

## HealthChoices Advisory Board

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.  
1 W. Broad Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018  
(Zoom Meeting)  
May 25, 2023

- I. Introductions: Those in attendance were: Janet Verga, Chelsea Jones, Tisbine Moussa, Donna Thorman, Matt Bauder, Drew Lazo, Mike Ramsey, Kristy Cole
  - a. Tom Walker on vacation, Janet Verga covering for his topics.
- II. Review of February 23, 2023 minutes
- III. Community Healthcare Alliance Report:

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

- Ronnie was not present – Matt had a brief update from Ronnie. Had CHA yesterday and a member presented and Ronnie asked to make sure we remember these are humans and have respect for them. Also had some issues with LANTA and staffing turnover and with issues where to pick up and drop off. New drivers mainly. Encouraged him to maintain open communication and file a complaint if needed. Also to remind members to recognize when new staff come on there may be some issues.

### **Provider Advisory Committee – Voting on Kendall Gazzo-approved**

- Cathy Murphy resigned from this committee. Kendall Gazzo is interested and came to CHA yesterday. Introduced her to the group. Want to review with this group. She is from Step by Step and is working on her graduate degree in public health and policy. Very interested in government aspect of things and how policy impacts. Seems very eager. All were in favor. First time all committees filled in a long time.

### **Children's Advisory Committee – Mike Ramsey**

- Nothing significant. Mike enjoys evidence based research. There is a clearinghouse that you can sign up for emails while they are evaluating new programs. 12 new items now and they give ratings to determine what eligibility and funding would be available out there. FFT is one of the highest rated programs and Mike supervised that program for a very long time. There are over 140 programs evaluated.
- In home service providers are struggling severely with hiring. There has been more focus and funding on MH treatment in schools. This is making it challenge to hire those for in home. In home cannot compete with school schedule, summers, and no

in home issues. Making the hiring market challenging. Then the schools are calling about why there are waitlists for a referral of in home services.

- Matt asked if they have found anything that actually worked for hiring and retaining. They have tried many things and none have been fully successful. VYH has increased all program and all staff pay, over a million dollars last year. They have also done sign on bonuses and are working on performance incentives now for retention. Also looking at doing shift differential for evening or weekend work.
- Access to Children's services in general is struggling. Difficult to talk about amongst providers because they are competing with those around them.

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

- Donna continues to now be the Parent advocate. She is still on the board of directors for Northampton County NAMI and does family to family program still during the transition. She would like to continue as parent advocate if they find someone from NAMI to also be on the board.
- Great success with Family to Family and the spaghetti dinner.
- Still looking for board members. Contact NAMI if interested.
- July 11<sup>th</sup> is their annual picnic for local group homes and invites all to have lunch. Step by Step plan play music. Get bag of hygiene products as gifts to take them. Who in Lehigh can send out? Matt can send to Dick Orlemann. She will send to Cathy Kromer in Northampton to send out.
- Donna heard about a program where Magellan is giving gift cards for clothing or shoes. Kristy clarified, this is the Northampton County SDOH reinvestment plan through the Easton Area Neighborhood center. Chelsea can be the contact for that. There are qualifications for this. Lehigh County has a similar program through Lehigh Conference of Churches.
- Sat Sept 9 annual run/walk at Lehigh parkway this year
- On PA Suicide Prevention task force there is a conference in August at capitol hill and there will be a march as well.
  
- Janet reported that she has heard about more programs for Vets than she has heard of before. It's difficult to find Peers that are Vets. They usually work directly through the VA. VA program at Center for Independent living.
- MH is doing COAPs and CPS supervisors training. Reach out to Mirka Picone at NC

#### V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Janet reported on behalf of Tom:

**Community Relations:** The quarterly spring member newsletter was produced with the feature story title of, "Perinatal depression is a common health condition." Outreach

efforts to area colleges, high schools, providers and stakeholders were ongoing for the 2023 Lehigh Valley Health & Human Services Job Fair that occurred on April 13 at Penn State Lehigh Valley. The Job Fair attracted over 100 job seekers and 40 agencies at the 4/13 event. There were over 1,500 unique web page views leading up to the event. A post survey of attendees and providers is released.

