HEALTH CARE ADMINISTRATION BOARD
THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 15, 2024
9:15 A.M.
NJ DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

February 15, 2024

Meeting was taken via Teams before Cindy Pineiro, RPR, CSR \#30XI00181500, and Notary Public of the State of New Jersey, on the above date, commencing at 9:15 a.m., there being present:

MICHAEL BAKER - Chairman
MARY KAY ROBERTS - Vice Chair
KIMBERLY JENKINS (NJ Dept. of Health) - Board Member MANUEL PAULINO (NJ Dept. of Banking and Insurance) Board Member
ELLSWORTH HAVENS - Board Member

PATRICK BARNHART (Presenter, Regulatory Officer, NJ Dept. of Health)
JACQUELINE CHADWICK (Presenter, Regulatory Officer, NJ Dept. of Health)
NOAH GLYN (Presenter, Executive Director, NJ Dept. of Health)
LISSETTE SANTIAGO (Attorney Assistant, NJ Dept. of Health) - Board Staff

MR. BAKER: I will call the meeting to order. This is the February $15 t h$ Heal $h$ Care Administration Board meeting.

Lissette, could you read the Notice and then take roll?

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Yes.
Good morning. This is a formal meeting
of the Health Care Admi nistration Board. Adequate
notice of this meeting has been published in accordance with the provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, including, but not limited to, N.J.S.A. 10:4-9.1, 10:4-9.3, and 10:4-10.

Notice was sent to the Seretary of State who posted the notice in a public place. Notice was also provided electronically on the Department's website and forwarded to two New Jersey newspapers.

। will now call the roll.
Ms. Jenkins?
MS. JENKINS: Here.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Paulino?
MR. PAULINO: Here.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Havens?
MR. HAVENS: Here.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Roberts?
MS. ROBERTS: Here.

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: And Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER: Here. Thank you very much.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: We have five
members of the Board, which does constitute a quorum.
MR. BAKER: The next item of busi ness is approval of the December 21, 2023 minutes.

Did anyone have any corrections for the mi nutes?

MS. JENKINS: No.
MR. BAKER: I would like to move approval of the December 21st mi nutes.

MS. ROBERTS: Mary Kay Roberts. I will move approval of the December 21, 2023 minutes.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Is there a second?
MR. HAVENS: Second.
MR. BAKER: I'm sorry. Ellsworth, thank you.

Please call the roll.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Jenkins?
MS. JENKINS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Paulino?
MR. PAULINO: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Havens?
MR. HAVENS: Yes.

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Roberts?
MS. ROBERTS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: And Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: We have five yeses. Motion carries.

MR. BAKER: Commissioner's report is up. That's Ms. Jenkins.

MS. JENKINS: Thank you. I apologize for my voice. It's going in and out. So sorry about that.

The Department of Health recently released a new overdose mortality data explorer dashboard. And as part of our ongoing efforts to end the opioid epidemic in the state, the dashboard displays drug overdose data which allows the public to explore demographic disparities by county, and continues the Department's efforts to bring data into the hands of the community stakeholders who can take action to prevent and respond to the overdoses. So that's a helpful dashboard for folks.

We also have one more release in conjunction with the First Lady's office. We released the New Jersey report card on hospital maternity care. The report card's the first of its kind in the nation,

1 and it outlines key metrics on maternal healthcare. It includes metrics that include the interactive data on hospital-specific and statewide births, including complication rates and severe maternal morbidity.

The information is designed to be useful .- user friendly to help birthing people make informed decisions about their care and which hospitals they would like to deliver at.

And that's the update from me. And for rules coming down the road, we expect 8:43H, the rehabilitation hospital rules, to be coming to the HCAB in the spring.

That's all l have for today.
MR. BAKER: Thank you very much.
Do any of the Board members have questions for Ms. Jenkins?

Hearing none, we'll move on to item four on the agenda.

Mr. Barnhart, you are up.
MR. BARNHART: Good morning. I am Patrick Barnhart. I'm the new regulatory officer in the Division of Certificate of Need and Licensing Division. Excuse me.

I'm joining you to present the Notice of Readoption with no changes for New Jersey

Admi nistrative Code 8: 33 H , which is the Certificate of Need: Policy Manual for Long-Term Care Services.

Wi thout adoption these rules would expire in two months on April 20, 2024. This chapter sets standards for determining if pediatric Iong-term care beds are necessary, and also standards for specialized Iong-term care beds, such as for severe behavioral management problems and ventilator care.

This chapter has not been substantially changed since 20 - 2004. So the Department will be proposing substantive changes in the near future.

Does anyone have any questions?
MR. BAKER: Is there any .-
MR. HAVENS: I'm sorry. Just a quick question. When do you anticipate the additional a mendments coming up?

MR. BARNHART: I know that the Department is working on those changes. There are some related chapters that -. that it's also working with, and we will be putting them up as soon as possible, I believe.

MR. HAVENS: Okay. Thank you.
MR. BAKER: Any other questions from
Board members?
MS. JENKINS: Mike, can l just interrupt
one second? Just a reminder that we do have a court reporter, so it may be helpful just to announce your name if you're on the phone so she can properly document who's speaking. Thank you.

MR. BAKER: Thanks, Kim.
Sorry, Cindy.
I s there anyone from the public who would like to be heard on this?

Hearing no one, ' $^{\prime}| |$ close the public portion.

Would someone I ike to make a Motion?
MS. ROBERTS: Mary Kay Roberts. |'\|।
make a Motion.
Ell sworth, we do this all the time. Go ahead.

MR. HAVENS: Go ahead. $\left.\right|^{\prime}| |$ second.
MS. ROBERTS: Okay. I will make a Motion
to approve the Notice of Readoption for Certificate of Need: Policy Manual for Long-Term Care Services codified at N.J.A.C. 8:33-. $33 H . \quad$ Excuse me.

