

HealthChoices Advisory Board

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.
1 W. Broad Street, Bethlehem, PA 18018
In Person and Zoom Meeting
November 16, 2023

- I. Introductions: Those in attendance were: Janet Verga, Drew Lazo, Kendall Gazzo, Mike Ramsey, Kristy Cole, Tom Walker, Matt Bauder, Donna Thorman, and Corey Dunbar
- II. Review of August 24, 2023 minutes – no edits noted; minutes approved as final
- III. Community Healthcare Alliance Report:

Member/Family Advisory Committee

- Ronnie was not in attendance
- Matt provided Ronnie's recent report from CHA
 - Ronnie has noted the importance of non-clinical resources for members
 - Ronnie indicated that there remain on-going issues with Lanta and added that there tends to be turn over in drivers; Ronnie provided a reminder about the Lanta complaint process to address member concerns
 - Ronnie talked about the stigma of having a mental health diagnosis

Provider Advisory Committee –Kendall Gazzo

- Kendall did not have any updates for the group at this time

Children's Advisory Committee – Mike Ramsey

- OMHSAS has been working on Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) regulations
 - The goal is to get the new regulations to the Governor's office in 2025
 - Mike noted that opportunities for members to receive Secure RTF services outside of Pennsylvania have been discussed and that there is a guidance document being developed by OMHSAS in regards to such
- Mike reported that he had been working with 2 students from Northampton High School on a "Shatter the Silence" event related to suicide prevention
 - There will be a "Donuts and Discussion" opportunity on December 2 at the Northampton High School Cafeteria from 9:30-11:00. At this event, a

father will speak on losing his son to suicide and Mike will be in attendance to facilitate discussion and answer questions.

- Tom then brought up the suicide prevention task force that includes representatives from both Counties and a variety of stakeholder groups
- The Public Health Emergency Public unwinding was also discussed at this time
 - It was noted that there have been two zip codes identified in Allentown (18102 and 18109) in which there is a disproportionate amount of adults that have not yet gone through the renewal process.
 - Providers are being encouraged to discuss the need to renew MA with their members
 - Mike and Tom noted that there have been many reports of Children losing their Medical Assistance coverage only to be moved into the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) or Health Insurance Premium Payment program (HIPP)
 - While these are insurance that will provide payment for behavioral health and substance abuse services just as MA will, the billing mechanisms are different for providers and as such there is not a large network of these providers available.
 - Providers and members are being encouraged to use the COMPASS program and/or contact their local County Assistance Office (CAO) if they are running into renewal issues such as what is noted above. The HC program and Magellan are unable to change any determinations made by the CAO or state.

IV. NAMI/OMHSAS/Provider/Peer/News

- Corey Dunbar was introduced to the group as the new VP for Lehigh NAMI
- Corey will begin attending on behalf of NAMI and Donna will continue to attend as a member of the Family Advisory Committee
- NAMI will be looking to promote more of its programs through various marketing campaigns
- The next Peer 2 Peer course will begin in January
 - NAMI is looking to get more information about their program to various Group Homes in the Counties
 - Corey and Donna noted that these courses are available to help members and others learn how to be the best advocate possible for themselves and their treatment
- Corey spoke about Faith Net through NAMI and that outreach is occurring to all Faith based organizations
- Corey indicated that NAMI has been reaching out to Parent Teacher Associations and various schools regarding their Family Basics Program
- It was noted that NAMI is almost ready for its Board certification related to their Crisis Intervention Team (CIT)
- NAMI is looking to promote its Family 2 Family and Peer 2 Peer Courses to prisons, parole departments, and D&A providers to widen the opportunity to attend these courses

- Janet reported that 87 individuals attended her Micro Aggressions Training
 - She added that she has received great feedback about the presentation and she will be offering another training on this topic on November 21st at the Regional CSP meeting
- Janet indicated that she has heard from more members about Outpatient providers not calling members back about their referrals
 - Kendall spoke about the large increase in referrals that she is seeing at Step By Step
 - Mike noted that staff turnover at agencies can also contribute to this occurring