Magellan's Member and Family Advocate is leading a working committee of County, Parent/Family Members/Person with Autism, and Magellan with goal being to **produce Navigation Guide for Youth/Young Adults of Transition Age who are on the autism spectrum**. The design edits are complete. Confirmation of final product through workgroup/committee was accomplished 5/2. Next steps: publication and promotion.

**Magellan is launching a new video series highlighting the IBHS program.** Many schools and daycare centers are spreading some misinformation about services, and it is important to discuss the FAQs (Frequently Asked Questions) and highlight the program changes since BHRS. This is a bi-county initiative. Filming is scheduled for 5/24. Sue Lettera (Lehigh Integrated Services Division), Maria Torres (Northampton Office of Children, Youth and Families Division) and John Lees (Magellan Family Advocacy) will be on video.

**A Bi-County Crisis Task Force seeks to address crisis system reform and ED (Emergency Department) boarding.** Magellan continues to serve in a supportive capacity under Lehigh County's Garrett Lee Smith suicide prevention in PA schools and colleges initiative.

On 3/1 Magellan launches the suicide assessment initiative; also in March, Magellan provided Suicide Risk Assessment training to 266 providers (CEs provided), representing Part I of a two-part training series; and posted a short video including NFL Alumni Association members working together with Magellan to bring awareness to suicide prevention. **Magellan through the ODP/OMHSAS Systems Collaborative is planning a crisis training specific to meeting the needs of members with IDD diagnoses.**

**School District Letters of Agreement** – Magellan established working meetings with Intermediate Units, Primary Contractors and area Schools where there are HealthChoices clinics to address the impact mental health and mental health crisis is having on young people. Efforts for the 2023 program year will include encouragement of HealthChoices providers to become CAMS-Care Certified. Essentially, CAMS-care trainings are on-demand learning courses, inclusive of role-play training and consultative calls, to increase provider skills in collaborative assessment and management of suicidality. CAMS is an evidence based, suicide-focused treatment framework.

**Magellan, County HealthChoices and IDD Divisions, and Psych Rehab providers hosted an Open House to promote Psychiatric Rehabilitation for Autism. The**

**May 2023 event was held at Haven House, and attracted families, advocates, and service providers. A follow up event will be held in the Fall.**

### **Medicare dually eligible OP MH Clinics and Methadone Clinics**

Both mental health and methadone treatment providers with Highmark Wholecare contracts have challenges in serving dually eligible. On the MH side, a lack of credentialed Medicare providers is causing potential service disruption to hundreds of members. On the SUD treatment side, there are no codes cross walked to the BHSRCC to allow bundled payment. Magellan and County partners are collaborating with OMHSAS and providers to develop solutions ahead of CY2024 opening of Medicare network for LPC and LMFT credentialing.

### **On March 30<sup>th</sup>, Magellan and Primary Contractors Completed the PEPS Triennial review process with OMHSAS and Mercer Government Human Services Consulting.**

The purpose of the review was to assess the managed care operations of Magellan Behavioral Health of PA and the oversight functions of our HealthChoices Primary Contractors (the counties). This review is part of a routine Program Evaluation Performance Summary evaluation of all the Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization (BH-MCO) service centers in Pennsylvania.

A few key comments of Mercer and OMHSAS teams in our closing meeting. Overall feedback was very positive, and the teams acknowledged many organizational strengths:

- Robust use and promotion of peer support, both on our team and within community-based programs. They were specifically impressed by the consistently positive feedback from our CMs about their consultations with our RSN team.
- Our use of SDOH information to support active CM and treatment planning was “impressive.” “We hear a lot of talk about it, but you are applying it and utilizing it.”
- Evidence of strong provider relationships. Complimented that providers use CMs for support and resource information.
- Commended our strong rapport collaboration and open lines of communication with the Primary Contractors.
- Evidence that our MD’s and psychologist are available, approachable, and helpful with both case consults and treatment planning.
- Evidence of strong collaboration among CM team members and supervisors.
- Impressed by the long tenure of many staff.
- Liked that we had some CMs serving as single points of contact for counties/county providers.
- Customer service associates well trained and knowledgeable.
- Tenured, high-performing C&G staff.

