

HealthChoices Advisory Board
In Person at VYH and Zoom option
May 30, 2024

- I. Introductions: Those in attendance were: Janet Verga (virtual), Drew Lazo, Ronnie Colbert, Mike Ramsey, Kristy Cole, Tom Walker, Matt Bauder, Donna Thorman (virtual), and Tisbine Moussa

- II. Review of February 15, 2024 minutes – no edits noted; minutes approved as final
 - a. Discussed Conflict of Interest form that had to be developed by Lehigh due to feedback from PEPS review. Includes a small questionnaire, is a few pages long and will need to be signed. Will be kept on file by both Northampton and Lehigh. This will be annual. We will send it out to the group for feedback. If there is a conflict we hope it is self-identified and they can recuse themselves if there is a true conflict. Don't anticipate any major issues, more so best practice and formality. Since our board is more informational and guidance given board rather than voting so we hope there won't be a conflict. It will be discussed more if a potential conflict is identified.

- III. Community Healthcare Alliance Report:

Member/Family Advisory Committee

- Ronnie discussed some continued problems with LANTA van still getting home very late. He has been advising people to call and file formal complaints. There continues to be turn over in drivers. He also likes to tell LANTA when drivers are doing well and note the ones they are thankful for.
- Haven House (Director and staff) came up with new things for the program. They are working on confidentiality issues where a consumer talks about another client when the person isn't there to defend themselves. Some changes about lunch. Instead of line, they get a voucher. This will help so people get enough. Some would go out and buy their own lunch and then come back and get free lunch as well and others didn't get any. Also cracking down on the bus tickets. Some consumers using the bus tickets from HH for their own personal usage. That is not allowed. New process developed to help with this. Some people are not as easy to comply and make the changes. Ronnie is trying to model good behavior to be a positive role model.

Provider Advisory Committee – Position is open. Kendal Resigned in 2023.
Asked at Provider meetings if anything is interested. No updates provided

Children's Advisory Committee – Mike Ramsey

- Mike discussed a Voluntary Resolution Agreement with DHS that was a result of a lawsuit settlement with Northumberland OCYF that requires all those working with

Child Welfare must do a new training. Figuring out what levels of staff and which programs are impacted by the training requirements. Janet looked up and there is a website that will be shared with the group for those to be aware. Matt and Kristy will check in with their Counties CYF to see if they are aware. The resolution had to do with a parent denied being able to care for their children because they were on MAT medications. Tom shared an experience he had in previous work with a situation that was similar. The hope is this lawsuit/training will be valuable.

IV. NAMI/OMHSAS/Provider/Peer/News

- Donna reported that the walk will be the first Saturday in September. Info will be sent out soon.
- Family to Family starts first week after Labor Day. Not sure if it will be Monday or Weds evenings yet.
- Donna added that the Peer to Peer class is also starting in September. Information on this and other activities can be found on the NAMI of Lehigh Valley website.
- Donna promoted NAMI's FaithNet, an interfaith resource network and has a presentation that can be custom to fit the needs of what is requested.
- Janet spoke about the Peer Support Network that exists.
 - QPR training earlier this month. 5 folks in attendance. 3 were Recovery supporters. She was asked to come back to Haven House to train the psych rehab staff. Dana Z from turning point also may be sending some staff.
 - LV Employment Task force had a very successful workshop with Penn Legal talking about removing legal barriers to employment. About 20 attended.
 - June will have Justin Wright coming to speak about Veterans and MH. In July there will be a WRAP discussion. And there is an opening in August if anyone knows of anyone that would like to present a topic relevant to Peer supporters let Jane know.

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Tom spoke about the Public Health Emergency unwinding that has concluded. Final unwinding will be the ending of June. As the impact is being evaluated, it appears that individuals that aren't eligible have found more appropriate level of health care coverage. Increased emphasis on HealthChoices MA components. Pennie marketplace has offered CHIP and HIPP insurances that help working families and those that are more healthy. Previously these got HC enrollment. So we have seen a large number of individuals have left the program. Nearly every County in PA is being impacted because this was higher than predicted. Discussed how to enroll, reenroll etc at CHA (Community Healthcare Alliance meeting) Lehigh and Northampton County CAO presented.
- Lehigh County met with DDAP Secretary during a listening tour and someone spoke at that meeting advocated for how hard it was to find, get, and keep DA

services after an episode of care or employment. CAO presentation (above) talked about some options and to work with SCA (Single County Authority) or MH department to expand diagnosis and then share that with the CAO.