MR. BAKER: Ell sworth, you want to
second?
MR. HAVENS: Second.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.

Any further comments?

Hearing none, Lissette, please call the
roll.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Jenkins?
MS. JENKINS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Paulino?
MR. PAULINO: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Havens?
MR. HAVENS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Roberts?
MS. ROBERTS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: And Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: We have five yeses.
The Motion carries.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Item five, Ms. Chadwick.
MS. CHADWICK: Good morning. Good morning, Mr. Baker and members of the Board. My name's Jackie Chadwick. I'm a regulatory officer at the Division of Health Certificate of Need and Licensing, and l'm here to request your approval of the proposed amendments to N.J.A.C. 8:36-1.3 and 2.4, with regard to Standards for Licensure of Assisted Living Residences, Comprehensive Personal Care Homes, and Assisted Living Facilities. And these proposed
changes would be in the definition section and the survey section.

In a nutshell, the Department plans to replace the advanced standing program with the deemed status program. And participation in the deemed status program would be voluntary for assisted i iving residences. If an assisted I iving residence elects to apply for deemed status, it must submit a request in writing to the Department, accompanied by an accrediting body report that was is sued within two years preceding this request, and a plan of correction, if one exists.

The request for deemed status would be granted or denied by the Department, and also may be revoked or modified.

If the assisted I iving residence seeks continued participation in the deemed status program, it would be required to supply updated documents every two years.

And in anticipation of this change, on

April 26 th of 2023 the Department issued a guidance memo regarding the replacement of advanced standing with this deemed status program, and, as such, all facilities are aware of this proposed change.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.

Any questions?
MS. CHADWICK: Any questions? I was just making sure 1 didn't have anything else.

MR. BAKER: Thank you. I had one.
Are there multiple accrediting bodies or are there some that we will accept or won't?

MS. CHADWICK: Currently there is one accrediting body. The Department will Iook into the accrediting bodies, and they'll be approved on the basis of their demonstrated ability to perform an operational survey using standards substantially equivalent or exceeding the federal conditions for coverage at 42 CFR Part 416. So right now there's one.

MR. BAKER: Thank you. That makes it easy.

MS. CHADWICK: Yeah.
MR. BAKER: Any other questions from
Board members?
Let's open this up to the public. Is there anyone in the public who would like to be heard on this proposal?

JOHN INDYK: Yes. John Indyk with the Health Care Association of New Jersey.

MR. BAKER: Thank you. Could you spell
your I ast name, John, for the court reporter?
JOHN I NDYK: Sure. It's I-N, as in
Nancy, D, as i n David, Y-K. And I'm vice-president of the Health Care Association of New Jersey.

MR. BAKER: Thank you. Please go ahead.
JOHN I NDYK: Sure.
We are New Jersey's I argest trade association representing approximately 200 of our state's nursing homes, 150 assisted I iving providers. I thank you for this opportunity to testify in the proposed amendments at N.J.A.C. 8:36-1.3 and 2.4.

As the summaries of the notice of proposal indicate, the objective was a proposed a mendment which would establish deemed status program for assisted living residences using a departmental recognized accreditation organization i nstead of continuing to allow these residences to obtain advanced standing status.

The $D O H$ i s well within its right to terminate the advanced standing program and rely i nstead on accreditation. Therefore, we are not objecting to the proposal.

What HCANJ does object to, however, is
the mi scharacterization of the advanced standing program as described in this rule proposal notice.

1 The tone of this summary in the proposal notice is

Advanced standing was more than just a "survey" performed by HCANJ. It was a joint effort by the $D O H$ and the regulating community to make qual ity advances i n a more coll aborative and less adversarial process. The programincluded enhanced transparency from providers, data measures prepared by independent experts, extensive reporting to the $D O H$, regular meetings, monitoring visits, critical support, and even DOH-led surveys.

To say that the advanced standing was merely oversight by the HCANJ is a distortion of the program.

Not every community chose to participate or was accepted into the program. These communities remained under the $D O H$ routine survey schedule. This collaborative effort, known as advanced standing, enabled $D O H$ staff to inspect communities not in the program. It also provided - it al so proved to elevate the quality of those communities accepted into the program.

Assisted I iving facilities that received advanced standing status were required to comply with more rigorous quality measures than counterpart facilities not participating in the program.

For example, there were nine qual ity measures that each community participating in the advanced standing program was required to meet and subsequently report on. And participants (indiscernible) low-quality measures, they were provided with clinical support to help with them i mprove. These measures were compared to national data, with advanced standing participants performed better on the measures than did their peers nationally.

It is imperative that the DOH put provisions in place for deemed status to ensure that quality i mprovements continue. We certainly do not want to see a slip - quality slip backwards.

Under the advanced standing program l i censure compliance to this were performed yearly by the former - by former DOH surveys who conducted the visits - those were DOH surveys.

For example, medication passes were observed and water temperatures were monitored for compli ance with regulatory requirements. Under deemed status annual inspections will not happen.

I nstead accreditation visits wil| be performed only every three years, during which deemed status facilities will be exempt from required $D O H$ site inspections other than complaint investigations.

Therefore, accreditation does not necessarily imply compliance with N.J.A.C. 8:36.

Finally, the proposal summary notice i ndicates that advanced standing status exempts an assisted I iving residence from required DOH Iicensing inspections. That was not entirely true. Under the program a random 10 percent of the participating communities were subject to follow-up DOH-Ied i nspections to ensure the integrity of the advanced
standing inspections. If uncomfortable with the findings, the $\operatorname{DOH}$ could have increased that percentage.

