MNsure Board Advisory Committees: Roles and Responsibilities

Draft Policy Statement
September 2014

Introduction

The MNsure Board of Directors (the "Board") is statutorily required to create advisory committees per Minn. Stat. § 62V.04, subd. 13(a). Advisory committees are charged with providing input on stakeholder goals for the long-term future of MNsure.

Policy Statement

The MNsure Board advisory committees are tasked with providing input representative of the various stakeholder groups affected by MNsure so as to better align the long-term future of MNsure with the needs of the public. Advisory committee input to the Board should be concrete enough to provide clear direction while focusing on goals and outcomes, not methods.

Advisory committee members have a responsibility to stay informed of issues affecting MNsure and its long-term future and to gather input from the various stakeholder groups which they represent in order to provide comprehensive, informed opinions as to what the future aims of MNsure should be. Board members have a responsibility to solicit advisory committee advice when appropriate and to consider input provided by the advisory committees in decision-making.

Background

Advisory committees are a creation of the Board as required by Minn. Stat. § 62V.04, subd. 13(a) for the purpose of advising the Board regarding the aims of MNsure. The committees exist to assist the Board and MNsure in carrying out its purposes by providing public input to guide MNsure's long-term future. The Board defines the responsibilities of, consults with, and receives recommendations from the advisory committees.

Representation

Per Minn. Stat. § 62V.04, subd. 13(a), the Board is required to establish and maintain advisory committees representing the following stakeholders:

- Insurance producers
- Health care providers
- Health care industry
- Consumers
- Other stakeholders

Per Board policy, the Board has the authority to dissolve, reconstitute, and/or reorganize the advisory committees given 30 days of public notice, so long as it always maintains advisory committees representing the above-listed statutorily-required stakeholders.

Per Board policy, advisory committee membership is also selected to represent geographic, racial, ethnic, and socioeconomic diversity.

The Board is also statutorily authorized to establish additional advisory committees as it sees fit.

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Membership
Per Board policy, each advisory committee must have at least 3 and no more than 17 members. Membership includes a chair and vice chair, both of whom are appointed by the Board, as well as a Board member liaison. Advisory committees meet at least quarterly.

From time to time, leadership meetings will be held that include the Board Chair, Board liaisons, advisory committee chairs and vice chairs, and staff, in order to discuss upcoming topics and plan the ongoing work of the advisory committees.

Roles and Responsibilities
Advisory committees are self-driven and self-sustaining. They are to respond to input requests from the Board in a timely manner, but should create their own agendas and conduct their own research in support of those agenda items. In all input provided to the Board, committees are to detail their goals for the long-term future of MNsure as concretely as possible. The committees should not expect to influence current activities. Rather, input is to focus on the goals MNsure should plan to achieve in the next three to five years. MNsure will consider how those goals recommended by the committees will be addressed. Advisory committee recommendations take into account the current state of MNsure but are forward-looking and descriptive of the long-term purpose, functionality, and scope of MNsure.

Committees are advised to develop a list of topics concerning the long-term future of MNsure that merit consideration, to use these topics to structure discussions, and to provide informed opinions on any such topics. Ultimately, while always required to respond to Board input requests, it is the committees' responsibility to determine which areas of MNsure's long-term future merit the committees' study and consideration.

Committee members are expected to be familiar with Minn. Stat. § 62V and other relevant statutes, and are to keep up to date on the operations of MNsure via Board meetings, press releases, and other publicly available information.

Board liaisons serve as MNsure's representatives to the advisory committees. Liaisons should guide the committees to function at the appropriate strategic level and provide concrete feedback with a long-term view. The liaisons will assist the committees' strategic thinking by informing them as to the needs of the Board and the current status of MNsure.

MNsure staff provides secretarial and logistical support services to the advisory committees. In concurrence with the annual report submitted to the legislature, MNsure staff will provide an annual update to advisory committees concerning the topics covered by the legislative report.

Recommendations to the Board
Advisory committees are to report recommendations to the Board, which will then vote to acknowledge receipt of the recommendations to confirm it has received the information. Acknowledging receipt of a committee's recommendations does not imply Board endorsement of the underlying suggestions an advisory committee has put forth. Rather, the Board can choose to incorporate committee recommendations into any future action. It is the Board liaison's responsibility to inform the originating advisory committee as to Board action taken in response to its recommendations.

In some cases, the Board may choose to refer certain advisory committee recommendations to MNsure staff for further input. In such case, MNsure staff shall provide a suitable response that is then reported back to the Board, as well as to the originating advisory committee leadership, as appropriate.

