

**MINUTES**  
**of the**  
**THIRD MEETING**  
**of the**  
**LEGISLATIVE HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**July 1-3, 2024**  
**University of New Mexico-Taos**  
**Bataan Hall**  
**121 Civic Plaza Drive**  
**Taos**

The third meeting of the Legislative Health and Human Services Committee was called to order by Senator Gerald Ortiz y Pino, chair, on Monday, July 1, 2024, at 9:28 a.m. in Bataan Hall at the University of New Mexico (UNM)-Taos in Taos.

**Present**

Sen. Gerald Ortiz y Pino, Chair  
Rep. Eleanor Chávez  
Rep. Pamela Herndon  
Rep. Jenifer Jones  
Sen. Antoinette Sedillo Lopez (7/2, 7/3)

**Absent**

Rep. Elizabeth "Liz" Thomson, Vice Chair  
Sen. David M. Gallegos  
Sen. Martin Hickey

**Advisory Members**

Rep. John Block (7/1)  
Rep. Joanne J. Ferrary (7/1, 7/2)  
Sen. Linda M. López (7/2)  
Rep. Stefani Lord (7/1)  
Rep. Tara L. Lujan (7/1)  
Sen. Harold Pope  
Sen. Nancy Rodriguez (7/1)  
Sen. Elizabeth "Liz" Stefanics (7/2)  
Sen. Bill Tallman (7/2, 7/3)

Rep. Kathleen Cates  
Rep. Gail Chasey  
Sen. Katy M. Duhigg  
Rep. Miguel P. García  
Sen. Siah Correa Hemphill  
Rep. Tara Jaramillo  
Rep. D. Wonda Johnson  
Rep. Alan T. Martinez  
Rep. Cristina Parajón  
Sen. Shannon D. Pinto  
Rep. Patricia Roybal Caballero  
Sen. Gregg Schmedes  
Rep. Reena Szczepanski  
Rep. Harlan Vincent

**Guest Legislators**

Sen. Roberto "Bobby" J. Gonzales (7/2, 7/3)  
Rep. Kristina Ortez (7/1, 7/3)

(Attendance dates are noted for those members not present for the entire meeting.)

**Staff**

Zander Dawson, Staff Attorney, Legislative Council Service (LCS)  
Andrea Lazarow, Bill Drafter, LCS  
Grace Balderamos, Staff, LCS

**Guests**

The guest list is in the meeting file.

**Handouts**

Handouts and other written testimony are in the meeting file and posted on the legislature's website.

**References to Webcast**

The time reference noted next to each agenda item in this document is cross-referenced to the webcast of the committee meeting, which can be found at [www.nmlegis.gov](http://www.nmlegis.gov), under the "Webcast" tab. The presentations made and committee discussions for agenda items can be found on the recorded webcast for this meeting.

**Monday, July 1****Welcome and Introductions (9:28 a.m.)**

Senator Ortiz y Pino welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Welcome to UNM-Taos (9:29 a.m.)**

Mary Gutierrez, Ed.D., chancellor, UNM-Taos, welcomed the committee to UNM-Taos and noted that UNM branch campuses are offering more associate and baccalaureate degrees to try to increase the number of health care workers in New Mexico.

**Recruiting Health Care Professionals (9:50 a.m.)**

Jerry N. Harrison, Ph.D., executive director, New Mexico Health Resources, Inc. (NMHR), provided an overview of NMHR, which is a nonprofit agency that supports efforts to recruit health care professionals to and retain health care providers in New Mexico. NMHR also offers services such as financial aid resources and career counseling. He discussed loan repayment and the difficulties of recruiting health care workers to rural New Mexico. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=2>.

**State Health Care Facility Staffing Update (11:31 a.m.)**

Patrick M. Allen, secretary, Department of Health (DOH), and Tim Shields, administrator, New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute at Las Vegas, provided information about state health care facilities for skilled and long-term care, rehabilitation, substance abuse treatment and mental health care, including The Meadows at the New Mexico Behavioral Health Institute of Las Vegas, Fort Bayard Medical Center, New Mexico State Veterans' Home, New

Mexico Rehabilitation Center, Turquoise Lodge Hospital and Sequoyah Adolescent Treatment Center. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=3>.