It should also be noticed that the comprehensive personal care homes also participated in the advanced standing program. Perhaps it was an oversight, but 1 do not see them mentioned as eligible to seek deemed status in the proposed rule.

I thank you for your consideration of HCANJ's concern, and with the (indiscernible) notice of proposed (indiscernible), we certainly hope that this is not the very stark illustration it appears to be about how DOH has chosen to regulate moving forward.

We firmly believe that the collaborative approach between the $\mathbf{D O H}$ and the regulating community during advanced standing program enhanced quality and served assisted living residents as well.

HCAN al so hopes that, as the DOH moves forward with this proposal, it will affirmatively execute some of the requirement and protocols mentioned above that appear now as being abandoned by the termination of advanced standing.

HCANJ fears that, to do otherwise, would diminish the quality of the (indiscernible).

So I thank you for listening to these comments and concerns. Again, no objections to moving forward with the proposal. Just wanted to convey our concerns.

MR. BAKER: Thank you very much.
Is there anyone else from the public who would like to be heard?

For what it's worth, I did not read the notices as antagonistic, but 1 understand the sensitivities of the industry to the comment about not having an industry group supervise itself.

Ms. Jenkins, any comments or anyone else? Ms. Chadwick?

Any Board members?
MS. CHADWICK: No. No.
MR. BAKER: Would someone like to make a Motion?

MR. PAULINO: I'Il make the Motion, Manny Paulino.

MR. BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Paulino.
Is there a second?
MR. HAVENS: l'\| second. I'm sorry.
Mr. Havens. |'\|l second.
MR. BAKER: Any other comments?
No?

Lissette, you may call the roll.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Jenkins?
MS. JENKINS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Paulino?
MR. PAULINO: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Havens?
MR. HAVENS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Roberts?
MS. ROBERTS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: And Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Five yeses. It

## carries.

MR. BAKER: Thank you. And, Lissette, your voice is coming in very softly. I don't know if something changed with the connection.

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Okay.
MR. BAKER: Okay. Next up is item number
six. Gene? Mr. President?
MS. CHADWICK: That would be me subbing
for Gene.
Good morning again. It's Jackie
Chadwick. I'm here to present to you a Notice of
Readoption with technical changes to N.J.A.C. 8:42C, which is hospice licensing standards.

I would note that we are currently working with and received proposed edits from stakeholders, and are planning to present a Notice of Proposal to amend this chapter i $n$ the very near future.

Basically, we just ran out of time, and we're just doing it this way for right now.

There are two $\cdots$ the technical changes are updating addresses and websites, and then there are two mi nor changes removing dates which go back to 1999.

Any questions?
MR. BAKER: Any questions from the Board?
MR. HAVENS: This is Mr. Havens again.
Just - I'm sorry. Just from a timing point of view, do you expect the changes to come within the next three months? Six months? Nine months? This year?

MS. CHADWICK: By the end of the year.
MR. HAVENS: By the end of the year?

Ok ay.
MS. CHADWICK: Yes.
MR. HAVENS: That's what a couple of
people have asked me. Thank you.
MS. CHADWICK: You're welcome.

MR. BAKER: Thanks, El\| sworth.

Anyone else? If not, would someone like
to make a Motion?
MS. ROBERTS: Mary Kay Roberts. I'।l
make the Motion to approve the Notice of Readoption for Hospice Licensing Standards codified at N.J.A.C. 8:42C.

MR. HAVENS: I second.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Ell sworth, was that you seconding?
MR. HAVENS: Yes, sir.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Please call the roll.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Jenkins?
MS. JENKINS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Paulino?
MR. PAULINO: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Havens?
MR. HAVENS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Roberts?
MS. ROBERTS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: And Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: We have five yeses.
The Motion carries.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.

Next is item seven.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Did you hear me any better during this time, Mr. Baker?

MR. BAKER: You're still -. you're still soft with a little background echo, but it's better. The background noise is gone.

Okay. Is Mr. Glyn on? I'm trying to find .-

MR. GLYN: So l would just like to start just by introducing myself. My name is Noah Glyn. I'm the fairly new executive director of the Of fice of Healthcare Financing Department. I'm meeting with you today to discuss regulations 8:97, Special Adoption and Concurrently Proposed Readoption of New Rules.

These new regulations are pertaining to public...

MR. BAKER: Mr. Glyn, can you hold up a second? We just had a tap from a member of the public, a couple of members, saying that they cannot hear you, and now you appear to be frozen.

MR. GLYN: Can you give me one second, please?

MR. BAKER: Sure.
MR. GLYN: Thank you.
(Short recess was held.)

MR. GLYN: Al| right. I apologize.
So just to restart, my name is Noah Glyn. I'm the new executive director of the Office of Healthcare Financing for the Department. I'm here to speak about the new regulations, 8:97, that are in response to Public Law 2021, Chapter 457.

So if you just bear with me for a mi nute, I'd like to just kind of go through this all piecemeal step-by-step. Hopefully it all makes sense at the end.

So the Public Law 2021, Chapter 457, tried to accomplish three main points. First was to order the Department to create a Iong-term care dashboard.

The second was to promulgate regulations to require the nursing homes to submit financial statements.

And the third piece is to require nursing homes to participate in the National Healthcare Safety Network Long-Term Care Facility annual survey and monthly reporting plan.

So these regulations are intended to and achieve these goals. So going through the regulations for each subchapter, |'\|l be brief. And l'I\| be happy to talk about anything in more detail.

So the first subchapter are just general provisions to define the terms that are aid out in the - in the regulations.

