



MASSACHUSETTS Strategic Health Group

Abington
CRPC
DCRSD
Franklin

Grafton
Medway
Merrimac
MURSD

Northbridge
NRSD
Salisbury
SEBRSD

Templeton
Webster

Massachusetts Strategic Health Group Open Session Meeting Minutes – January 27, 2026

A meeting of the Massachusetts Strategic Health Group was held on Tuesday January 27, 2026 in Medway Town Hall, 155 Village Street, Medway, MA 02053, and via remote participation on Microsoft Teams.

1. Attendance - Board Members Present: Richard LaFond - Town of Webster, Lindsay Grasso - Town of Abington, Steven Lamarche - Dudley-Charlton RSD, Karen Bratt - Town of Franklin, Mary Lauria - Town of Grafton, Michael Boynton - Town of Medway, Adam Gaudette - Town of Northbridge, Victoria Nakis - Valley Trust. Kevin Paicos - NFP, Ken Lombardi - NFP, Sheryl Strother - NFP, Eric Avrumson - NFP.

Board Members Absent: Mendon Upton RSD, Narragansett RSD, Spencer-East Brookfield RSD, Town of Templeton RSD.

Chairman LaFond called the meeting to order at 1:00 p.m. There was no executive session today.

2. Acceptance of the Open Session Meeting Minutes from January 6, 2026 - Motion to approve the open session meeting minutes from January 6, 2026 made by Mr. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Lamarche. Roll call vote: Town of Abington – yes, Dudley-Charlton RSD – yes, Town of Franklin - yes, Town of Grafton - yes, Town of Medway - yes, Town of Northbridge - yes, Valley Trust – yes, Town of Webster – yes. Motion passed 8-0.
3. Monthly Financial Report - Mr. Lombardi presented the group financials on the screen. Health care trends, in general, are continuing. The major carriers Blue Cross/Blue Shield and Harvard Pilgrim Health Care have suffered losses and have scaled back on GLP-1 coverage for weight loss only. The GIC removed GLP-1s from the open formulary to help mitigate their FY 2026 budget shortfall. Hampshire County had a mid-year rate increase on July 1, 2025 of 18% and then 20% on October 1, 2025, which included the removal of GLP-1s. MIIA announced its rate increase range of 2.8% – 14.4%, with an average of 8.3% which includes the removal of GLP-1s as of July 1st. The GLP-1s removed are weight loss drugs Zepbound and Wegovy, not diabetes drugs Ozempic or Mounjaro. Removal of those weight loss GLP-1s results in a 6% - 8% rate difference, which is significant.

The Financial Update covers 6 months, from July 1, 2025 through December 31, 2025. NFP has been reaching out to individual participants in deficit to formulate plans to pay their remaining FY



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2025 deficits. MSHG is in a surplus position of about \$3.1 million, because of the favorable claims data. This does not include 3 months of additional rebates to be received.

4. Mr. Paicos provided the following status reports:

Regional JPA's – Mr. Paicos reported that some communities that have requested an analysis of compatibility. NFP is continuing conversations with Narragansett, Templeton, Salisbury, and Merrimack. There is a group of Community School Districts that is also interested in being evaluated. The methodology of setting individual ratings for each community is no longer as effective with respect to stable rate setting as it used to be. The goal of creating JPA's within MSHG will provide much better stability for rate projection in the future.

Member FY25 Deficit Payments - Merrimack and Templeton have payment plans in place. Grafton, Mendon/Upton and Narragansett do not have plans in place as of yet. Grafton Started with a \$950,000 deficit and is now down to \$386,000, and will use free cash to pay the balance before they leave the group. The requirement to pay the 45% of the June 30, 2025 deficit has not changed. Any surplus beyond the remaining 55% will go towards satisfying their IBNR requirement. Grafton is meeting with NFP on setting up a plan to pay their 45% before leaving in May. They will have a plan outline by the next meeting. Merrimack and Templeton will be appropriating money at their respective town meetings. Mr. Lombardi mentioned that there is still \$1.2 million in stop loss that has to be collected from the old plan year, through HPI.

Withdrawn Members Deficit Payments – Ms. Strothers and Mr. Lombardi have been working with Tri-County and CES teams. There is a large claim that was filed late and just processed for Tri-County. They should be resolved shortly. Acushnet and Oxford are withholding a small amount of their final bills. CLA, accounting consultant for both towns, agree with Finance Director and NFP numbers, but they still refuse to pay. Mr. LaFond and the board thanked Ms. Strothers for all the work she does for the group.

5. Discussion with Rx Benefits re. GLP-1 Management Programs and Clinical Program Review – Kimberly Snow, Senior Strategic Account Executive with RX Benefits, has weekly calls with NFP to provide updates. Christeana Casey was present on the phone and reported the Rx Protect Program is yielding 11.85:1 ROI with YTD plan savings of \$947,218. Gabriel Martinez, clinical pharmacist, spoke on the Encircle Rx Cardiometabolic Weight Loss program, which is a Rx Benefits weight loss management program. Requirements for that program are a higher BMI, 2 comorbidities, and use of the Omada app (virtual care program) 4 times per month. This weight loss program is integrated with the Rx Benefits program, unlike the Abacus program. The program will align with the patient's current program. Rx Benefits will request clinical notes



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regarding the patient's comorbidities, and the patient can be denied the medication if they are not meeting the program requirements within the first few months. Mr. Paicos stated that the board should consider the following:

- Does MSGH want to have a GLP-1 management program for diabetes management?
- Does MSGH want to have GLP-1 meds for weight management at all?
- If MSGH allows GLP-1s for weight loss, does MSGH want to have a management program with a portal through which someone gets the GLP-1s? Patients received their medication through Abacus's vendor now, not the MSGH vendor.

This item will be on the February agenda for a decision.

6. There was no Executive Session.

Medway News – Boynton announced that Cheryl Houle has accepted the job of Assistant Town Manager/HR Manager in Holliston. Joyce Sheehan is stepping into Cheryl's old position. The board congratulated Cheryl and welcomed Joyce.

7. Next Meeting Date – February 24, 2026, 1:00, Medway Town Hall.

Motion to adjourn the meeting made by Mr. Boynton, seconded by Mr. Lamarche. Motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Kelly Lyman, Executive Assistant

Documents:

Draft Meeting Minutes, January 6, 2026, 4 pages.

MSHG Board Meeting, NFP, January 27, 2026, 19 pages.

RX Benefits Renewal Strategy for 2026, January 27, 2026, 5 pages.