

ARKANSAS KIDNEY DISEASE COMMISSION

Meeting Date: Wednesday March 9, 2011 **Time:** 12:30PM

Location/Room: ARS Little Rock Field Office - Conference Room

ATTENDEES:

Board Members Michael Bierle, MD; James Campbell, MD; Garry Glasco, MD; Nigel Hall; Kathy Pierce; Robert Treviño; Scott Young, MD; Bob Abbott

Guests Steve Bryant; Mary Wilson; Bobby Walker; Mary A. Luttrell; Bonnie Bradley; Katie Anderson; Sarah Agee; Andrea Easom; Malanie Mechum; Barbara Gullett;

ARS Staff Jim Moreland; Richard Ward

AKDC Staff Katrina Betancourt; Helen Cobb

CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Garry Glasco declared a quorum and called the meeting to order.

MOTION TO ACCEPT MINUTES

Dr. Glasco requested Board Members to review the minutes of the last meeting. A motion to approve the minutes was declared. Dr. Campbell's name was omitted in error. The error was corrected and Dr. Glasco suggested a motion to approve the corrected minutes the board agreed, seconded and the motion passed.

COMMENTS FROM ARS COMMISSIONER ROBERT TREVIÑO

Commissioner Treviño shared that the legislature is in session, that ARS is doing well and it appears we have no adverse impact concerning AKDC or the commission. He mentioned that we have some unfilled positions at this time and that the legislators were of the opinion that since the agency demonstrated the resilience to function without the unfilled position, that maybe they should be given up. He shared with the legislatures that we had two key prominent positions available, the Physician's position and Occupational Therapist position, he went on to explain why these position were difficult to fill, due to salaries and the private sector which made the two positions highly competitive, the freeze on hiring and asked by the office of personnel not to fill positions unless we got authorization from the governor's office. Thankfully the freeze was lifted in December. Hopefully, within the next few weeks we will have permission to re-advertise for the unfilled positions.

At this time Commissioner Treviño acknowledged that Bob Abbott's initiative regarding the Chain of Life Award had come to fruition that the legislature passed the official act and it was formulized on March 14, 2011 where Governor Beebe signed the official act. Mr. Abbott was among family and friends and was truly elated for the recognition, and the recognition it will bring to living donors.

Commissioner Treviño next shared with the board that during the budget analysis he noticed that AKDC thus far has spent approximately half of its funds and that the fiscal year will end June 30th of this year, and asked the chairman for permission to remind the board of a discussion held at a previous meeting concerning transportation vouchers. He asked if a portion of that discussion could be revisited since some funds are available at this time it seems feasible to extend additional assistance to our clients by issuing travel vouchers to help defray some of their cost, he then asked the board if this issue could be discussed and encouraged the board's impute concerning this matter, at this point the commissioner acknowledge Ms. Betancourt and stated that she will provide further details concerning this matter.

WITH NO FURTHER QUESTIONS OR COMMENTS FOR THE COMMISSIONER, DR. GLASCO ASKED THE PROGRAM MANAGER TO PROVIDE THE BOARD WITH THE STATISTICAL REPORT.

STATISTICAL REPORT

AKDC Program Manager Katrina Betancourt provided the Board an update regarding client statistical information. She reported that since the last Board meeting the AKDC having added 140 new clients with the program providing services to 1,051 individuals current fiscal year to date. She reported the program providing services to approximately 90 fewer clients this fiscal year when compared to the same time frame last year. She also provided a summary regarding the approval of clients for prior-approved drugs as well as pre-transplant dental services.

AKDC Clients

Clients Added Since Last Meeting	102
Clients Receiving Paid-for Services Last Fiscal Year	1141
Clients Receiving Paid-for Services Fiscal Year to Date.....	875
Clients Receiving Prescription Drugs Fiscal Year to Date.....	865
Clients Receiving Pre-Transplant Dental Services	21

AKDC Clients Receiving Prior-Approved Drugs

Clients Added to Renvela Approval List Since Last Meeting	11
Clients Added to Fosrenol Approval List Since Last Meeting.....	1
Clients Added to Sensipar Approval List Since Last Meeting	8

Clients Approved for Pre-Transplant Dental Services 10
Following discussion Ms. Betancourt provided the financial report.