The subchapter two, financial transparency, is the focus. So the statute requires nursing homes to publish on their website owner-certified financial statements. These regulations describe what exactly is required of them to meet this $\cdots$ to meet these financial statement requirements. It also requires them to post $\quad$ publicly post CMS cost reports. Subchapter three focuses on the disclosure of operational clinical data. So as mentioned before, the National Healthcare Safety Net work 1 ong-term carefacility annual survey, this is the most widely used healthcare-associated tracking system. It is required for $\cdots$ for $\cdots$ so within chapter three also. So it requires the nursing homes to participate in this . in the NHSN. It also requires the nursing homes to post a link to their dashboards - to the Department's dashboard, which we've already created, so the - their website will I ink to the dashboard.

In addition, it requires that the nursing homes publish contact person for the public to reach
out to with any questions.
Finally, subchapter four lays out the enforcement penalties for any nursing homes that fail to comply with these requirements.

If it's helpful, we can - I can share our screen and 1 can kind of demonstrate how the financial statements tie in with the dashboard and and with the various facilities.

So if that's something you would find helpful, I would be happy to demonstrate that.

MR. BAKER: Please do so. Thank you.
MR. GLYN: Al| right. Let me just share my screen. Actually, Christina - okay. My colleague, Christina Carzono (phonetic), will share her screen and we'l| walk through it.

So this is the Department of Health website which, obviously, you can find. Just a quick Google search. So if you go to "Office and Programs" and you scroll down, you'\|l see the "Office of Long-Term Care Resiliency." And on the left side which says, "Nursing Home Facility Data," if youclick that i ink, this takes you to the dashboard.

So we're going to - once it loads we're going to present one facility that has actually posted their financial data. That would be Seashore. Right
here click "Search," it pulls it up. And there it goes.

Okay. So you can see here there's
various pieces of information on this site, including a star rating. And on the left side where it says "Financial Statements," if you click on there, so this takes you to the facility's website where there's a public disclosure. It's IRS filing 990, as well as a CMS cost report from 2021.

So, ultimately, the facilities will also have to post their contact person on this website or some similar website. In addition, they'll have to post a link to the data dashboard, so that way it will al most be kind of, you know, self referential in that the facility will refer back to the dashboard, and the dashboard will refer back to the facility. So it will be easy for the public to find both data sources.

MR. BAKER: Hold on for a second.
So right now they're already required and have to expend funds to have the form 990, which is a nonprofit tax return, and also the CMS filing done.

And I gather you're suggesting that, as a
result of these regs, if adopted, the audited
financial statements will be another item on that dashboard to click on?

MR. GLYN: Right.
To be clear, though, the IRS 990 will
fulfill the requirement of the audited financial
statements. So a facility that has posted its IRS 990
filings will not need to publish something separate.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.
MR. GLYN: And that is all for our
presentation and demonstration.
If there are any further questions, and you open that cost report $\cdot$ somebody asked us to open the cost report.

Christina, can you share screen? It's not our intention to pick on this facility in any way. It's just that this was a facility that we found that did have its financial information on there, so .-

MR. BAKER: Understood. It's a public document.

MR. GLYN: Yeah.
MR. BAKER: It's an example. Thank you.
MR. GLYN: Thank you.
MR. BAKER: And the member of the public, thank you as well.

Any other comments, Mr. Glyn?
MR. GLYN: None from me.
MR. BAKER: I have a question. So g90's
are formed for not-for-profits. I'massuming a large number of nursing homes are not-for-profit. I don't know if there are also a large number that are for profit.

If you're a for profit, you're not filing a form 990. You would then be required by these regs to get an audited financial; is that how we should read it?

MR. GLYN: That is correct, yeah. And as one of the commenters, or one of the people in the chat, just said, most are for profit. And 1 would agree with that. I don't have the exact breakdown, but, yes, the majority are for profit and they will be required to post an audited financial statement, as defined by these regulations.

MR. BAKER: And their tax return as a for profit would not satisfy the Department's requirements?

MR. GLYN: No. That is correct.
MR. BAKER: Okay. Okay. Any Board members have questions?

MS. ROBERTS: So I guess I did have a question. And, you know, I think it's been a concern of the industry that the underlying statute that's the basis for these regs didn't talk about audited

1 financials. That that was removed by an amendment.
2 You know, I think we're going to hear from the
3 industry, but $I$ just had a question in terms of, did
4 the Department feel that it has the authority to ask
5 for audited financials?

So we do feel that we have the authority
to interpret that to require audited financial statements. We feel that's important for the financial viability of the industry to require professional oversight that guarantees accurate information.

We all know how important it is to have a
financially viable nursing home industry. We feel that these requirements are in line with the statute, and they're also in line with the requirements of other healthcare facilities, including acute care hospitals, which are required to submit audited financial statements every year.

So given the language of the law, given

1 our oversight responsibilities and the general desire

MS. ROBERTS: Just from a compliance standpoint, so this is a special adoption, so it will be i mmediately effective when it goes in the register.

Is there a time period that you'll be looking for an audited financial statement or ..

MR. GLYN: The regulations -. |'m sorry. The regulations do stipulate that they're due back by the 15 th day of the sixth month after the close of the nursing home's fiscal year.

Now, you know, most nursing homes, । i magine, are on calendar year basis for their fiscal year, so that would be June 15th.

The regulations also do give us .. the Department has the authority to, you know, have some I eeway, especially in this first year, l would say, given that this is a new requirement.

Obviously it would be unreasonable to expect the nursing homes to have audited financial statements, you know, a week from now or something like that. So, you know, we are certainly mindful of
the fact that this is a new requirement, and we will
be mindful of specific requests in that regard.
MS. ROBERTS: Thank you.
MS. JENKINS: If I could just -. just
from a regulatory standpoint, it is a special
adoption, but we're doing $\cdots$ the Department is doing a
concurrent proposal as well. So there's a comment
period on this. So while the rules, yes, will be
effective upon filing with the OAL, they're good for
-. with the concurrent proposal they'\|l be good for
two years. But we are doing that proposal. Otherwise
then they will expire at that 24 -month mark.
But the proposal will allow for the
comment period, just like you do any other proposal,
and that will then go through and respond to any
comments the Department gets.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Any other members have questions or
comments?

