

HealthChoices Advisory Board

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.
1 W. Broad Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018
(Remote meeting due to COVID restrictions)
May 20, 2021 2pm

I. Introductions: Those in attendance were: Tom Walker, Kristy Bernard, Chelsea Jones, Tisbine Moussa, Donna Thorman, Pat McGarry, Andrew Lazo

II. Review of February minutes – No issues and accepted.

III. Community Healthcare Alliance Report:

Member/Family Advisory Committee

- Ronnie was not present.

Provider Advisory Committee – Cathy Murphy

- Cathy Murphy joined as the Provider Advisory Committee and was not present. She provided an email update.
- Telehealth guidance from OMHSAS. Email went out clarifying a previous email from the licensing boards. One example was telemedicine that it may not be able to continue when temporary waiver no longer exists. A lot of providers fearful of this. OMHSAS advised that they are still working on a telehealth bulletin that will allow for some of these to continue. They will not offer a time frame but are hopeful that it will be prior to the expiration of the disaster declaration. Discussion regarding benefits of Telehealth and reference to state website and survey results from Providers.
- OMHSAS has issued an application for funding to support the opportunity for growth, recovery and inclusion in their community, have access to culturally competent services and supports of their choice and enjoy a quality of life that includes family members and friends.
- The RFA is intended to award up to \$500,000 to accomplish these objectives. Submission is due June 3rd, 2021 12:00 PM EST. More information can be found at <http://www.emarketplace.state.pa.us>
- Advocacy Alert
Do you believe older adults and individuals with disabilities should have easier access to mental health services? (We certainly do).
Currently, marriage and family therapists and licensed mental health counselors are not eligible Medicare providers, despite the important role they play in delivering treatment, recovery, and prevention services.
However, there is new legislation to change that – and it needs your support!

On March 18, Senators John Barrasso (R-WY) and Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) reintroduced the Mental Health Access Improvement Act (S. 828). This legislation would allow marriage and family therapists and licensed mental health counselors to participate in the Medicare program, dramatically expanding access to care for older adults and individuals with disabilities.

This simple change would immediately increase patients' access to needed care, particularly in underserved communities, rural areas, and areas with a mental health workforce shortage.

Will you take two minutes today to urge your Senators to cosponsor the Mental Health Access Improvement Act?

Thank you to those of you who already took action to ask your Representatives to cosponsor the House version.

- The Employment First Community of Practice webinar on “Value, Outcome and Performance-Based Payment Methodologies to Advance Competitive Integrated Employment in State Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Systems and Managed Care LTSS Systems” is available for viewing in the archives. The webinar presents examples of state Medicaid LTSS systems, some that are using managed care and some that are not, that have designed and implemented value-based purchasing and outcome-based reimbursement methods to advance Employment First and Competitive Integrated Employment. Visit [here](#) to view “Value, Outcome and Performance-Based Payment Methodologies to Advance Competitive Integrated Employment in State Medicaid Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Systems and Managed Care LTSS Systems.”
- RCPA Urges State to Dedicate \$750 Million in Federal Aid for One-Time Payment to Health and Human Service Providers. The Rehabilitation and Community Providers Association (RCPA) wants the commonwealth to give health and human service providers a one-time cash infusion of at least \$750 million using federal aid, plus additional federal matching funds, to mitigate decades of chronic underfunding and address additional challenges that have arisen during the pandemic.

Children’s Advisory Committee – Pat McGarry

- FBI format changing for background checks. Used to say conviction but can still work in child welfare, now will say if they can or cannot work in child welfare
- June 18th Pat will be retiring from VYH. This will open a vacancy for this committee.

IV. NAMI/OMHSAS/Provider/Peer/News

- With mandates lifting and group home participants being vaccinated, hoping to have Annual Picnic in July. More details to come

- FaithNet initiative moving forward thanks to Tom. NAMI may give small grant for 1500 to get materials and handouts. Hoping to help folks get total needs met especially in light of more in person stuff happening and filling needs where services are lacking.
- Family to Family class in September. Support groups and Peer to Peer will be offered via ZOOM. They have seen attendance grow with ZOOM option.