Drew asked if there was feedback from Job fair. Most Janet received was positive. Hoping to have it again. Tom has more details. Some reported that meaningful conversations occurred that would lead to an interview. A lot of people weren't at level of being clinicians and that is a large need. There will be more pre planning this year and hoping to get more colleges on board. Not just Penn State. Looking at places that have master's degrees in the field as well. Mike R is also on the committee and said it was a great start. It was Penn State student focused and that is where some of the problem solving needs to be done.

## VI. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Matt provided updates on Reinvestment Plans including Respite plan with Access is now being put on hold. They finally hired staff, but then had no members referred. They are working internally to see how/if they can move forward.
- Pinebrook High-Fidelity Wraparound has 14 members and 8 pending, ABA Support Services 2:1 Program has 2 active members (one slated for discharge in July that has been involved for a long time), and Clearinghouse has 44 members served through contingency and one through bridge (the spend on members has been going up because rents and other expenses are going up).
- Social Determinants of Health Reinvestment plan is up and running with the Conference of Churches and is tied into and linked to the Community Based Care Management program (CBCM) with the conference as well. There were 3 members identified from CBCM membership pool that have needs to be addressed above and beyond housing, which included transportation and clothing. No one identified needing daycare yet. Starting small to ensure proper process are in place.
- Lehigh County DHS Block grant hearing happened on April 26 with a day and evening session offered. Had attending in AM but no one in the evening session. Morning session was recorded and is on the DHS website.
- Public Health Emergency update. Federal emergency has ended May 11, state ended at end of March. Members need to reapply for their MA benefits starting April 1<sup>st</sup> when their renewal comes due. This has been suspended through the pandemic. We did not see a decrease in membership during April but actually saw an increase due to CHIP fee for services members being transitioned into the HealthChoices program. We do anticipate a decrease in membership over the course of next year, but unsure of amounts.
- There has been discussion around 100 million dollars set aside from Behavioral Health Commission. Money was earmarked and set aside, but one of the pieces of legislation being filed is to see DHS and labor and workforce wanting to tap into 5 percent for their own work force improvement efforts. But there is movement and hoping to hear more soon.

## VII. Northampton County HealthChoices Report

- The housing reinvestment plan with the Conference of Churches will continue for another 5 years. The Conference is opened a site in Easton, which will be more centrally located for Northampton County members.
- The Respite reinvestment plan with Access remains on hold as per Matt's update above.
- The Social Determinants of Health (SDoH) reinvestment plan continues through the Easton Neighborhood Center. They recently had a leadership change so Northampton is working with the new Director around implementation of the program. Only a few members were served in 2022. Program can assist with transportation, clothing and child care. Reach out to Chelsea or Kristy for info
- The Outpatient Restoration Long Term Support Residence (ORLTSR) is still nearing the end of construction. Ribbon cutting is scheduled for Tuesday. Members are not ready to be admitted yet. Once final details are complete, licensing and enrollment with the state will occur.
- Kristy indicated that Northampton County received approval for the reinvestment plan to provide funding to Safe Harbor in Easton for expansion of their warming and cooling shelters and 4-6 transitional housing unit. Contracts are in process.
- Gary Ruschman, Director of Information Referral and Emergency Services (IRES) has retired. His position is posted.

## VIII. Adjournment

Next meeting will be held on **August 24th, 2023 at 2:00pm** at the Magellan Bethlehem office or via Zoom depending on COVID circumstances.

(Matt has conflict for next meeting so we will decide later what the plan will be)