

## HealthChoices Advisory Board

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.  
1 W. Broad Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018  
(Remote meeting due to COVID restrictions)  
August 20, 2020 at 2pm

- I. Introductions: Those in attendance were: Tom Walker, Matt Bauder, Kristy Bernard, Chelsea Jones, Liz Fox, Tisbine Moussa, Donna Thorman, Pat McGarry, and Ronnie Colbert
- II. Review of May 21, 2020 minutes – No issues and accepted.
- III. Community Healthcare Alliance Report:

### **Member/Family Advisory Committee**

- Ronnie reported members are happy that the programs are open again, but were told that it is mandatory that they had to wear masks in all the groups and that before they enter the programs they have to wash their hands. Ronnie added that in the morning it is mandatory that staff take a member's temperature and if you have a temperature or cough then you can't come back to the program until it clears up. Groups are open again at Haven House and they do it in two ways, one you could do from 7:30 to 12:00 and the other from 12:00 to 3:30.
- He reported there have been some major changes at Haven House; they got new tables and chairs in the cafeteria and the second floor now has games. The Haven House kitchen is ready to remodel they are getting a new dishwasher.
- Ronnie reported no issues with LANTA other than that you must wear a mask on the bus.
- Ronnie reported members were able to be seen in person at Haven House and commented that it looks like Haven House has done a nice job with scheduling, giving people the option to come in person.
- Ronnie indicated Haven House has done a nice job with giving members the option to come in in person. He related that some instances of seeing a therapist or psychiatrist continue via telehealth and that some members would prefer to see their therapist or doctor in person. Most appointments seem to be happening virtually though. Matt reinforced that if a member requests a face to face session, providers should be taking steps to accommodate that request.

### **Provider Advisory Committee – TBD**

- Adult Provider Advisory Committee representative still to be determined

### **Children’s Advisory Committee – Pat McGarry**

- Pat related VYH is very grateful that the APAs were extended until December 2020
- OMHSAS released a memo on Guidance on Masks, Screenings, and Handwashing for Providers on August 18, 2020
- On 8/14/2020, OMHSAS released a memo and chart summarizing the temporary suspension of regulatory requirements
- VYH has developed a list of screening questions for staff when going into the field and using masks for face to face contact
- They also take masks out for families
- Guidance from the state does seem clearer
- Pat has heard that some providers are closing due to the pandemic
- VYH is doing a blend of services virtually and in person
- VYH has done a lot of internal fundraising to purchase hotspots and computers to support families with on-line learning

#### IV. NAMI/OMHSAS/Provider/Peer/News

- NAMI will be doing their walk this year virtually and will be accepting any kind of activity for the challenge.
- The challenge will be for the entire month of September
- <http://www.nami-lv.org/>
- Nami will be starting Family to Family in September. The group will be held outdoors in a private location and will also offer the course through zoom. NAMI has ensured that the Zoom platform remains secure.
- Peer to Peer will be offered in the Fall through Zoom
- Support groups are offered through Zoom

#### V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Tom reported “SAFETY NET” is a key local, learning group on community policy. The group brings together faith and non-faith traditions and all the diversity here in the Lehigh Valley. In light of the pandemic and Black lives Matter and issues related to community safety, the group has been holding a series of meetings; one of the key aspects is related to community policing after the George Floyd death. The group met with Police Chiefs Granitz and Marks from Allentown and Whitehall

respectively to hear a little about what their needs might be. Both identified their largest need is related to mental health care. The group will start to plan ways in which the faith community might better support the wider community needs. The group felt it important to put our money where our mouth is and start talking about how health and the ways congregations can further support individuals so they just wanted to bring this up at the Advisory Board.

