**Health Care Reform Forum Meeting Minutes - Wednesday, April 12, 2023**

**Progressive Action for the Common Good**

Minutes Taken By: Maggie Davis

Attendees: Diane Trix, Frank Samuelson, Rael Slavensky, Maggie Davis

1. **Old business - Prescription Drug Pricing LTE**
   1. Do we want Frank to submit this on his own, as he has done on his own rather than on behalf of PACG?
   2. Diane suggests Frank sends this the way it is since the HCRF approves and it has already been published on the blog. Frank agrees and he will submit the letter to the editor.
   3. Diane will send it to Frank.
2. **New Covid Booster Recommendations**
   1. Diane was looking at the new recommendations and doesn’t really understand them. Found that the CDC was recommending the single bivalent booster.
   2. WHO revised vaccine recommendation. Healthy children and young adults probably do not need another booster, but those that are in risk groups should get them every 6 months.
   3. Frank and wife were at doctor recently. They asked if it was time for another booster and doctor said they hadn’t received any new instructions from the CDC yet.
   4. Maggie will ask her mother’s doctors at UofI tomorrow.
   5. Diane suggests we do not put anything in the PAU until we all hear something more concrete. Everyone else agrees.

**3. Covid Death Rate in U.S.**

1. Diane has article on Arizona having the highest death rate.
2. Highest areas: Indian reservations, states that did not expand Medicare, Republican senators, lower income areas, etc.

**4. North Carolina Expands Medicaid**

a.Frank says they have had two segments on the PBS Newshour.

b.This is a state that has resisted adding it, but this will help a lot of people now that it has been approved. Financed by the hospitals somehow–not by regular taxpayers.

**5. Biden’s budget talking points + Congressional Voting Record**

1. Everyone received this.

**6. Boycotting Walgreen’s**

1. Rael: Women’s March is sending out information about boycotting Walgreen’s
2. Maggie will ask at next board meeting if anyone from PACG is organizing boycotting Walgreen’s?
3. Rael: This is all based off of a letter from republicans. We wonder if CVS and other pharmacies were also targeted and chose not to act upon it. Maybe the board of Walgreen’s is more worried about litigation?

**7. Medicare Advantage Webinar**

1. Diane said this was way too technical for her. Frank also agreed.
2. Frank was looking to take a summary from it and add it to a letter to the editor, but it was too complex.
3. Diane was hoping to ask Deb (as she knows about coding).
4. No action at this time.

**8. Ways to Lower Personal Drug Costs**

1. There is a link in medicare.gov that talks about ways ordinary people can lower their prescription costs. Do we want to share this on the PAU? Diane cannot find it at the moment. She will send it around and we will post it (if no issues). Diane would like everyone’s response on this.
2. There was another article from Forbes.
3. Consider switching to generics, additional coverage, pharmaceutical assistance, state funded assistance programs, applying for extra help through the government.
4. Maggie’s mother has grant from Amgen Safety Net Foundation (Pharmeceutical grant) vs. one from UofI grant foundation. UofI was then able to grant another individual.
5. Rael: Mail order prescription: touted by pharmacies as less expensive.
6. Diane: We could make our own list from Forbes, Medicare, etc. lists. Ask your doctor.
7. This is a work in progress for now.

**9. Update on facilitator position**

1. Julie is not interested in the co-facilitator and is too busy.
2. Kay is not sure how busy she will be as chair of Democratic Party of Iowa. Does not want to accept anything new until she knows.
3. Diane was encouraged to ask Karen, but she is not on Zoom and does not do Social Media.
4. Deb is in Long Grove. She cannot do this.
5. Maggie? Will think on this.
6. Diane asks if anyone has ideas for facilitators, anyone please contact her.
7. We have one more meeting in May and then Diane is gone. She will maybe be back in November, but she is unsure. She feels better that she will say she wont be back, but if she does she would be a participant, not as a facilitator.
8. Maggie suggested asking Carolyn Martin or if she knows anyone.
9. Diane wonders if Jane Duax would be interested? Maggie could ask her.
10. Diane reminds us that we need to be bi-partisan.

**10. Rael’s book review on “Weathering: The Extraordinary Stress of Ordinary Life in an Unjust Society”:**

1. Rael has PDF of book review from Spirit of 1848 section of American Public Health Association. Was a book review in The Guardian. Non -Academic book about “Weathering”. “How daily discrimination damages the body.”
2. Diane will send this review to everyone.

**Next Meeting is May 10th, 2023.**