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Annual HealthChoices strategy meeting on 4/23 with LC/NC/Magellan. Helps build out rate requests and needs assessment to support Rates we are asking the state to consider for 2022. Many topics were noted and discussed:
 - Cross Systems work
 - Integrated Health
 - Tobacco Action Planning
 - Peer Services-WRAP planning
 - CHC impacting seniors-MHAP in Gracedale coming soon hopefully.
 - SBOP collab meeting continue to be strong. What will happen with reopening and dealing with issues of pent up needs and services. Successful in getting Commercial insurances to sign on so more students have access
 - Systems Transformation and Value Based plans proposing Blended Case Management in June—inpatient, family based and ACT will now have BCM to connect dots between systems of care.
 - Children's Services
 - IBHS. Last year was transition year. Fully implementation in January. Continue to support and train to move forward
 - First Episode Psychosis in Lehigh-hopefully NC soon. Child Family Focus is the provider
 - SDOH-housing within VBP model with Conference of Churches
 - Drug and Alcohol. A lot of changing structure. ASAM alignment continues to move forward
 - Expansion of Opioid Centers of Excellence (COE)-Pyramid added
- Tom presented a Powerpoint on Message of HOPE. It will be shown at the upcoming Provider Town Hall. Discussion regarding that topic. .

VI. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Liz reported updates on Reinvestment Plans. The Clearinghouse program for supported housing through Conference of Churches continues. High Fidelity Wrap around and ABA supports program continues as well.
- SDOH and what is being done at state level. More of that is being done with RHACs and health disparities have been identified in Lehigh Valley. Matt is on those meetings.
- CBCM Program with the Conference of Churches and Magellan assisting. Joint Community Based Care Management Program with Northampton.

VII. Northampton County HealthChoices Report

- Northampton County continues funding for the Conference of Churches Housing Program and is continuing extending services offered for members impacted by COVID.
- The ORLTSR-Housing for forensic population housing- Under Construction. Barriers keep popping up and opening hopeful for January 2022
- Northampton County's Respite programs continues to be to operate but COVID is greatly impacting referrals.
- New Reinvestment Plan was developed by Chelsea to address SDOHs. Officially approved by the state and interviewing providers and then contracts will be developed for program starting July start.
- Community Based Care Management program-Partnering with Conference of Churches. Contracts have been developed. Meeting with key players. This will be for member who are homeless or at risk and in our AIP programs. HC is funding a case manager for this. The issue is that the funding provided by the state for this cannot be used for commodities. Our reinvestment programs will provide assistance as well as other linkage to resources and community programs. Meetings continue for development. Hopeful for 8 members per county. One CM position, can move up to two when program ramps up.
Tom--Regional Accountable Health Council---looking at Health Equity Zones at the zip code level. Tasking these RAHC boards to work on multi payer alignment to address these health disparities. Looking at many indexes and using math and data. Finding that health disparities shorten lives. The disparity can be the priority and do it at the neighborhood level. Both counties have these zones and we will have to put in work to improve outcomes for the community. Kristy was interviewed asking about certain areas. State is really doing due diligence. Lehigh and Northampton both initial targets in our area (there are many counties) City of Allentown is one of top picks. Need to identify those that should be at the table.

- Northampton County employees continue to work in office. Cathy Cromer in MH has been promoted to Deputy of MH. Mirka Picone has been transferred from DP to Cathy's MH program specialist position-which will focus on QI. Wendy Novak Admin of DP will be retiring August 2. That will leave her position as well as Mirka's opening in DP.
- Northampton County is doing a Request for Proposal for BH-MCO. Hasn't been done in 20 years in NC. Lehigh County does it every five years. Will be released soon. It will be a long process.

VIII. Adjournment

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