- Tom identified an op-ed that was written by Lehigh County's Controller, Mark Pinsley on a National program called CAHOOTS- Crisis Intervention Helping Out On the Streets. The CAHOOTS team deal with mental health related crisis and could be diverted from the police. The larger studies on this model have demonstrated something like a 96% success rate for not requiring additional police activity and a very, very high safety margin for workers that have been called out. This is another opportunity that exists for the community.
- Magellan has started a new contract year with Lehigh and Northampton Counties. Our contract is for 18 months and part of an alignment to the state's new unification of the fiscal system. The contracts are for 18 months, starting July 1, 2020 and will continue through December 2021.
- Magellan and the counties continue to focus on expansion of Drug and Alcohol MAT providers due to the Opioid epidemic and focus on the Opioid Centers of Excellence. Getting MAT medications to individuals, multiple studies have shown that the use of MAT medications has a very significant impact in whether someone will readmit to a residential or drug and alcohol facility and keep individuals in the community and advancing in their recovery.
- MBH is working on standardizing Certified Recovery Specialist Services and expanding those services here in the Lehigh Valley with a current application from Mid-Atlantic Rehabilitation Services.
- MBH has also carved out and matured the work/role of peers within their organization with Emily Ferris as the Manager of CPS Services and Janet Verga, CPS locally. MBH wants to advance a model that is sustainable and holistic and peer driven and peer led. Tom noted the Magellan peer workforce helped with member surveys in the early stages of the pandemic to make sure that individuals that had used hospitals or maybe were vulnerable in the community were getting the services they needed.
- The Children's Services need now is the transition to IBHS. The state has again started working on the licensing plan which had been temporarily suspended for a time due to the pandemic. The IBHS services are further supported by a Project Management Team at MBH. There have been regular provider meetings since September of 2019 to be ready for IBHS. MBH has been able to get the actual reimbursement schedule from the Department of Human Services and that has been provided to providers.

- Tom reported the on-going coordination between Systems. There has been a significant amount of effort looking at individuals with co-occurring disabilities and mental health needs. There have been a series of meetings with OMHSAS and County Intellectual Disabilities as well as HealthChoices to look at overall systems impact. MBH will be convening focus groups to ensure both mental health and intellectual disability needs are being met in the community. These focus groups will be led by the consumer and satisfaction team.
- Value-Based Purchasing- Over the next year Social Determinants of Health need to be integrated within Value-Based Purchasing. Current VBP levels of care include inpatient hospitalization, assertive community treatment, and family-based services. In addition, HealthChoices is being required to also fold in community-based organizations under value-based purchasing and looking at models to make sure that total person care is happening. Tom noted nation-wide research is suggesting that 90% of treatment outcomes for individuals are all connected to things like food security, housing stability, the ability for travel and transportation. These topics are all germane and we look forward to working with primary contractors on developing some of these partnerships as we look down the road ahead with regard to behavioral health.
- The Suicide Task Force is certainly something that has been occurring in both counties and Magellan looks forward to continuing to partner. QPR training is one topic that Northampton County is employing and there are a number of behavioral health providers which participated in that training and the vision is to have a train the trainer model.
- MBH is working to expand School Based MH Outpatient and working to support the schools and providers through a technical assistance collaborative.
- Josh Bridges, the Lehigh County MH/ID Administrator, HealthChoices, and Magellan partnered together to release a request for information that lead to the selection of Child and Family Focus to be the First Episode Psychosis Provider for Lehigh County. The state approved the submission and Child and Family Focus will be looking for a satellite site here in the Lehigh Valley
- Due to a lack of outcomes movement in the past several years on adherence to antipsychotic medications for individuals with schizophrenia, MBH will be working with a pharmacist consultant who will be delivering a 9-week curriculum for medication adherence to individuals with schizophrenia. Laurie Samer is the consultant and clinical rounds have just been launched to be able to identify individuals that would benefit from the consultation service. MBH's hope is to keep people adhering to their medications and out of the hospital and preferably as early as possible in the individual's journey towards recovery. There is a potential interface between First Episode Psychosis program and the medication adherence program.