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Tom spoke at length about the Public Health Emergency unwinding that continues to occur
 - Tom noted that the state is privy to the member information that helps make determinations but that information is not made public
 - Magellan and Counties will be asking OMHSAS for a training around MA determinations and how best to provide advocacy during the process
 - Tom added that Lehigh Valley Health Network identified upwards of 120 school-based OP members that have been affected by the MA determination being moved to either CHIP or HIPP
 - This in turn is having an effect on member's continuity of care and ability to receive services in general
 - Tom indicated that all providers need to maintain documentation on member's MA eligibility and determination
 - Magellan will continue to have discussions with providers as the PHE unwinding continues
 - Magellan provides monthly outreach to members regarding the need to complete the redetermination process
- Tom indicated that rate increases have occurred across almost all levels of care to help support the provider community given that member insurances and access to care are in flux
- Magellan will be performing a rate leveling process across all Magellan Counties to create better overall consistency among rates across services and providers
 - With this, Lehigh and Northampton Counties received reduced rates for 2024 from OMHSAS
- Tom reported that Magellan and Counties are looking to bolster support for members in the community and are increasingly using Community Health and Community Transition Workers to assist in that goal
- Tom noted that in today's fiscal environment, providers will need to grow and diversify their populations to help remain solvent
 - It may be that accepting CHIP and HIPP may be business decisions that providers need to make
- There was then discussion on what types of investments should be going on in our community related to services for our members. The question, "Where does growth need to occur?" was presented. The need for Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT)

providers was discussed. It was noted though that OP services consisting of both therapy and medication management seemed to be of the most need at the moment.

- Tom reported that in attempting to make investments in the provider network the biggest challenge was trying to get the rate increases that have been provided to funnel down to the direct/frontline workers. It seems most rate increases tend to be put towards administrative areas as opposed to maintaining and retaining work forces at providers.

VI. Northampton County HealthChoices Report

- Kristy provided updates related to Northampton County's reinvestment plans
 - At this time there is no provider identified to implement Respite services though one provider has expressed interest that will be explored
 - The Housing and Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) plans continue to be implemented by the Conference of Churches
 - The Conference has now opened their Easton location and it is hoped that this will increase referrals for Northampton County
 - Work continues at the Outpatient Restoration Long Term Structured Residence (ORLTSR)
 - Kristy noted that they are still waiting on the Certificate of Occupancy and as a result a plan extension has been requested
 - High Fidelity Wraparound continues to be implemented for mor OCYS involved individuals
 - Kristy indicated that she has submitted a reinvestment plan to OMHSAS for CAM's Care Training, which would support School Based OP providers to be trained in a suicide treatment protocol

VII. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Matt provided updates related to Lehigh County's reinvestment plans
 - Concern Behavioral Health has expressed interest in learning more about the Respite reinvestment plan and the vision for implementation. Matt will set-up meeting with Concern to review and discuss
 - High Fidelity Wraparound through Pinebrook Family Answers currently has 20 active cases with 2 more being enrolled and 3 on the wait list.
 - Clearinghouse through the Conference of Churches served 22 members in October with 200 unduplicated members being served year to date.
 - 1 member has been referred to and accepted into the 2:1 ABA support program. However, the provider is struggling to fully staff the case currently.
 - There were 10 members served through the SDOH program through the Conference of Churches in October. All the needs that were assisted with fell under the food, clothing, transportation and education categories. Lehigh has been notified that the first member in need of child care assistance has been identified and their need and ability to meet this need will be explored.

- Drew talked about the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) level of care implementation and related denial and audit trends that have been noted
 - Drew indicated a denial trend has been noted related to D&A services and providers being able to convey members need by ASAM
 - Drew added that providers have good policies related to ASAM in place but there needs to be better implementation related to actual ASAM criteria and communicating that criteria to Magellan
- Drew reported that draft Program Evaluation Performance Summaries (PEPS) have been received by Counties and Magellan. Feedback to the state is being compiled and will be provided so OMHSAS can finalize the reports.

VIII. Adjournment

Next meeting will be held on **February 15, 2024 at 2:00pm** at the Magellan Bethlehem office or via Zoom depending on COVID circumstances.