



**Healthy Louisiana  
Health Education Advisory Committee Meeting  
Minutes Summary – Second Quarter: June 17, 2020**

**Health plan contact:** Kim Chope  
**Subject:** Member Services

**Attendees**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Brooke Deykin	Healthy Blue
Cheryl Bowers-Stephen, MD	Healthy Blue
Crystal Pichon	The Safety Place
Kathy Victorian	Healthy Blue
Kimberly Hollard	Providence Community Housing
Lashundra Robinson	Healthy Blue
Letonya Dean	Food Bank of NWLA
Lisa Ellsworth	Healthy Blue
Mathew Wallace	Easter Seals
Patricia Prudhomme	SWLA Center of Health Services
Peter Lambousy	Healthy Blue
Rashad Bristo	Healthy Blue
Renee Ellis	Caddo Schools
Robert Blue	Healthy Blue
Terrence	Northeast Counseling LLC
Tracy Smith	Healthy Blue
Walthena Gosa	Healthy Blue

**Agenda topics**

- Introductions
- Health plan updates
- COVID-19 updates
- Group discussion

**Introductions**

Peter welcomed everyone. He thanked them for joining from home. Everyone introduced themselves and their organization.

**Health plan updates**

Peter gave updates since December. He reviewed membership numbers. Healthy Blue's membership grew by more than 21,000 members over the last 3 months to almost 288,000 members. Medicaid enrollment grew by almost 100,000 members. The growth is driven by COVID-19 and higher unemployment.

## **COVID-19 updates**

When the pandemic hit, the Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) made it simpler for members to renew and made sure current members wouldn't lose their benefits. LDH at first limited what was sent to members about COVID-19. Recently, LDH eased some restrictions to allow us to tell members about immunizations for children and send well-visit reminders. LDH also expanded telemedicine, extended preapprovals and waived copays.

Healthy Blue is removing barriers to healthcare by offering telemedicine visits. Transportation was a challenge at first due to the fear of getting COVID-19. Recently, transportation has gotten back to normal. Most doctor offices are now seeing patients. It's important to take care of ourselves and not allow the fear of COVID-19 to stop us from seeking care.

## **Our response to COVID-19**

We addressed food insecurity and other needs for the most vulnerable across the country. We're working with groups and states to offer COVID-19 relief. We also started a nationwide call campaign to reach out to Medicaid members and connect them with services. Our local team is taking part in in this, making calls to our members.

We continue to focus on health disparities facing underserved communities. These communities are often the most impacted by this pandemic. Locally, we're working hard to help the community. We're open to listening to other organizations' ideas on COVID-19 relief. We supplied 40,000 gloves and masks in Baton Rouge and New Orleans. We gave more than \$100,000 to groups across the state to support their efforts. We want to thank all of you for what you do on the front line, putting your lives at risk to make a difference.

## **Commitment to our community**

Peter reiterated our commitment to address social injustice, racial inequality and health disparities. He noted Anthem along with Anthem Foundation pledged \$50 million over the next five years to groups focused on influencing these issues. He opened the floor for discussion.

### *Discussion*

- Kathy, Healthy Blue: The murder of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and others were senseless. They did not deserve to die at the hands of those who were supposed to protect and serve. Having five brothers and a husband makes it hard. While these are hard conversations, we need to have them. We don't beat what we don't face. I hope we can come together as a country because black lives do matter. This has been going on for a long time. I believe that many people that watched the George Floyd murder triggered empathy and compassion. We need to treat people as human beings.
- Peter, Healthy Blue: We know this is a hard topic. We're open to anyone who has ideas about helping the health plan break barriers.

## Group Discussion

- Barriers to telemedicine
  - Matthew, Easter Seals: Rehab services in North Louisiana have experienced issues with telehealth because clients have limited cellphone plans and won't use minutes for telehealth. It's hard for people to get support.
  - Peter, Healthy Blue: We will look into this issue. Maybe the plans offered extra minutes because of COVID-19.
  - Patricia, SWLA Center for Health Services: Many clients have flip phones and aren't able to use telehealth. Many lack Wi-Fi. Nurses have been bringing hot spots with them when they meet with clients. New Orleans is doing a pilot with Verizon where they may be giving Wi-Fi. This is a huge challenge in rural areas. We've also created safe spaces where clients may come to interact with providers.
  - Peter: We'll check to see if we're able to offer any solutions. Are there ways to identify members in need of devices? Patricia stated this would be the hard part.
  - Both Matthew and Patricia discussed using case managers to help identify needs as well as principals in schools.
  - Kathy, Healthy Blue: If we offered extra minutes for telehealth, how will we know members use the minutes for it? Can we provide a card that is specifically for telemedicine use?
  - Matthew: We should set up a national line members can call toll free.
  - Peter: We could charge the providers for telemedicine and then have them bill us.
  - Kim, Providence Community Housing: Neighborhood Works discussed the technology gap that exists across the country in low-income homes. A work group in Washington D.C. is looking into the issue. Kim will circle back with Peter as she learns of solutions.
  - Peter: We can fix this. We have to bring the big carriers to the table to agree. Access to care is a barrier because of limited minutes.
- Cultural Competency
  - Robert, Healthy Blue: People are looking for education. After 20 years of conducting this type of training, this is more a "spirit" thing than what they have in their hearts. For now, we can only do cerebral training.
- Announcements
  - Kathy: We'll host 15 back-to-school events throughout the state this summer but will need to be careful with COVID-19. We'll use drive-thrus to distribute over 6,000 kits to make sure parents and kids have a great start to the school year. We are prepared to help virtually, too. We still plan to host our annual Total Teen Takeover in August. We're working on a virtual event along with our partners Big Buddy, Easter Seals and The Safety Place.
- Conclusion
  - Peter: Thanks to everyone for making the time to join us today and for all the work you continue to do in the community and to serve our members.

*Add context language to website:*

To join us at our next meeting or to learn more about the committee, call our Member Services team at 1-877-440-4065 (TTY 711), Monday through Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. **Meetings will be virtual due to COVID-19.**