**Public Comment (12:36 p.m.)**

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD) Update (1:25 p.m.)**

Clay Bailey, superintendent, RLD; Melissa Salazar, director, Boards and Commissions Division, RLD; and Todd Stevens, director, Cannabis Control Division, RLD, provided an update about health-care-related licensure in New Mexico, including an updated license count and a description of the department's new automated licensing platform that simplifies the processing of new license applications and license renewals. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=4>.

**Legislative Finance Committee (LFC) Report: Hospital Rates and Accountability (2:11 p.m.)**

Allegra Hernandez, Ph.D., senior fiscal analyst, LFC, presented a brief about hospital revenue, the range of profitability among hospitals throughout the state and state investments in hospitals. She explained that most of the New Mexico hospitals that experienced a net loss in 2022 are located in nonurban areas and that investor-owned hospitals are near the national average for profitability. She noted that the state continues to increase hospital subsidies and that estimates suggest that government revenue will comprise about 74 percent of hospital revenue in 2025. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=5>.

**LFC Report: Physical and Behavioral Health Workforce (3:11 p.m.)**

RubyAnn Esquibel, principal analyst, LFC, presented a brief about the health care professional shortage that exists both in the state and nationally. She explained that New Mexico has one of the most severe shortages of mental health care providers in the country, as approximately 40 percent of the state's population is underserved. Data indicate that in New Mexico, Medicaid enrollment increased between 2020 and 2022, but the number of physical and behavioral health care providers that accept Medicaid patients trended downward. She noted that a recent report by the Association of American Medical Colleges estimated that by 2036, the country will have a shortage of between 20,200 and 40,400 primary care providers. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=6>.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 4:01 p.m.

**Tuesday, July 2****Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 9:17 a.m.

**New Mexico Medical Board Update and 2025 Legislative Goals (9:19 a.m.)**

Karen Carson, M.D., board chair, New Mexico Medical Board; Amanda Quintana, interim executive director, New Mexico Medical Board; Debbie Dieterich, investigations manager, New Mexico Medical Board; and Monique Parks, licensing manager, New Mexico Medical Board, reviewed licensing statistics for fiscal year 2024, application processing and licensure pathways. They discussed the New Mexico Health Professional Wellness Program, investigations in fiscal years 2023 and 2024 and artificial intelligence in medicine. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=7>.

**Higher Education Department (HED) Report: Expanding Behavioral Health Education Opportunities (10:40 a.m.)**

Patricia Trujillo, Ph.D., deputy secretary, HED; Jose Eli Fresquez, Ph.D., L.I.S.W., L.C.S.W., Cornerstone to Excellence; Veronica Sanchez, D.S.W., L.I.S.W., L.C.S.W., chief executive officer (CEO), Cornerstone to Excellence; Steve Peterson, Ed.D., commissioner, Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools; Ismael Dieppa, Ph.D., L.C.S.W.; and Calico Jones, D.S.W., L.S.W., discussed an upcoming HED report about expanding the behavioral health care workforce in New Mexico and accompanying pilot projects.

**UNM Health Care Workforce Report (12:01 p.m.)**

Hengameh Raissy, Pharm.D., interim vice president for research and research professor, Department of Pediatrics, UNM Health Sciences Center (HSC), presented the UNM HSC's annual health care workforce report, pursuant to the Health Care Work Force Data Collection, Analysis and Policy Act. Michael Richards, M.D., M.P.A., senior vice president, Clinical Affairs, UNM HSC, discussed drivers of workforce needs, tools for accessing needs and trends in physician employment. Douglas Ziedonis, M.D., M.P.H., executive vice president, UNM HSC and CEO, UNM Health System, discussed UNM's initiatives for expanding and diversifying the state's health care workforce, such as recruiting and retaining health care providers and students interested in becoming health care professionals and increasing the UNM School of Medicine's class size and residency and fellowship numbers. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=9>.

