
***Delaware Nursing Home Residents
Quality Assurance Commission***

DNHRQAC Meeting of August 19, 2025

9:30 a.m.

Virtually via Cisco Webex

Anchor Location: DE CLASI – Georgetown

20151 Office Circle

Georgetown, DE 19947

FINAL

Commission member(s) present: Lisa Furber, DNHRQAC Chair; Cheryl Heiks; Norma Jones; Mary Peterson; Kori Bingaman, RN, NHA; Chris Marques, Esquire and Hooshang Shanehsaz, RPH.

Deputy Attorney General (DAG) Patrick Smith, Esquire was not in attendance.

Commission members not in attendance: Dr Avani Virani, MD; Brian Frazee; Representative Eric Morrison and Senator Spiros Mantzavinos.

Ms. Furber attended in-person @ the anchor location. The remainder of meeting participants attended virtually or by phone. A quorum of commission members was not present.

Others Present: Margaret Bailey, DNHRQAC; Ngozi Dom-Chima, DNHRQAC; Kevin Andrews, Public; Paul Smiley, Gilpin Hall; Sean Dwyer, DE Valley Chapter Alz Assoc; Erica Holmes, DE Valley Chpt Alz Assoc; Jim McCracken, LeadingAge DE/NJ; Julie Devlin, Esquire, Delaware Health & Social Services (DHSS); Steve Constantino, DHSS and Dava Newman, DHSS.

1. Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 9:35 am by DNHRQAC Chair, Lisa Furber. There was not a quorum of commission members present.

2. Approval of meeting minutes

Meeting minutes from 5/20/2025, 6/17/2025 & 7/15/2025 were not voted on due to lack of quorum.

3. Executive Session

An executive session was not held due to lack of quorum. Ms. Bailey will reach out to commission members to schedule a “separate” 30-minute meeting within the next two weeks for the full commission to address employment related items. Information will be posted on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar (PMC).

4. Old Business/New Business

DNHRQAC Statute Legislation

Senate Bill (SB) 155 w/Senate Substitution (SS) 2 was passed in both legislative chambers during last legislative session and awaiting Governor Meyer’s signature. The statutory changes will take effect 90 days after enactment into law.

DNHRQAC Strategic Planning Session

Ms. Furber mentioned July/August would be a perfect time for the Commission to host a strategic planning session for members to discuss short-and long-term goals. A few meeting locations were brought up during the discussion which included Willowbrooke Court Skilled Center at Manor House where Ms. Bingaman serves as Executive Director. Mr. Marques wondered if the strategic planning session should be live streamed, too and therefore open to the public. Ms. Furber mentioned all DNHRQAC business must adhere to open public meeting laws. She suggested the strategic planning session should be scheduled soon and commission members should plan to attend in-person, if possible.

DNHRQAC Satisfaction Survey

Ms. Dom-Chima provided information relating to the resident, family and staff satisfaction survey. During FY 26, the Joint Finance Committee (JFC) awarded DNHRQAC with \$15,200 in Grant-In-Aid funds to conduct a satisfaction survey for skilled nursing facilities (SNF) and assisted living facilities (ALF) throughout Delaware. The survey will focus on quality of care and safety related type questions. No public health information will be captured in this survey.

Although a specific timeline has not yet been determined, the hope is to roll out the survey within the coming months. Behind the scenes, Ms. Dom-Chima has been working on:

- Creating a webpage blog & other means to promote outreach efforts
- Developing a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's)
- Cultivating Survey Monkey questions
- Preparing a volunteer base to help residents complete the survey & training materials
- Purchasing and fine-tuning electronic devices and software

Ms. Dom-Chima will continue to provide updates to the Commission, once they are available.

DNHRQAC FY 25 Annual Report

Ms. Furber mentioned Ms. Bailey and Ms. Dom-Chima are working on the FY 25 annual report. Commission members Ms. Furber, Ms. Peterson and Ms. Heiks offered to assist with the report, too. A draft of the report will be shared with the full commission for consideration.

DNHRQAC FY 27 Budget Requests and Door Openers

Ms. Bailey provided an update to the Commission. The FY 27 Budget Request and Door Openers approved by the Commission (July 2025 meeting) was submitted to Administrative Office of the Courts (AOC) and Office of Management (OMB) for consideration. The items included:

- A. Convert casual seasonal (c/s) data analyst staff position to fulltime (f/t)
- B. Request 5% increase in travel, contractual and supplies (also need to move the FY26 increase of \$4,500 line items from one-time to operating/annual budget).
- C. Request \$1,500 for network port
- D. Request \$3,000 for staff development

Ms. Bailey recently met with the current OMB Judicial Branch analyst to discuss items relating to DNHRQAC's operating budget and FY 27 Budget Request and Door Openers.

