

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON
PALLIATIVE CARE AND QUALITY OF LIFE
May 13, 2022**

Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH)
The RSA Tower, Suite 1586
Montgomery, Alabama

Members Present

Kristi A. Acker, D.N.P., Chair
Karen Marlowe, Pharm.D., Co-Chair
Gregory W. Ayers, M.D. (WebEx)
Leigh Ann Matthews, M.S.N.
Timothy Mayhall, M.Div.
Rodney O. Tucker, M.D., M.M.M.
John G. Beard, M.B.A.
Mary Ann Somers, M.A.Ed.
Sarah Pederson, Ph.D.
Stormy Dismuke, M.S.N.
Annie Hinson, L.B.S.W.

Members Absent

Richard J. Brockman, J.D.

ADPH Staff Present

Scott Harris, M.D., M.P.H., State Health Officer
Karen M. Landers, M.D., F.A.A.P., Chief Medical Officer (WebEx)
Brian Hale, Office of General Counsel, Alabama Department of Public Health (ADPH)
Dana Billingsley, Office of General Counsel, ADPH
Jacqueline D. Milledge, Director, Bureau of Health Provider Standards (BHPS)
Patricia Watson, State Program Director, BHPS
Tonya Blankenship, Supervisor, Medicare Other Unit, BHPS
Kierra Montgomery, Office Manager, BHPS

Guests Present

Rosemary Blackmon, Alabama Hospital Association (AlaHA)
Carol Snowden, AlaHA
Angie Smith, Alabama Nursing Home Association (ANHA)
Stacie Sinclair, Center to Advance Palliative Care (CAPC)

CONSIDERATION OF THE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 11, 2022:

A motion was made and seconded to approve the Minute of February 11, 2022, as distributed; the motion carried unanimously.

PROMOTING PALLIATIVE CARE:

Stacie Sinclair, of CAPC, presented information outlining ways in which each state could promote quality palliative care for its residents. The topics included “Definitions and Standards,” “Education and Training,” and “Public Awareness.”

COMMUNITY COALITIONS:

Rosemary Blackmon and Carol Snowden, of AlaHA, discussed their organization’s efforts to engage community hospitals and educate them about palliative care. They reviewed ideas for how communities can work as a team to connect everyone involved. Ms. Blackmon stated that a forum meets twice a year with nearly 300 hospital quality coaches, chief executive officers, and infection preventionist to discuss various quality topics. The next meeting is scheduled for October 2022. Ms. Blackmon feels that this would be a great starting point for some sort of initiative. The Council discussed advance directives, witnesses and notary signatures, and legislation that would protect establishments that choose to sign as witnesses in good faith. The Council discussed the creation of a system to educate the community about the terms and dialogue used in advanced directives. Education would be beneficial to both patients and their families to be better prepared when advance directives are used.

MEMBER UPDATES:

Ms. Blackmon advised that AlaHA has yet to nominate an appointee to the Council.

Dr. Rodney Tucker resigned from his position on the council and agreed to continue to be a resource for the council.

Dr. Karen Landers assumed the position of Chief Medical Officer upon the retirement of Dr. Mary McIntyre effective May 1, 2022.

COVID-19 UPDATE:

Dr. Landers noted that as of May 12, 2022, there were 419 cases of COVID-19 and five deaths. Long-term care cases continue to be very low with 4 residents and 15 staff cases. As we coexist with COVID-19, we must continue to emphasize the importance of staying informed of COVID-19 updates and remaining up-to-date on vaccinations.

OPIOID PRESCRIBING AND REGULATION UPDATES:

Dr. Greg Ayers stated that there was nothing new to report about opioid regulation. He stated that the number of deaths from drug overdoses skyrocketed in 2021. He feels that most of them were likely due to stress caused by the pandemic.

Dr. Ayers thanked everyone involved in the passage of House Bill 191.

OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

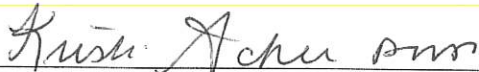
The Southeast Institute for Innovation in Palliative and Supportive Care Conference will meet in November 2022. Dr. Kristi Acker stated that if any council member would like to be represented at the conference to notify her or Dr. Tucker so they could be added to the agenda.

The Council agreed that hospice physician representation on the Council is needed. They also would like more representation statewide. The Council discussed asking Dr. Monica Williams-Murphy to fill this position.

Ms. Marlowe suggested the Council send letters to organizations asking them to include the topic of palliative care in their regular staff meetings.

NEXT MEETING DATE:

The next meeting of the Council is scheduled for August 12, 2022.



Kristi A. Acker, D.N.P., Chair
State Advisory Council on Palliative Care and Quality of Life



Jacqueline D. Milledge, Director
Bureau of Health Provider Standards
Alabama Department of Public Health

Approved: August 12, 2022