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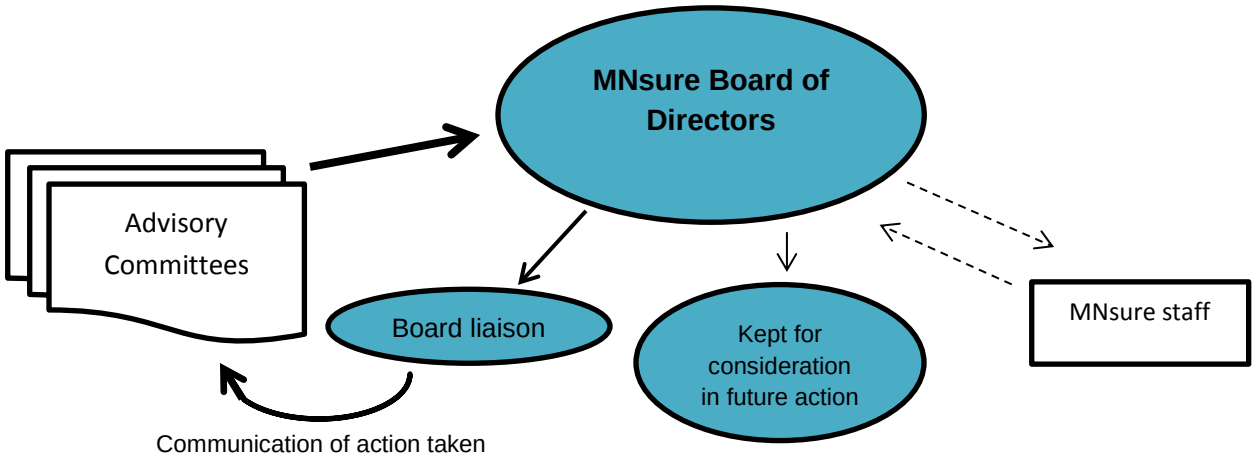

Chart 1: Pathways for Advisory Committee Recommendations

Member Recruitment and Selection
Following a formal solicitation, nomination, and selection process dictated in MNsure Policy #04 ("Policy on Advisory Committees"), it is the responsibility of the Board (or the Board's designee) to appoint advisory committee members. Members are each appointed to a two-year term and may serve a maximum of two complete consecutive terms. Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs are each appointed to a one-year term of office and may serve a maximum of two consecutive full year terms in committee leadership. Normal terms for both members and officers commence upon the first advisory committee meeting following a member's appointment.

Appointments are individual appointments only and do not reflect a seat held by a given organization with which the committee member may be associated. If a committee member is unable to attend a meeting, another individual from the organization may attend the meeting as a member of the public, but does not have a voice or vote on the committee.

Annually, the committee will require its members to state in writing their desire to serve for the next complete year, excepting members whose terms are at an end. These statements are to be submitted to the Board liaison two months before the end of the term. Failure to submit such a statement will be viewed as resignation from the committee. Should a member be at the conclusion of his or her first term and seeking a second term, the member should state in writing his or her desire to serve another term and commitment to serving out the entirety of that term. The Board shall then vote on whether to approve the reappointment of these members.

Resignations and Removal
Should a chair or vice chair resign his or her leadership position, the Board liaison may solicit suggestions from committee members as to who should fill the position. Per Board policy, the Board retains the authority to appoint a replacement. In the event of the chair's resignation, the vice chair shall serve as the interim chair until the Board has appointed a permanent chair, who may but need not be the vice chair. Any time served in committee leadership toward the completion of a resigning chair or vice chair's term does not count toward the general term limits.

Any committee member may resign at any time by giving written notice to the chair of the committee. An advisory committee member may be removed by a majority vote of the Board. If a committee member misses four meetings in a year or three consecutive meetings, he or she may be recommended by the

committee for removal. After two consecutive meetings missed, the committee chair will send a letter to the absent member with a reminder of the attendance policy.

In the spring and fall of every year, each committee will assess its membership and determine if it has openings and a need for new membership. If so, it is to inform the Board and request that the Board initiate the appointment process. It shall conduct the process and resulting appointments in compliance with MNsure Policy #04 and taking into account staff flexibility as needed to accommodate the open enrollment period. Any additional solicitations for new committee membership are to be conducted at the direction and discretion of the Board.

Advisory Committees as Currently Constituted

Currently, the Board has established two advisory committees, both established in 2013: a Health Industry Advisory Committee and a Consumer and Small Employer Advisory Committee. Both Committees are tasked with responding to Board input requests. Both Committees may conduct research and develop work product at their own discretion, always within the scope of their mission to envision the long-term future of MNsure. All research conducted and work product developed that is not in response to a Board request should nonetheless be provided to the Board for consideration in future deliberations and should be as specific as possible in its opinions and recommendations. Advisory Committees are welcome to share updates at Board meetings detailing their work.

Health Industry Advisory Committee

The Health Industry Advisory Committee is tasked with calling upon its members' experiences and technical expertise to respond to Board requests. Members are to represent stakeholder groups within the health industry as a whole rather than the specific entity for which they work or nominally represent. The Committee is to provide input that speaks to the general welfare of MNsure, the health industry, and the people of Minnesota.

Consumer and Small Employer Advisory Committee

The Consumer and Small Employer Advisory Committee calls upon its members' diverse experiences and perspectives to respond to Board requests. It has a responsibility to monitor social media in coordination with MNsure staff to gather broad consumer input in formulating its recommendations, as it seeks to represent the opinions of all consumers and small employers across Minnesota rather than just those serving in its membership. The Committee is to provide input that speaks to the general welfare of MNsure, the consumers and small employers who are eligible for participation in MNsure, and the people of Minnesota. Membership is compensated with a per diem of $55 a day plus expenses per Minn. Stat. § 15.059, subd. 3.

Both Committees are charged with using the personal expertise of their memberships to envision the long-term future of MNsure and detail concretely the goals and outcomes MNsure should strive to achieve.

NOTE: Nothing in this policy statement is intended to contradict or supersede the information on advisory committees found in Minnesota Statute, MNsure Policy #04, or the Advisory Committee Charters.

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