and are down 1 CSR. Mr. Gilberti said they currently have 16 technicians, but they recently lost one.

## **VII. Initial Discussion on Yearly Advisory Report**

For 2025, the report does not need to be as substantive because the council has only met a couple of times. Mr. Toubman stated that the Council could possibly write a supplemental report after the initial report is due and that wheelchair repair statute requires recommendations to be included in the report due January 1, 2025. Mr. Morgana recommended weekly meetings until the report due January 1, 2025 can be finalized.

## **VIII. Next Meeting**

Mr. Slifka informed the Council that they will be notified when the next meeting is scheduled.

## **IX. Adjournment**

Mr. Slifka asked for a motion to adjourn at 12:32PM, Mr. Prizio moved and Mx. Garland seconded. The vote was unanimous. The Complex Rehabilitation Technology & Wheelchair Repair Advisory Council is adjourned.

Chandra Persaud  
Advisory Council Administrator

Sarah Makowicki  
Minutes Prepared by