FINANCIAL REPORT

Ms Betancourt provided the Board an update of the AKDC's current financial information. She reported program client service expenditures fiscal year to date totaling \$826,704 with that number being down about \$90,000 when compared to the same time frame last fiscal year. She provided the Board an overview of expenditures including prescription drug and pre-transplant dental costs.

Previous Fiscal Year

Amount spent by the AKDC for Client Services Last Fiscal Year	\$ 885,314
Amount spent for Prescription Drugs	\$ 827,264
Amount spent for Pre-Transplant Dental Services	\$ 30,723
Amount of Nepro Purchased	\$ 27,327

Current Fiscal Year

AKDC Client Service Budget for State Fiscal Year	\$ 950,000
Amount Processed by the AKDC for Client Services Fiscal Year to Date	\$ 476,360
Amount Processed for Prescription Drugs	\$ 461,170
Amount Processed for Pre-Transplant Dental Services	\$ 15,190

Following Ms. Betancourt's report consideration was given as to what to do with any current fiscal year surplus funds. After discussion, a motion was made for the AKDC to complete a bulk purchase of the nutritional supplement Nepro in an amount consistent with the recommendation of the ARS Chief Fiscal Officer. The motion was seconded and passed.

Dr. Glasco asked for a motion to approve the statistical and financial reports as given by Ms. Betancourt. A motion was made and seconded. The motion was passed.

However, at this time Dr. Young had a comment and a question to ask. His comment was to Ms. Betancourt, he asked her opinion as to why spending was less this quarter, he wanted to know if it was due to fewer patients utilizing our services or has there been a drop in the cost of drugs. Her response was, a drop in drug cost could be possibility, however, the same amount of people are utilizing our services as before, that social workers were utilizing other patient assistance program as well and when claims amounts seem overpriced, she explained, applications are sent to clients and encouraged to apply for additional assistance. She also expressed perhaps more generics are being used.

Dr. Glasco wanted to know how it is known when medications are over priced. Ms. Betancourt explained, by perusal of claims on a daily basis the cost of drugs on our formulary are usually consistent, so when a particular drug seems overpriced it presents a red flag and the usual cause of the discrepancy is due to weather or not a client has insurance or the claim form was filled out incorrectly. If it's discovered that the client's insurance will not cover the cost, the social worker is contacted to discuss what assistance programs(if any) are available to assist our clients with there medications.

At this time Dr. Glasco recognized that Commissioner Treviño wanted to share some additional information, he mentioned that he and Mr. Moreland had discussions with Libra Systems the organization that installed our current system. He shared that since the current system is case managed and automated he wanted to know if the functions of AKDC as well as the pharmacies dispensing drugs could be integrated into the present system. The company expressed that the possibility was feasible. The commissioner surmised that if the cost was reasonable the possibility would ensure better accounting for auditing purposes.

Dr. Glasco asked if there were any additional questions or comments, Dr. Young again expressed concerns why there is a drop in kidney patients using our services and asked if UAMS had seen a drop in kidney failure patients. Dr. Campbell remarked that he noticed the drop in terms of services due to Medicare D. He emphasized that if clients are utilizing Medicare D for all of their medications, there is no need for our services, plus we're a payer of last resort.

Mr. Moreland added that the turn over of social workers in the Helena area, could be a probable cause. Mr. Moreland went on to explain that the newer social workers were not using our services as often as veterans are, probably due to the newness of their profession, learning the processes of the job, being unaware of AKDC and what our services entail and/or how to apply for our services.

Mr. Moreland shared with the board a impending visit to the Helena Dialysis Unit on March 11th to understand why for the last two years Referral Application have not been forth coming from this unit, and expressed plans to visit other dialysis units in the future.

Dr. Glasco asked for a motion to approve the financial reports. A motion was made and seconded. The motion was passed.

OLD BUSINESS

World Kidney Day:

Ms. Betancourt informed the board that this was our first year participating in World Kidney Day, held March 5th at UAMS; overall she felt it was a success and a good learning experience. She shared the positives and negatives of the symposium; One positive being the Health Fair, she expressed that with the help of eighteen volunteers, including UAMS staff and some nursing students assisting with the health screenings, made our first endeavor a success. Ms. Betancourt also expressed how proud she felt when twenty people signed-in for patient education information, health care screenings and how people seemed to enjoy the presentations. She mentioned that the vendor's exhibits were impressionable and successful. The one negative aspect was the difficulty of parking; however once inside, the space was excellent. She informed the board that the workshop was filmed and will be on AKDC's website. After further discussion she expressed that next year's event will be much better.