**Approval of Minutes (1:37 p.m.)**

Upon a motion made and duly seconded, and without any objections, the committee approved the minutes of the June 5-7, 2024 meeting.

**Public Comment (1:38 p.m.)**

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Health Care Authority (HCA) Update (2:01 p.m.)**

Alanna Dancis, C.N.P., medical director, HCA, and Dana Flannery, Medicaid director, HCA, provided an update on Turquoise Care, which is a Medicaid managed care program that began on July 1, 2024. They discussed managed care organization oversight and accountability, Medicaid rate increases, changes to managed care organization contracts and 1115 Waiver updates. They noted that New Mexico was selected to participate in a four-year federal Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic Medicaid demonstration program. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=10>.

**Hospital Nursing Updates (3:26 p.m.)**

Nancy Laster, R.N., D.N.P., M.B.A., C.E.N.P., C.P.H.Q., chief nursing officer, Lovelace Westside Hospital and administrative director, One Call; Holly Muller, D.N.P., M.H.A., R.N., C.R.R.N., N.E.A-B.C., S.V.P., P.D.S., chief nursing officer, Presbyterian Healthcare Services; and Brittany Hamilton, M.S.N., M.B.A., R.N., chief nursing officer, Holy Cross Medical Center, discussed challenges that rural hospitals face, such as limited ground transportation and limited bed availability, including limited bed availability for high-level-care patients. They described initiatives to recruit nurses such as Team Taos, which is an initiative at Holy Cross Medical Center that encourages nurses in Taos and graduates of the UNM-Taos nursing program to practice nursing in Taos. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=11>.

**Nursing School Updates (4:14 p.m.)**

Shawna Kemper, M.S.N., R.N., C.N.E., director of nursing, San Juan College; Dawn Kittner, M.S.N., R.N., C.N.E., director of nursing, UNM-Taos; and Terri Tewart, M.S.N., R.N., dean, School of Sciences, Health, Engineering and Math, Santa Fe Community College, discussed challenges that nursing schools face, such as difficulty finding faculty, lack of student preparedness and difficulty finding nurses who want to pursue a career in nursing education. They shared their personal experiences about struggling with student retention, including having students who dropped out of nursing school for reasons such as not being able to afford daycare for their young children, being unable to complete assignments because of not having internet access at home and needing to take care of family members who cannot afford to hire a caregiver.

**Recess**

The meeting recessed at 5:12 p.m.

**Wednesday, July 3****Reconvene**

The meeting reconvened at 9:24 a.m.

**Brainstorming Session (9:25 a.m.)**

Senator Ortiz y Pino led the committee in a brainstorming session focused on potential legislation that could address the issues presented to the committee.

**Health Care Workforce Challenges (10:26 a.m.)**

Larry Martinez, director of legislative affairs, Presbyterian Medical Services, discussed employee recruitment and retention challenges at Presbyterian Medical Services, such as barriers to recruiting, the lack of affordable housing in many communities in the state and the difficulty in providing competitive wages for employees. He reviewed statistics about services provided by Presbyterian Medical Services in New Mexico and noted the number of vacant positions within Presbyterian Medical Services. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=13>.

**Health Care Providers' Perspective on Health Care Access (11:45 a.m.)**

Adrienne Enghouse, R.N.; Carol Goode, patient; Regina McGinnis, physical therapist; Nicole Loera, social worker; Gigi Regusis, R.N.; Vanessa Guterres, cast technician; and Laura Rector, R.N., described the mission of the United Health Professionals of New Mexico. They shared their personal experiences with hospital administrations and the statewide health care worker shortage. The presentation materials can be found here:

<https://www.nmlegis.gov/Committee/Handouts?CommitteeCode=LHHS&Date=7/1/2024&ItemNumber=15>.

**Public Comment (12:41 p.m.)**

A list of individuals making public comment is available in the meeting file.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business before the committee, the meeting adjourned at 12:49 p.m.