

# Telehealth Alliance of Oklahoma (TAO) Meeting Minutes

## 2/14/2017

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**Attendance:** *Reji Varghese, Lane Hooton, Janet Wilson, Pam Forducey (remote), Jennifer Kellbach, Patti Davis (remote), Carolina Morris (remote), Martha Gragg, Angela Surratt (remote), Marcy White, Ariel Lufkin (remote), Christine Calouro (remote), Mei Wa Kwong (remote), Dawn Watson*

**Welcome/Opening Remarks:** The meeting was called to order at 10:04 a.m. by Mr. Reji Varghese. Introductions were made of all in attendance, and a quorum was not present. Action items were delayed until a quorum could be achieved. Ms. Watson noted that last month's meeting minutes were reviewed via email so that the group could take them to the bank to show that the board had voted to add Ms. Watson to the accounts.

**Treasurer's report:** Mr. Varghese presented the treasurer's report in Ms. Harrison's absence and reported that Aetna had expressed some interest in a TAO membership. Ms. Watson reported that Hillcrest also had expressed an interest in a membership and had been invoiced. The treasurer's report was not approved due to lack of quorum.

**CTEL Report Out:** Mr. Varghese reported that the one main theme was direct to consumers. He provided two hand-outs from the event, one on mobile health apps as an interactive tool and another from the Federal Trade Commission regarding New Jersey Board of Medical Examiners certification advertising regulations. The next meeting of CTCL is in June. The ATA meeting is in April and registration is now open. Ms. Forducey will give her report at a later date.

**Legislative report:** Ms. Watson reported that members were watching several pieces of legislation including the remote patient monitoring bill requested by AARP and the bill to require payment parity for telemedicine. In addition there are several bills that could affect the universal service fund which Ms. Watson, Ms. Harrison and others will be paying close attention to. Other bills exist that will affect telehealth definitions and other items. TAO members will be sure to weigh in on those bills and are communicating with each other and legislators frequently. Ms. Forducey reported that she attended the Diabetes Caucus with

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Ms. Watson and Ms. Anne Roberts and that she was pleased with Ms. Watson's knowledge of the legislature and its members.

**HRSA grant:** Ms. Wilson reported that the contract for the OU Health Sciences Center wasn't finalized last week though the position has been filled. Officials are working to make sure the contract is finalized.

**Update of Telehealth Survey:** Ms. Kellbach reported that the survey was sent out in the second week of January. Of those emailed, 230 with medical licenses responded and 30 hospitals. Ms. Kellbach said that about half of the 230 said that telemedicine is good and some respondents said that the state should not be using telemedicine. She said that the response rate is so low that it is difficult to do anything with results and that she would have liked to have had at least 50 percent of hospitals respond. Mr. Varghese said that the medical board could do another email to doctors this week.

**Educational presentation:** Ms. Mei Wa Kwong with the Center for Connected Health Policy presented an analysis of the telemedicine laws of the state and proposed legislation at this time. Oklahoma's laws are quite strong and the state is one of the better ones around telemedicine policy. Ms. Kwong reported that two bills, SB716 and HB1580, seek to establish parity of payment and no such language exists in Oklahoma law now. Without parity language, private payers are not required to pay the same amount per service as they would have if the service was in-person. HB1580 seems to be the better language. SB726 in its current form may discourage providers from using telehealth because some of these things may be viewed as burdensome. The definition of telemedicine medical service differs from other parts of statute and may cause confusion. HB1893 would provide for reimbursement for remote patient monitoring but does not clearly state there would be payment parity. Nineteen states have reimbursement for RPM with varying degrees of reimbursement for Medicaid. Another bill, HB2239 appears to include telephone and fax in the definition of telemedicine.

**Meeting adjournment:** The meeting was concluded at 11:21 a.m. and no vote was taken due to absence of quorum.

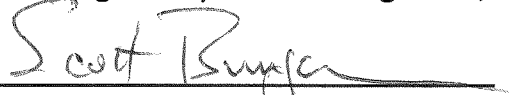
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*Upcoming TAO meetings at Oklahoma State Medical Board offices from 10:00 to noon:*

- March 14\* On site: 101 NE 51st St, Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Minutes signed by Scott Bumgarner, Secretary

  
Signature

  
Date