

2020 INTERIM EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
JOINT COMMISSION ON HEALTH CARE

TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE
GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA



REPORT DOCUMENT #3

COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
RICHMOND
2021



JOINT COMMISSION ON HEALTH CARE

Delegate Patrick A. Hope, Chair

Senator George L. Barker, Vice Chair

December 30, 2020

The Honorable Ralph Northam
Governor of Virginia
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Members of the Virginia General Assembly
Pocahontas Building
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Governor Northam and Members of the General Assembly:

Pursuant to the provisions of the Code of Virginia (Title 30, Chapter 18, §§ 30-168 through 30-170) establishing the Joint Commission on Health Care and setting forth its purpose, I have the honor of submitting herewith the Interim Executive Summary for the calendar year ending December 31, 2020.

This report includes a summary of the Joint Commission on Health Care's activities including legislative recommendations to the 2021 Session of the General Assembly.

Respectfully submitted,

Patrick A. Hope, Chair



2020 Interim Executive Summary of Activities

The Joint Commission on Health Care (JCHC) was established in 1992 to continue the work of the Commission on Health Care for All Virginians. The JCHC authorizing legislation in the Code of Virginia, Title 30, Chapter 18, states in part: “The purpose of the Commission is to study, report and make recommendations on all areas of health care provision, regulation, insurance, liability, licensing, and delivery of services. In so doing, the Commission shall endeavor to ensure that the Commonwealth as provider, financier, and regulator adopts the most cost-effective and efficacious means of delivery of health care services so that the greatest number of Virginians receive quality health care.” The Commission undertook the following activities during 2020 to implement this purpose.

Commission Meetings

The full Commission met virtually four times in 2020 on September 30, October 20, November 16 and December 15. The Executive Subcommittee met virtually on November 4.

During the September meeting, the Commission Members elected a new Chair, Delegate Hope and Vice Chair, Senator Barker. Chairman Hope also appointed the Executive Subcommittee members: Delegate Hope, Delegate Hayes, Delegate Orrock, Delegate Sickles, Senator Barker, Senator Dunnavant, and Senator Edwards. The Executive Director, Jeff Lunardi, provided the Members with an orientation to the JCHC and plans for studies for the rest of the year.

At the October meeting, Senior Health Policy Analyst Stephen Weiss presented a review of total healthcare spending in Virginia from 2014-2018. The Members also received updates from three stakeholders: the Deputy Secretary of Health and Human Resources, the Virginia Association of Health Plans, and the Virginia Association of Community Services Boards.

During the Executive Subcommittee meeting on November 4th, the Executive Director, Jeff Lunardi, briefed the Subcommittee Members on the four strategic objectives and how they will be incorporated into future studies. He also presented a list of potential studies to be prioritized for next year. The Members narrowed the topics down to six, which were further narrowed down to three by the full Commission at the December meeting.

During the November 16 meeting, Senior Health Policy Analyst Stephen Weiss presented an overview of strategies that Virginia could consider studying to improve the affordability of health insurance in the individual market. In addition, several stakeholders provided presentations to the Commission: the Virginia Hospital and Healthcare Association, the Virginia Health Care Association/Virginia Center for Assisted Living, and the Medical Society of Virginia provided updates on their Associations.

During the final meeting of the year in December, the Members voted on workgroup recommendations for Pharmacist Statewide Protocols. They also voted to repeal the JCHC sunset clause and approve the top three study topics for staff studies for 2021, which are nursing facility workforce, supporting elderly Virginians in the community, and health insurance affordability in the individual market.

Commission Recommendations for Legislative Action

The JCHC voted to recommend two pieces of legislation during the 2021 General Assembly session: Pharmacist Standing Orders and repealing the JCHC sunset clause.

Pharmacist Standing Orders authorize pharmacists to initiate treatment with, dispense, or administer certain drugs and devices to adults (18 years and older). Members voted to introduce legislation authorizing the following new statewide protocols: Tuberculosis testing, HIV prophylaxis for both pre- and post-exposure, Devices, controlled paraphernalia (ie-insulin pen) and DME to lower out of pocket expenses, if prescription required for insurance to cover it, and vaccines included on the CDC immunization schedule.

Members voted to put forward legislation to eliminate the sunset clause for the Joint Commission on Health Care.

Other Staff Activities

JCHC staff also participated in several workgroups and Boards focused on health policy both in Virginia and nationally. Executive Director, Jeff Lunardi served on the Board of Virginia Health Information, the Medicaid Hospital Payment Policy Advisory Council, and the Children's Health Insurance Program Advisory Committee. He also serves as a staff Vice-Chair of the National Conference on State Legislatures standing committee on health and human services.

Senior Health Policy Analyst, Stephen Weiss served on the Supported Decision Making in Virginia workgroup (Chapter 855 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly) and the Virginia Sexual Assault and Forensic Exam (SAFE) Program Work Group (Chapter 1072 of the 2020 Acts of Assembly).