

State of Connecticut
GENERAL ASSEMBLY



PUBLIC HEALTH COMMITTEE
LEGISLATIVE OFFICE BUILDING HARTFORD,
CT 06106-1591

Healthcare Workforce Safety Working Group

Meeting Summary

Monday, September 23, 2024

2:30 PM on Zoom and YouTube Live

I. Convene Meeting

- The meeting was convened by Sen. Anwar at 2:30 PM.
- Members present: Sen. Saud Anwar, Rep. Cristin McCarthy-Vahey, Sasa Harriott, Eric Smullen, Teri Henning, Barbara Pearce, Kathlene Chacon, Karen Enders, Jenn LeDuc, Tracy Wodatch, Chris Pankratz, Stephen Magro, Sarah Gadsby, Tyler Booth, Karen Buckley, Kim Sandor, John Clark, John Brady, Julianne Giard, Rhianna Gingras, Ronald Cotta, Barbara Kass, Anna Karabin, David Bothwell, Auden C. Grogins, Matthew Festa.
- Guests: Marcus Yancoskie

II. Introduction of Members

- Sen. Anwar and Rep. McCarthy-Vahey introduced themselves and thanked the Working Group members for their public service. Working Group members introduced themselves.

III. Designation of Co-Chairs

- Sen. Anwar explained to the Working Group that there will be two co-chairs that will run the meetings. Rep. McCarthy-Vahey stated that the Working Group members will decide on the co-chairs and that the Public Health Committee Co-Chairs are for organizational purposes only.
- Tracy Wodatch provided the group an overview of her background and expresses her interest in becoming a co-chair and
- Sasa Harriott offered herself to become a co-chair and provided the group with an overview of her experience and background.
- Sen. Anwar asked if other members were interested in becoming a co-chair. Hearing no response, he made a motion to accept Tracy Wodatch and Sasa Harriot as the Co-Chairs. The motion was seconded by Eric Smullen.
- Tracy Wodatch and Sasa Harriot were unanimously elected co-chairs on a voice vote.
- Sen. Anwar thanked both co-chairs for their public service.

IV. Working Group Scope of Work

- Sen. Anwar gave an overview of the Working Group Scope of Work and the impact on home health itself and hospice organizations. He explained that these two were separated because some issues like background checks will take time for the workforce. He added that hospice organizations were included because of advocacy to keep the workforce safe without delay. He stated that home health care, home health agencies, and hospice organizations are the three broad areas for the Working Group to focus on when making recommendations to the Legislature.
- Rep. McCarthy-Vahey informed the group where the authorizing language of the Working Group is in legislation. She emphasized that the language is not overly prescriptive.
- Sen. Anwar informed the Working Group that for future meetings they can invite speakers and presenters to acquire witness testimony. He explained to the Working Group why Elara was not included as a member of the Working Group and added that they could be invited as a presenter or speaker.
- Tracy Wodatch stated that it is important to plan for an early meeting to have an introduction to home and community-based services.
- Eric Smullen reinforced Tracy Wodatch's point that care is transitioning to

the home environments. He believes that legislators would appreciate that broader scope if they are being specific to meet the demands of what they are asked and to ensure that no section of caregivers is left out.

- Sen. Anwar pointed out that when the next meeting is set up, Tracy Wodatch can have an update to delineate what is what and to clarify the terminology to anyone who isn't in the space. He explained the process and logistics of the report that the group will submit to the legislature.
- Karen Buckley noted the full continuum of care for patients and the impacts that the recommendations may have on the home health care space. She also noted that the current space has limited availability and that currently people are waiting for care but there are workforce issues causing delays.
- Jenn LeDuc expressed concerns about available resources in the Quiet Corner of the State. She noted that the area is more rural and believes that technology issues will be a major challenge in the area. She is worried that the recommendations that might be put in place wouldn't fit the communities in the Quiet Corner.
- Sasa Harriott agrees with Jenn LeDuc's perspective and added that the recommendations that will be put forward must be specific to geographic locations as well as unique to communities.
- Rep. McCarthy-Vahey noted the end date of the Working Group as it could end on January 1st or when the report is issued, whichever is later. She acknowledged the late start of the Working Group and wanted people to think about the schedule of the meetings related with the end date.

V. Meeting Schedule

- Sen. Anwar suggested that the Working Group should schedule the next two Working Group meetings. He asked about September 30th from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM as well as having the meetings be two hours long.
- Rep. McCarthy-Vahey noted that the members could be able to do some preparations in between meetings if the next meeting is on September 30th and the following meeting can be two weeks from September 30th which is on October 14th.
- Hon. Auden C. Grogins informed the group that she would not be able to make the meeting on October 14th.
- Rep. McCarthy-Vahey acknowledged that every meeting will have some members missing due to conflicts. She noted that recordings can be viewed to catch up on meetings.

- Sen. Anwar noted that October 14th is a holiday and suggested moving the meeting to October 15th from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM on ZOOM.
- The Working Group seeing consensus plans to hold the next two meetings on September 30th and October 15th from 2:30 PM to 4:30 PM on ZOOM.
- Sen. Anwar suggested having another meeting two weeks from October 15th.
- Rep. McCarthy-Vahey suggested that the co-chairs of the Working Group should have a bigger voice in that decision.
- Tracy Wodatch said that she will meet with Sasa Harriott to discuss logistics. She would like to see regularly planned meetings and added that she would not be available two weeks after the October 15th meeting.
- Sasa Harriott likes the idea of having regularly scheduled meetings.

VI. Announcement of Time and Date of Next Meeting

- Sen. Anwar announced that the next meeting will be on September 30th at 2:30 PM on ZOOM.
- Tracy Wodatch asked Sen. Anwar a logistics question.
- Piotr Kolakowski answered the logistics question.
- Sen. Anwar wanted to the Working Group to know that he and Rep. McCarthy-Vahey are available to help.

VII. Adjournment

- The meeting adjourned at 3:12 PM.