Performance Measures for State Agencies Report

Ms. Bailey forwarded an August 6, 2025 memorandum sent to State Survey Agency Directors relating to FY 24 (10/1/2023 – 9/30/2024) State Performance Standards Systems (SPSS) Findings. This memorandum was sent by Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) which outlined results identified and summarized with States receiving a score of Met, Partially Met or Not Met.

Ms. Peterson expressed concern over the results of Delaware and asked DHSS to research and prepare to discuss the report at the September meeting. The report showed that Delaware Met 2 out of the 7 items measured in the report. Ms. Devlin mentioned DHSS is aware of the report and offered to research and provide an answer to the Commission.

5. Discussion

Delaware Valley Chapter Alzheimer's Association

Sean Dwyer and Erica Holmes presented information relating to the DE Valley Chapter Alzheimer's Association. Mr. Dwyer provided Alzheimer's facts and figures:

22,000 in Delaware living with Alzheimer's or other dementia (2020 data). Of that figure, two-thirds are living in a long-term care facility. Mr. Dwyer will forward a copy of the presentation so it can be shared with commission members.

Additionally, the most common forms of dementia, stages and warning signs were shared in the presentation.

The Alzheimer's Association has a 24/7 helpline, offers free education and supports and TrialMatch (links individuals with research studies). The Association also has an application called My Alz Journey, as another resource for individuals living with dementia.

The Delaware Valley Chapter will be hosting a few Walks to End Alzheimer's in October:

Oct 4, 2025 in Sussex County
October 18, 2025 in Wilmington

Mr. Dwyer mentioned SB 120 is near and dear to his heart. This bill requires that individual, group, State employee, and public assistance insurance plans provide coverage for biomarker testing, when the test is supported by medical and scientific evidence. It applies to all such policies, contracts, or certificates issued, renewed, modified, altered, amended, or reissued after December 31, 2026. As of 5/1/2025, the bill was introduced and assigned to Banking, Business, Insurance & Technology Committee in the Delaware Senate.

Ms. Heiks mentioned that facilities currently can bill for a cognitive assessment.

DNHRQAC Subcommittee Updates

DNHRQAC Legislative/Advocacy:

This subcommittee has been discussing the Background Check Center and service letters. They will be hosting a meeting on August 22, 2025 to continue the discussion with Delaware Department of Labor (DOL). Additionally, the subcommittee invited DHCQ Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program Administrator to discuss & develop a list of demographic questions to ask during license renewal. The final list of questions will be brought to the full commission for consideration.

Eagle's Law Staffing Ratio Waiver:

Ms. Furber advised members that since the January 1, 2025 waiver application implementation date, there have not been any applications submitted. DNHRQAC Waiver Application Decision Subcommittee has a weekly standing meeting scheduled, posted on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar, to review applications and provide feedback relating to an application's disposition to the full Commission. The waiver application decision meetings are cancelled, at least 2 days in advance, if there are no applications in process.

DNHRQAC Hiring Committee:

Hiring Committee Members had hoped the full Commission could meet in executive session during this meeting to discuss employment related items. Due to lack of quorum, the executive session did not occur.

6. Public Comment

Ms. Bailey mentioned the Easterseals Annual Caregiver Conference will be held on Wednesday August 27, 2025 in Dover. Details were previously sent to commission members.

Mr. Paul Smiley provided public comment relating to the background check center as a repository for service letters. Additionally, Mr. Smiley shared feedback regarding DHCQ's staffing sheet that is sent to all Delaware skilled nursing facilities (SNF). Ms. Bingaman mentioned the collection of data or inconsistencies across the reporting structure could lead to unintended consequences. Ms. Heiks echoed Ms. Bingaman's concerns and both agreed that standardized reporting is vital.

Ms. Devlin, DHSS Chief of Staff, mentioned DHSS will be undergoing some leadership changes. Secretary Manning will be retiring October 1, 2025. As a result, Governor Meyer's Office will be vetting potential candidates in the coming months. DHSS also recently posted on the State of Delaware Employment webpage the DHCQ Director position. In the meantime, Amanda Levering will be serving as the Acting Director for DHCQ.

7. Next DNHRQAC Meeting – To be determined. This meeting will be conducted via virtual platform and in-person anchor location to address executive session related items that were not able to be addressed during this meeting due to lack of quorum. Once a date/time has been determined, information will be forwarded to commission members & posted on the Delaware Public Meeting Calendar. An in-person/virtual meeting is also scheduled on September 16, 2025 @ 9:30 am for the Commission to conduct their monthly business. Information for this meeting is also posted on the public meeting calendar.

8. Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 11:43 am.

Attachments: DNHRQAC Meeting of 8/19/2025 - meeting agenda
DNHRQAC Meeting of 5/20/2025 – minutes draft
DNHRQAC Meeting of 6/17/2025 – minutes draft
DNHRQAC Meeting of 7/15/2025 – minutes draft