No?
We will now open it up to the public
portion. I don't know how many folks we have wanting to speak, but please limit your comments to five mi nutes, if you can.

Who's the first person up, Lissette?

JOHN INDYK: John Indyk, Healthcare Association.

MR. BAKER: Okay. John, and you spoke earlier, so the court reporter has your name.

Please proceed.
JOHN INDYK: Thank you. Thank you for this opportunity to convey our objections to the Special Adoption and Concurrently Proposed Readoption of New Rules.

As a proposed readoption of the rules, it prompted (indiscernible) indicated by the enactment of P.L. 2021 , Chapter 457, which passed the I egislature Assembly Bill 4478 .

HCANJ request that you not approve the proposed (indiscernible) by the Department because it contains a requirement that owner-certified financial statements be audited by a Certified Public Accountant. This requirement is contrary to both the wording of the I aw and the Iegislative intent. It i mposes an administrative burden that is excessively costly and will divert money away from patient care for no clear regulatory purpose.

And Assembly Bill 4478 and counterpart
Senate Bill 2759, if they were advancing in the I egislature, HCANJ and our partnered trade
associations engaged in extensive discussions with bill sponsors and staff and other Iegislators.. I egislative Ieaders about this Iegislation.

Paramount among our many objections to the provision requiring annual audited financial statements. We did not object to the idea of financial (indiscernible) through the posting of financial disclosures.

However, we did object to the requirements that they be audited because of the cost of these audits. And we also objected to the burden of requiring providers to prepare reports that were different than reports that were submitted to the Department of Human Services.

As a result of these discussions, various changes were made to the proposal. In fact, the I egis 1 ation was amended four times as it made its way through the I egislative process. Included in the first round of amendments was removal of the requirement for audited financial statements. That provision could have been placed back into the I egislation the next three times it was amended. However, it was not.

Legislators appreciated the concerns we had raised about requiring audited financial

1 statements, and instead passed a compromised bill negotiated in good faith, and with which HCANJ did not oppose.

To be clear, HCANJ was not happy with many of the provisions of the final bill, but we understood that there had to be compromise, and we agreed not to oppose the final bill.

The Governor signed the compromised bills into I aw without sending it back to the Iegislature, passing that ordered financial statements be placed back in.

For the DOH now to ignore both the wording of the $I$ aw and the clear intent of the
 the proposed new rule that nursing homes' financial statements be audited, is a reversal of the good faith for which this I egislation became Iaw.

Further, the Department is seeking to i mpose requirements for audits without conducting any financial analysis about the impact of this requirement upon the nursing homes and the residents.

We do not object to including financial
audited statements. Why do we object to the DOH including audited financial statements in the proposal? There's several reasons.

First, nursing homes would incur significant costs to have financial statements audited by a CPA. Approximately $\$ 100,000$ annually for each nursing home. There is no funding for this cost, and there's been no analysis to determine whether nursing homes have the resources to comply. The $D O H$ apparently just presumes, without any data to support the presumption, that these nursing homes have excess cash available to pay this cost. This presumption is absolutely wrong.

Second, unlike (indiscernible) reports which are collected by DHS, financial statements are complex, vary from one nursing home to the next, and cannot be used to compare facilities. They certainly cannot be used to accept Medicaid payment rates. And we are unaware of any regulatory purpose for these reports.

Neither the I aw nor the proposed regulations contain any requirement or indication how these reports would be used. I n fact, the law does not even require that these reports be submitted to DOH. The I aw only requires that they be posted on the nursing home's website.
$\left.\right|^{\prime} \mid \|$ continue. Third, the DOH does not permit a single dollar of funding to nursing homes in

1 New Jersey. There's already ample financial transparency reports that nursing homes already are required to submit, including annual direct care ratio reports mandated by I aw in 2020 requiring nursing homes to report to DOH both total revenues collected, along with reports of revenues that are expended on direct carestaff, other wages, taxes, administrative costs, investments and improvements to the facility's equipment and physical plant, profits, et cetera, and any other factor that the Commission shall require.

There's also quarterly NF-1 reports submitted by the DOAS to allow for the assessment of financial stability (indiscernible). There are also now Medicaid (indiscernible) reports most recently collected last October in a form and format dictated by the DHS to uniformly convey the full array of operating expenditures made by each nursing home, along with ownership data, revenue streams, and other i nformation DHS deems necessary to require, which a mounts to full disclosure - full financial disclosure of nursing operations. There are al so now Medicaid (indiscernible) reports most recently collected last October in a form and format dictated by the DHS to uniformly convey the full array of operating expenditures made by each nursing home along
with ownership data, resident experience, and other information DHS deems necessary to require. Which amounts to full disclosure .. full financial disclosure from nursing home operators. And there's also Medicare (indiscernible) reports submitted annually to (indiscernible).
(Indiscernible) and finally the burden of the State requiring providers to submit multiple reports to multiple agencies is a type of ill-conceived regulation that makes it more difficult for providers to focus on the care of their residents. The I aw contains I anguage that calls for DOH to streaml ine reporting requirements, and this regulatory proposal does the exact opposite.

Providers could be required to submit one annual financial disclosure to one state agency that can be (indiscernible) to state agencies and posted for the public. That report should be thorough, accurate, meaningful, and transparent.

The hodgepodge reporting that these proposed regulations add do not benefit anyone. And one final point must be made.