At this point Commissioner Treviño mentioned to the board how a video presentation on ARS's website would be an excellent outreach source to all the residents of Arkansas informing them of the services we provide. He asked the board to consider adding AKDC, he went on to explain how a marketing and video firm if hired would know the best way to approach this endeavor.

With no further questions or comments concerning Old Business. On to New Business

NEW BUSINESS

Ms. Betancourt informed the board that next year AAKP National Convention will be held in Little Rock at The Peabody Hotel on August 25th thru August 28th and if additional information was needed, it can be attained on AAKP's website.

At this time Ms. Betancourt announced that Dr. Glasco was now a member of The DaVita Dialysis Group and that the Group is a major contributor to AAKP.

Ms. Betancourt asked the board if anyone knew of a person with celebrity status or an inspirational speaker who has knowledge of kidney disease perhaps know of someone on dialysis or someone who has transplanted, who would be willing to participate or willing to speak on the subject at the convention.

Dr. Campbell commented on how beneficial this convention would be for some Arkansan on dialysis, but that due to finances won't be able to attend, Ms. Betancourt shared that this concern was expressed to AAKP, and it was explained that they are trying to find funding or the possibility of writing a grant for travel vouchers for patients interested in attending this event.

CHAIN OF LIFE AWARD:

Ms. Betancourt happily announce that the awards will be purchased within the next week that the frames were picked up by Mr. Moreland and the actual awards will be signed by Governor Beebe on Monday, March 21st.

Ms. Betancourt asked the board when will be a good time to present, she suggested presenting the awards quarterly after the board meetings, or whenever the board deemed the right time. Commissioner Treviño interjected at this time and suggested perhaps asking the Governor to proclaim a Chain of Life Day in Arkansas, he shared that that the Governor has a photo-op quarterly and presenting the award at this time, he expressed how thrilling this would be for the recipients to appear in the local newspaper and expressed how this would increase visibility and great advertisement for the commission. He recommended drafting a proclamation to the Governor's office asking him to format and sign it. The Commissioner suggested that Ms. Betancourt work with scheduling to include us in the roster for the proclamation day.

Ms. Betancourt requested nominations for the award. Linda Tyler was suggested at this time.

SYSTEM SEVEN:

Ms. Betancourt shared her concerns that due to most pharmacies on electronic billing, several clients were referred to different pharmacies who still did paper claims. Several pharmacists have asked if the state considered electronic billing. She shared with the board that a proposal was presented by Libra System Seven, which is their software program and we would have to keep on top of because it is based on Medicare allowable rate, the other option would be Medicaid System.

Mr. Moreland shared that every time Medicaid renewed their system in the past it was suggested that AKDC was allowed to get a page inside their billing system, by doing this, we would have access to their Fee Schedule, not just Immunosuppressant but other drugs as well. Mr. Moreland emphasized that by having access to this data, we could track what kinds of drugs we're using, what we're paying for and how much we're buying, and Mr. Moreland also shared that the AKDC might qualify for discounts and rebates which would generate additional funds to assist the clients with. After further discussion Mr. Moreland stated that both avenues will addressed.

At this time Mr. Bryant's expressed hopefully Medicaid could upload AKDC's formulary versus their formulary because ours is more limited.

DIABETES ADVISOR COUNCIL

AKDC has partnered with the Diabetes Advisory Council.

SURPLUS OF FUNDS

The AKDC is predicting a surplus of funds for this fiscal year 2011. The intention is for the AKDC to continue to purchase and distribute Nepro. In addition, the AKDC would like to offer a three month period transportation reimbursement pilot to financially assist clients with transportation to CKD related appointments.

A motion was made to approve travel reimbursement to AKDC clients at a rate of nineteen cents per mile IRS allowable medical travel rate. An addendum was requested to investigate if there could be an increase in mileage reimbursement.

At this point Commissioner Treviño asked the board to consider reinstating travel vouchers for three month; from March 15th thru June 15th based on IRS allowable medical travel rate.

The motion was seconded and passed. An addendum was approved in case the travel rate was increased.

Announcements:

Dr. Glasco asked if there were any announcements, none were forthcoming.

A motion to adjourn the meeting is made and seconded.

The meeting was adjourned.
