

HealthChoices Advisory Board

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.
1 W. Broad Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018
November 17, 2022 at 2pm in person

- I. Introductions: Those in attendance were: Tom Walker, Tisbine Moussa, Donna Thorman, Matt Bauder, Andrew Lazo, Ronnie Colbert, Kristy Cole
- II. Review of August 18, 2022 minutes – No issues and accepted.
- III. Community Healthcare Alliance Report:

Member/Family Advisory Committee

- Ronnie gave the update he gave at The Community Healthcare Alliance (CHA) meeting. He has been in touch with a few consumers regarding group homes or apartments. He was having problems with his Roommate and staff didn't do anything about it. Wanted to avoid calling Harrisburg. Ronnie has supported him and said it's ok to contact Harrisburg if needed. LANTA is getting better with consumers. Only issue is now at Haven House. LANTA parks in the front of the building. New drivers don't know to go to the back. Ronnie is addressing it.
- 3 more consumers that finally got their housing approval letters that they have been waiting for. Working to get them in and Ronnie is supporting them
- LGBTQ Community Class at Haven House going well. Ronnie thinks only program in County that has this type of group. Reviewed videos on pride and discrimination.
- Weds next week is Haven House traditional Thanksgiving dinner at program. Let clients know about this.
- Spoke on conference call yesterday. Reminder for everyone to have crisis phone numbers. Warm Line, ICM on call, etc. If feel crisis they have the info needed to get help. Suggestions to put on Fridge, enter in cell phone so they are prepared with the numbers easily accessible.
- Ronnie has lost two important people in his life recently but still trying to focus on supporting consumers who need help.

Provider Advisory Committee – Cathy Murphy (Not in attendance)

No Updates

Children's Advisory Committee – Vacant

- Discussed at CHA that we are still looking for a Children's Committee Representative to bring up issues relevant to the Children's Service System for others to be aware of. There has been a lack of interest expressed. Discussed potential targeted outreach to VYH to Mike R who replaced Pat M. Integrated Services or CASSP could also be an option. Important to make sure that the bigger state issues are being brought up. Suggestion about someone from Kidspace who attends IBHS meetings. Can be mentioned at PQAC but needs to be Northampton/Lehigh County. IU could show some interest. Would be beneficial to have someone that typically attends CHA.

IV. NAMI/OMHSAS/Provider/Peer/News

- Donna reported that they had 3 FRIENDS come to the Family to Family education course and that was the first time in her time teaching that it was friends attending. Had 20 individuals graduate from the class. Next will be in the spring. Get info out to anyone who would be interested. There will be a Peer to Peer starting soon.
- There was a FAITHNET presentation for the Parish of Nurses at Sacred Heart Hospital. Was well received.
- NAMI has keychains that has crisis numbers on them. Donna can drop them off at Haven House for the dinner. Donna and Ronnie coordinated to get these items. There are also posters with info that people can take pictures of to have the info.

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Tom reported that there were several events completed over the last few months. Provider Town Hall and Compliance fair completed successfully. Many of the groups that Magellan provides support to such as Community Support Program (CSP) are all now resumes with a mixture of hybrid and in person.
- State offers Stakeholder updates monthly. OMHSAS has been transparent and they are going to be continuing and are helpful
- The state offered the Calendar Year 2023 Rate package. They projected a decrease in membership based on the ending of the public health emergency. Some dollars were pulled back resulting in spending and member utilization changes. When the emergency declaration expires, there could be a 30 percent decrease in membership. There is a large part of that who are high utilizers of the services. There is some worry there and makes it difficult to enact permanent rate increases since finances are unknown. There have been targeting cost effective increases such as CPS, BCM and Psych rehab. There has also been support to facilities that have been negatively impacted by the pandemic and workforce issues. Attempting to retain provider network by providing rate increases, lump sum, and stabilization payments. Plan was for January for rolling back and starting the unwinding by the state, however,

there is no official word or date set. Could be another 3 months. Intention is for this process to take a year.