Traditionally, Medicaid (indiscernible) reports in New Jersey were audited by the State with an auditor's program operator of DHS. The (indiscernible) reports
were accurate, the audits rarely resulted in significant findings. HCANJ understands that the State has explored instituting the audited program now. The cost for that program is \$18 million annually.

However, the State does not want to budget funds for this purpose. Why then does the DOH think it appropriate for nursing homes that could take the hit of more than $\$ 30$ million annually to submit audited financial statements when the State refuses to spend $\$ 12$ million less for the same purpose?

For these reasons, HCANJ respectfully requests that the HCAB reject the Department's rule proposal before you, unless requirements in nursing home financial statements be audited is removed.

I thank you for your consideration of these objections.

MR. BAKER: Thank you, Mr. Indyk.
Is there anyone else from the public who would like to be heard on this matter?

MEAGAN GLASER: Meagan GI aser, LeadingAge New Jersey \& Delaware.

MR. BAKER: Please go ahead, Ms. Glaser.
MEAGAN GLASER: Good morning. Thank you
for the opportunity to comment before the Health Care

1 Administration Board on the proposed special adoption 2 of rules concerning nursing home financial

3 transparency reporting and National Healthcare Safety 4 Network participation at N.J.A.C. 8:97.

LeadingAge New Jersey \& Delaware, which represents 150 primarily nonprofit mi ssion-driven senior care organizations, including nursing homes, strongly supports financial transparency. Our goal, however, is to accomplish this transparency in a manner that is useful for the public, and that it mi nimizes administrative burden and cost.

Our comments today are confined to only one component of the proposal: The proposal to require nursing home financial statements to be audited by an independent Certified Public Accountant. N.J.S.A. 26:2H-46.3, Subsection B, requires the New Jersey Department of Health to require a nursing home to post on its internet site annual owner certified financial statements, among other requirements.

LANJDE is concerned about the duplication of efforts and costs associated with the Department's proposal to require these statements to be independently audited by a CPA, when cost reports required by Medicare and Medicaid contain the same information and are prepared by reimbursement experts,
many of whom are CPAs.
In addition, we want to confirm.. although l know Mr. Glyn said earlier, we originally wanted to confirm that the Department intends for the IRS form 990 to completely satisfy all the requirements for the annual owner certified financial statements for nonprofit nursing homes.

LeadingAge New Jersey \& Delaware believes the proposed I anguage at N.J.A.C. 8:997-2.3B should clearly state this. Therefore, rather than using the I anguage to satisfy all or part of the requirements of posting an annual owner certified financial statement, the provision should state, to satisfy all of the requirements of posting an annual owner certified statement.

We hope to be able to work with the Department as this proposal goes through the comment period to arrive at a resolution that addresses the need for transparency, and al so reduces duplicative and potentially confusing reporting that could result in multiple financial reports that present information in slightly different ways.

The statute itself calls for the Department of Health to review reporting requirements for nursing homes, and take steps to standardize and
consol idate the reporting requirements for the purpose of reducing the administrative bonanza on nursing homes in complying with reporting requirements, developing updated standardized data reporting requirements and improving the utility of the reported data and the ability to share the data across systems, including, as appropriate, systems maintained by other state departments and agencies, county and local agencies, and federal authorities.

Thank you for your time today.
MR. BAKER: Thank you very much.
Is there anyone else from the public who would like to be heard?

LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Yes. Laurie Facciarossa Brewer, State Iong-term care ombudsman.

MR. BAKER: Laurie, please spell your
I ast name for the court reporter.
LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Do you want me to put it in the chat? Laurie, L-A-U-R-I-E, $B-R-E-W-E-R$.

Oh, okay. Just put it in the chat? I don't know if she can grab it there. It's Laurie, L-A-U-R-I-E, Facciarossa, F-A-C-C-I-A-R-O-S-S-A, Brewer, B-R-E-W-E-R.

MR. BAKER: You're cutting out for others
in that we can't hear you.
LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Can you hear me now?

MR. BAKER: Yes.
LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Okay turned my camera off. Is this better?

MR. BAKER: Yes. Thank you.
LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Okay.
Thanks. Good morning, Chairman Baker, and members of the Board. My name is Laurie Facciarossa Brewer. I'm the State long-term care ombudsman. I don't represent the nursing home industry. I represent the people who I ive in nursing homes.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to offer comments on the rule proposal before you today with the financial transparency for reporting for nursing homes.

MR. BAKER: You're going in and out.
LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: I don't know why. Okay. Is anybody else going to speak? |'I\| go to another computer.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Why don't we give Ms.
Brewer a chance to go to different computer? Is there anyone else who would like to speak? We'\|l give Ms. Brewer a few minutes to get to a new computer, or
even an iPhone sometime works better.
(Short recess was held.)
MR. BAKER: For the Department staff, after Ms. Brewer speaks, |'\| ask you to address the comments raised by the members of the public.

MR. GLYN: Certainly.
LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Laurie Brewer here.

MR. BAKER: Okay. Ms. Brewer, start from the beginning, and if you wouldn't mind, speak a little slower so the court reporter can catch everything.

LAURIE FACCIAROSSA BREWER: Of course. Good morning, Chairman Baker, and members of the Board. My name is Laurie Facciarossa Brewer, and l'm the New Jersey Iong-term care ombudsman. I don't represent the nursing home industry. I represent people who live in nursing homes.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comments on the rule proposal before you today related to financial transparency reporting for nursing homes.

I firmly support the proposed requirement for nursing home financial statements to be audited by independent CPAs in accordance with generally-accepted auditing standards and not self reported.

Independent audits will add significant value for both regulators and resident advocates in three important ways. One, hel ping to ensure that public funds are spent primarily on resident care.