- Tom shared an ongoing partnership Magellan has had with Pennsylvania 211 and cross training between Magellan and 211 staff. Specifically, roughly half of the PA 211 team participated in the training and 50 individuals from Magellan that attended the training.
- Additional items related to the impact of the Coronavirus: there have been practice closures. Both ARCH and Aveanna/EPIC closed their BHRS/IBHS programs. Member disruption was kept to a minimum because service providers that left ARCH or Aveanna have been able to transition to new providers and keep their families with them, so that was a successful outcome in a touch situation.
- Acadia Health who own White Deer Run notified MBH earlier this month that they made the decision to close the Allentown outpatient Clinic, a halfway house in western PA, and the Blue Mountain Detox and Residential. MBH would like to engage the SCAs to talk about ways in which we might use strength or documented best practice of potential providers following and taking their caseload with them. There will an impact with the Blue Mountain facility closing in terms of member transition. We will need to work quickly, since the date of the closure is September 30, 2020.
- The CLIU Unit announced (and sent letters to families) that they would be closing their OP and BHRS programs. The announcement and letters were a little premature. MBH has been able to negotiate with CLIU to keep the doors open, at least until the end of the year. We hope the OP program will be maintained past that and they have committed to keeping their partial program running.
- MBH has also done some temporary rate increases for residential facilities that are mission critical to keep the basic infrastructure going.
- The APAs for community-based providers will continue through December 2020.
- Tom reported that Rebecca Mutchler, MBH's Senior Clinical Director for the past 15 years accepted a promotion to work on the Magellan corporate team and look at some systems transformation type work.
- MBHs Children Systems Transformation Manager, Tara Karbiner, has accepted the position of Clinical Director and that went into effect in August.

## VI. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Matt reported there was a grant opportunity through the state for a First Episode Psychosis program (FEP) and Lehigh felt it worthwhile to apply. The grant is on the base side of the county, meaning the provider that has been chosen, Child and Family Focus will have a contract developed with the base side of the county and that will allow the training and start-up to occur. The grant funding is also to help fund members that may not have HealthChoices funding, but fit the requirements of the First Episode Psychosis Program. The program is brought in and funded under HealthChoices as well. The FEP will receive HC funding through an APA, not quite like ACT, but FEP does have both a community-based and an office-based component. Implementation meetings have started with MBH and Child and Family Focus. Lehigh has encouraged them to look for office space close to the border of Lehigh and Northampton counties.

Matt related there is a lot of hope for this program. It is very focused and targets ages 16-30, members that are experiencing their first episode of psychosis and are hospitalized. As a result, the program gets involved to help them stabilize and get them connected with services quicker. Marketing for the program will begin in October but services likely won't begin until December at the earliest.

- Lehigh was able to finalize and execute our Magellan behavioral HealthChoices contract between Lehigh County and Magellan. That contract was approved at the June 10 Board of Commissioners meeting and it was unanimously approved. It was very well received by the Commissioners. The initial term for this contract, since it is a new contract is going to be three and a half years. Normally we run the first contract for three years, but three and a half years allows us to align the contract with the state calendar year
- Matt reported receiving extensions on all Lehigh County reinvestment plans and now all the reinvestment plans to have the same end date of December 31, 2022. The current Lehigh County Reinvestment plans include Respite services, supportive housing, High-Fidelity Wraparound, and 2:1 ABA Support program.
- Lastly, Matt reported that J. Layne Turner (Lehigh County Single County Authority Administrator) resigned for another job opportunity. Layne's last day was August 7, 2020. Josh Bridges will assume the Administrator role with Joe Martellucci as the Assistant D&A Director until a new D&A Administrator is named.

## VII. Northampton County HealthChoices Report

- Northampton County continues funding for the Conference of Churches Housing Program and is working on extending services offered for members impacted by COVID.
- The ORLTSR-Housing for forensic population housing- the contracts are completed. Construction will soon begin and there may be something you see in the news about it. This is a joint project with Northampton County Base MH department.
- Northampton County's Respite programs continue to operate.
- Northampton has been helping to deal with the program closures. Northampton was happy to extend the APA agreements until the end of the year to help providers stay afloat.
- Northampton County employees returned to work in the offices in May. Staff are starting to do some in person meetings, but are giving the option of calling in as well. In the Northampton County Human Services building the large conference room is being used for meetings.

- Northampton is extending the Magellan Contract for the last option year. It will be an 18-month contract to align with the state Contract. We will be potentially looking at an RFP in the future.

#### VIII. Adjournment

Next meeting will be held on **November 19, 2020 at 2:00pm** at the Magellan Bethlehem office or via Zoom depending on COVID circumstances.