- Despite efforts to support some providers there has still been some closures. Hope house crisis residential services has officially shut their doors since last meeting. Bet-el Counseling services, one of largest OP MH providers with offices in Allentown and Bethlehem. Closing by end of year. DA program already closed. 1200 members were impacted. At this time 600 have found other providers already. Some providers have moved to others and members will follow over (i.e. Preventative Measures) Big issue is those that have Medicare. Family advocate and member services has been helping with the transition and answer questions and calls, 24 hours a day. Malvern OP program on Stefko (Catasauqua site remains open) announced their closure as well. Similar model where client will follow therapist when they move to another provider. Early 1st quarter for this closure.
- A lot of providers are competing for not only Medical Assistance but also Commercial Carriers, who pay more. So, it has to become a business decision. This is the backlash of the new normal and what happens when there is a focus on things like medication assisted treatment, elevation availability and use of telehealth and telemedicine. On the DA front there a lot of commercial programs that are offering residential component that is priced out of MA. Hard to compete.
- Ronnie asked about wait time for DA treatment. Tom explained the process for ASAM assessments. And issues which finding the right place based on gender and needs. In general, may take 4 days from assessment to enter facility. Concern that these individuals get in quickly. A lot of these individuals especially when secondary issues are getting their needs met through medical inpatient beds. This helps with continuity of care. Also happens with those that are incarcerated. For the community at large, they tend to be prioritized for beds due to higher risk for relapse. The two hospital facilities have been doing a lot to get members to the right level of care as well. Members can also go to recovery centers to get an assessment in person and they can socialize and gain support as well at these locations. There have been a significant number of investments from the opioid settlement dollars that the Counties received and are working on developing new programs. MARS is offering a certified family recovery program with these funds in Lehigh County.
- Health and Human Services jobs fair 4/13/2023 at Penn State Lehigh Valley campus. Target is for students and alumni as well as anyone in the community. Will focus on employment and education in the human services field. There will be breakout sessions to reinforce these conversations. Fingerprint testing onsite as well. Shared effort with LV employment task force. Hope is that this can be turned over to the local colleges to make this a yearly event. There is a decline in interest in these fields and many students don't know about why it's important and how rewarding it can be.

VI. Northampton County HealthChoices Report

- Kristy reported that the Member Advisory group coming up soon on December 7th 2022 at the Neighborhood Health Center of LV in Easton. Hoping for other Reinvestment ideas. Typically input comes from other Counties in the department. Northampton County may do what Lehigh is doing or piggy back off of ideas they receive.
- Housing continuation plan has been extended for 5 years and continues to be utilized.
- Access continues to work the Respite plan. Working on getting more utilization and if we can partner with our Children and Youth Department to work with tier families to see if this can assist them. Create a connection prior to an emergency since this is not an emergency program.
- Easton Neighborhood Center is doing slow ramp up of the Social Determinants of Health program. Keeping it small right now as they work through operationalizing the plan. Chelsea Jones is main contact for that if there are members who could benefit.
- ORLTSR construction is finally nearing completion. December 15th will be a walkthrough. COMHAR is starting to move furniture in and hiring staff
- Submitted an extension for Respite and new plan for financial support of expansion at Safe Harbor of Easton to expand warming and cooling shelter and provide transitional housing unit as well as coed rooms. Waiting on response form the state for both of those.
- There continues to be issues in the County with finding placements for children with complicated needs. A lot of children sitting in hospitals or parents not able to provide the care, but not providers able to accept them.
- There are many unknowns in the coming year with membership, rates, utilization, and the unwinding of the PHE.

VII. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Valley Youth House has ended their Reinvestment Respite Program. Looking to partner with Access Services since they contract with Northampton for the same program. There hasn't been a lot of interest by providers to do this type of work. Focus will be on home and Community services starting contract 1/1/2023 and will get out to IBHS group, CHA, and share info. This program has historically been underutilized. Trying to gain the actual need of the program. Seems to be same members who continue to utilize and not many new. So looking into that data.
- Matt provided updates on Reinvestment Plans: High-Fidelity Wraparound has 11 members and 8 currently being engaged for admissions-hiring has improved but still 6 on waitlist, 2:1 Program has 1 member with multiple complexities-hope is to stabilize and step down to IBHS over the next few months, and Clearinghouse has 32 members served in October. SDOH plan-engaging in conversation with Lehigh Conference of Churches for contracting. Contract for January 1. Working on consistent assessment process and then how to triage out and identify those with most SDOH category of needs to prioritize.
- Reinvestment planning process-Started back in spring and went into summer. There were not many ideas suggested. But those that were suggested were from solely providers. There was no input from members. Most of those ideas were not things that these funds could be used for. Will be working with Member Advisory Workgroup to assist as well as focus groups at MyLife and Haven House to hear from members. Usually what suggestions we get are usually areas of things we have already been able to offer. Ronnie asked more details. Suggestion could be for LGBTQ focused ideas that Ronnie has brought up previously in this meeting.
- Performance Evaluation Performance Standards Triennial review is coming up in April 2023. Kickoff Call December 8th.

VIII. Adjournment

Tom reminded the group of the Member Advisory Workgroup on 12/7 discussed above. 35 dollar stipend for members to attend. Tisbine also added the need for members to participate in the panels. There was a flyer for that and it can be brought up at MAWG. Plan is to do this on a quarterly basis with the next in Lehigh County.

Next meeting will be held on **February 23, 2023 at 2:00pm** at the Magellan Bethlehem office or via Zoom depending on COVID circumstances.