Two, enabling the State to more accurately calculate the true cost of nursing home care and set rates accordingly.

Three, allowing us to assess and monitor the fiscal health of each nursing home.

That final point can be crucial in averting sudden closures. I think we all recall what happened at the Princeton Care Center I ast year and the difficulty it presented and continues to present for residents and their loved ones.

My staff and I have advocated for
financial reporting rules that go beyond those on today's agenda. Specifically we support a requirement that all nursing homes submit financial statements, not only for their own .- themselves or their own facility, but also for any related entities that are paid through their nursing home operations. But we recognize that new legislation is needed to support such a requirement.

For today we urge you to approve the proposed rules which have the potential to provide a
pass forward in fiscal .- financial transparency in nursing homes.

I want to add also that a number of the I egislative wrangling around transparency that occurred last year related to a bill that did not even pass last year and was re-i ntroduced this year, and that is a financial transparency bill which has been introduced by Senator Vitale that would require just what I'm talking about, which is audited financial statements, not just of the facility itself, but for related parties. Related meaning that they're part of the same ownership group. And national experts have shown that these type of related parties provide a good vehicle for owners who are so inclined to funnel off money to themselves or to the corporation.

So al so want to note that nursing homes i $n$ New Jersey, in the State fiscal year budget that we are currently in, received a $\$ 120 \mathrm{mi} \|$ | ion rate i ncrease across the board. $\$ 50$ million in statefunds and \$50 million in Medicaid funds.

So the argument that they don't have the money to do this, when they just received $\$ 120$ million in additional funding, (indiscernible) to me.

Thank you again for the opportunity to
offer my perspective.

MR. BAKER: Thank you very much.
I s there anyone else in the public who would like to be heard?

Hearing no one, $\left.\right|^{\prime}| |$ close the public portion and give the Department, either Mr. Glyn or Ms. Jenkins, the opportunity to respond to the questions as 1 see the two big questions were regulatory authority to impose a condition that might have been at least vague in the statute, and then, secondarily, addressing the cost issue.

I i magine that they already have
significant accounting costs. I don't know that there's a lot of additional cost to go into an audit or not, but $\left.\right|^{\prime}|l|$ |et the Department respond. Thank you.

MR. GLYN: Sure. And, in addition to
those points, ${ }^{\prime} d$ like to address a few other points that were made as well. So l just wanted to .. I just want to point out that these financial statements that we are proposing are not duplicative of the Medicaid or Medicare cost reports. For example, there is no bal ance sheet requirement in the - in the Medicaid cost reports. It's $\quad$ there's no way to know what the current assets or |iabilities are at the facility. That's just one example.

I believe somebody mentioned that we have no - the Department has no plans to use this data and select the requirement for its own sake. That's not accurate. We do have plans to complete market analysis and to start beginning to study what constitutes a healthy facility.

So we do have plans to use the audited financial data. And that also is part of the reason why it is so important that it be audited to ensure the accuracy to ensure that when we are analyzing what constitutes an unhealthy or - a healthy or unhealthy facility, that we are looking at accurate audited data.

There was also point that if the Department really felt that this was so i mportant, why don't we just audit it ourselves? Well, the fact is that the I aw requires that the nursing home is supposed to supply owner-certified financial statements. It doesn't create a mandate for the Department to do that.

> And the question is: What is an
owner-certified financial statement? And we feel that the Department has - has latitude to interpret that in a way to promote the broader goals of the law. And the broader goal s of the aw are to promote financial
-. financial stability of the overall industry.
So the audit requirement is part and parcel of the overall purpose of the law.

I also just want to point out that we are not - - we are not going to be the only state to have such a requirement. For example, Pennsylvania has recently instituted a similar requirement that nursing homes publish their audited financial statements as well. So we're certainly not an outlier in that regard.

So l'm hoping l responded to whoever made points. If there's something that you feel that I've mi ssed, you can address it, and l'।l try to address it.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Did any Board members need follow-ups or additional information from the Department?

Ellsworth, you're muted. Still can't hear you. Still mute. Turn off your earbuds maybe. Still can't hear you. You want -. you want -. we'II give you 30 seconds to log out and come back in, El? Maybe that will do it.

Lissette, keep an eye out for him.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Yes.
MR. BAKER: We're getting nothing.

MS. ROBERTS: You know, l could fill in the space, giving Ellsworth a chance to get live.

You know, l seem to recall a few years back, and this is in connection, really, with the Medicaid budget dealing with the nursing homes, whether they were supposed to put in place kind of an early warning system or something to deal with the nursing homes who were in financial trouble.

So my question was: Have you worked with Medicaid at all in terms of this financial disclosure pieces? Will that help with an early warning system..

MR. GLYN: So we do ..
MS. ROBERTS: .- concerning the
financials? Sorry.
MR. GLYN: I'm sorry. We do receive the early warning system data. That data is not audited. And we do have questions about the complete accuracy of all the information that we receive. It's also on a - you know, a quarterly basis, so it's not like it's necessarily the .- it's not up-to-the-minute data necessarily.

So understanding that, you know, when we receive the audited data that won't be up to the minute either, but at least it will be .. we can be
sure that it's an accurate reflection of where they were for their previous fiscal year.

MS. ROBERTS: Thank you.
MR. BAKER: Ellsworth will try to get
back in. We'll give him a minte.
(Short recess was held.)
MR. HAVENS: Okay. I apologize. I don't
know what the issue is.
My question was: Has .- since there
seems to be a question that the .. from the original I egis ${ }^{2}$ ation to final Iegislation that there's either reinterpretation or changes by the Department, has the Department gotten any feedback from any of the sponsoring legislators on changes and why the changes were made, if changes have been made?

MR. GLYN: I have not received any of that information. I can't speak for everybody in the Department. Our focus on the law that actually passed and was .- or the bill that was actually passed and signed in to law. So - but, no, l have not received any feedback from the -. you know, the sponsoring Iegislators.

MR. HAVENS: Okay. So on the final -. I apologize. I didn't follow the Iegislation, obviously, that closely.

So in the final legislation that was passed, you believe that the Department's - these regulations are in concert with the final legislation?

MR. GLYN: Correct.

MR. HAVENS: Is that correct?
MR. GLYN: Yes.

MR. HAVENS: Okay. That was my question. Thank you.

JOHN I NDYK: How can you say that it was taken out? Audited financials were taken out of the comments?

MR. BAKER: Mr. Indyk, the public portion is closed. Please mute yourself. This is a portion for Board members.

Any other Board members?

MK, I know you had something.
MS. ROBERTS: Well, thelong-term care
ombudsman talked about there's new legislation that would require audited financials. So, I mean, it kind of goes to Ell sworth's point. If they have dropped new legislation to require audited financials, doesn't this - -

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: No. The difference is that it's for related parties.

JOHN INDYK: I can't ..

MR. BAKER: One at a time. Let Mary Kay finish her question, and then - and then we'\| allow an answer. Thank you.

MS. ROBERTS: Okay. I hear what you
said. I just - $\quad$ wanted clarification because if the | egislature has new legislation or legislation that didn't pass last session, that would require the audited financials. I thought that that would be clear legislative intent that they didn't require in the last statute that had passed and was signed into I aw a udited financials. But if it's unrelated parties that $-\quad$ I hink that's what you were just saying.

MR. BAKER: Okay. So I'm just trying to keep everything organized for the court reporter.

So, Madam Ombudsman, would you please respond? Thank you.

MR. BAKER: Laurie, you're still muted.
MS. FACCI AROSSA BREWER: Okay. Can you hear me?

MR. BAKER: Yes.

MS. FACCIAROSSA BREWER: I put it in the chat, the new legislation. My answer is in the chat.

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: This is Lissette. Her chat reads, "The new |egislation speaks to audited financial statements for related parties. This one
does not."
MR. BAKER: Thank you, Lissette. I was just going to ask how we got that into the record. You took care of it. Thank you.

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: You're welcome.
MR. BAKER: Are there any other Board members who have questions? I have just one more for staff. Remind me what the comment period is and the process for the comment period.

MR. GLYN: There is a 60-day comment period. It is .-

MS. JENKINS: Mike, this is a special adoption with a concurrent proposal. So the special adoption will go into effect .. so the rules will go into effect when they're filed with the OAL.

But with the current proposal .- because the special adoption will only be good for two years. So to keep, you know, any rule going past that, you would have to do the proposal, which the Department is doing now. So at the same time we're doing the proposal, which will have a 60-day comment period.

Does that answer your question?
MR. BAKER: Yes, it does. Thank you.
Are there any other questions or comments
from the Board members?

Hearing none, would someone like to make
a Motion?
l'Il make a Motion for approval of the Notice of Special Adoption and Concurrently Proposed Readoption of New Rules for Nursing Home Financial Transparency Reporting and the National Healthcare Safety Network Participation codified at N.J.A.C. 8:97.

Is there a second?
MR. HAVENS: This is Ellsworth. |'\|।
second.
MR. BAKER: Thank you.
Any last comments from the Board members?
Hearing none, Lissette, please call the
roll.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Jenkins?
MS. JENKINS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Paulino?
MR. PAULINO: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Mr. Havens?
MR. HAVENS: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Ms. Roberts?
MS. ROBERTS: No.
SPEAKER: Somebody with knowledge of this issue that can be .-

7 Motion carries.
whoever's speaking. the record. adjourn.

MR. BAKER: Please mute yourself

Lissette, please continue.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: And Mr. Baker?
MR. BAKER: Yes.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: We have five yeses.

MR. BAKER: Thank you.
MS. JENKINS: I'msorry. Mary Kay, did you say yes or no? I'm sorry. Just to clarify for

MS. ROBERTS: My vote is a no. I have an is sue with the audited financials. I think we may be going too far in terms of owner's certified financial statement. But, you know, $\quad$ certainly appreciate the intent behind the regulations themselves, and look forward to the comment period.

MR. BAKER: Thanks, Mary Kay.
MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: My apologies. We have four yeses. Motion carries.

MR. BAKER: Are there any other comments from members or from the Department?

Hearing none, |'\|l make a Motion to

Is there a second?

MR. HAVENS: Second. Mr. Havens second.

MR. BAKER: All in favor say aye.
MS. JENKINS: Aye.
MR. PAULINO: Aye.
MR. HAVENS: Aye.

MS. ROBERTS: Aye.
MR. BAKER: Thanks, everyone. I also want to thank those from the industry who came out and spoke today, al so our ombudsman, and to encourage you all to participate in the - what will be on the additionally filed item, the 60-day comment period.

I thank you all, and we will see you next month.

MS. SANTIAGO-RIVERA: Thank you.
( Meeting was concluded at $10: 30$ a.m.)

CERTIFICATION
STATE OF NEW JERSEY
COUNTY OF CAMDEN

1, Cindy Pineiro, a Certified Shorthand Reporter and Notary public of the State of New Jersey, do hereby certify that $I$ reported the meeting in the above-captioned matter; that the foregoing is a true and correct transcript of the stenographic notes of testimony taken by me in the above-captioned matter.

। further certify that I am not an attorney or counsel for any of the parties, nor a relative or employee of any attorney or counsel connected with the action, nor financially interested in the action.

Cindy Pincio

Cindy Pineiro, CSR \#30XIOO181500
Notary Public \#50010742 Exp. 2/24/25

Dated: February 15, 2024

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