- Tom added that there remain concerns related to Children’s Mental Health and access to care given changes to MA that continue to be reported. There has been lack of documentation of disability standards being met for some that apply.
- Tom reported that MA enrollment is down and medical claims expenses have increased. The cost of care and HC program is very challenged right now. There is also general burnout and acuity changes. Working on a strategy and in discussion with the state. There are some providers having issues and holds on entry into certain levels of care-such as ACT.
- There will be a Behavioral Health Summit in the LV this fall. Subcommittee has been chartered. Looking at Continuum of care, health disparities, workforce shortage and other key topics. Full morning session, possibly whole day, to reestablish connections.
- MH Awareness Month and dismantling stigma. Tom has been on a campaign promoted by Lehigh County for pop up events. There was a successful walk thank you to the planning committee.
- Celebrated the anniversary of Closure of Allentown State Hospital and there is a plaque on Hanover St with nice statement about the hospital. Tom read the statement. Donna shared her experience hearing the bad, but realizing there was some good and is trying to learn the needs of people and is advocating for long term care facilities, which are needed when people are trying to get meds stabilized.
- Tom promoted the Community Based Care Management program through the Conference of Churches being implemented by both Lehigh and Northampton Counties addressing homelessness.
 - This program is now open to any HealthChoices member that has had an acute inpatient hospitalization in the past year
 - The focus of the CBCM program is housing and Social Determinants of Health (SHOD) needs
 - Also launched a program expansion focused on seniors call DUOS. DUOS provides supports for caretakers and individuals and focusses on maximizing Medicare advantage benefits. Magellan will be hiring a CHW Community Health Worker to support this.
- Medicare issues—received final word from CMS that there are no issues with access and there is parity. CMS does not view these to be issues as we do and there is nothing more to do.

VI. Northampton County HealthChoices Report

- Kristy provided updates related to Northampton County’s reinvestment plans
 - Housing reinvestment plan offering Bridge and Contingency funding through the Conference of Churches. The Conference of Churches is also implementing Northampton’s Social Determinants of Health reinvestment program

- The ORLTSR now called the Restoration LTSR is moving along. COMHAR has signed the lease. This 8-bed program is now going through Magellan licensure as it prepared to accept its first members in the next few months. They are working on staffing and have a list of potential members to be screened.
- Contracts have been signed with Concern for the respite program and there is a potential first referral they are reviewing.
- High-Fidelity Wraparound Services with Pinebrook has had contracts signs and is being implemented for those that are not open to CYF.
- CAMS Care, a suicide training for clinician has also been approved. There will be an education day soon and more info to come.
- Tisbine had asked how new members can join these boards or meeting, what is the process? We will discuss and look into it.

VII. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Matt provided updates related to Lehigh County's reinvestment plans
 - Housing Clearinghouse through Conference of Churches served 18 members in April. Focus right now is on the members being evicted as a priority to be proactive.
 - The Social Determinants of Health program through the Conference of Churches served 18 members in April with housing, coordination with physical health, education, and food/clothing being the main areas of focus. No members need child care or other more costly services.
 - High Fidelity Wraparound through Pinebrook/Family Answers served 24 members in January with 12 additional cases pending or in the process of being enrolled.
 - Discussions have been held with Concern Behavioral Health about implementing a Home based, Family Driven and Site Based respite program. Concern and Lehigh County is working on the Contract and hoping to go live in June. Further updates to be provided at future meetings regarding general marketing and promotional info.
 - The 2:1 ABA Support program offered through ABA support Services continues to serve one member in the program. This member was supposed to go to RTF in May and there is one potential for admission.
 - Started the process for collecting needs/gaps for future programs. This morning had Member Advisory Workgroup. Many needs are regulatory issues and will continue to work through options.
- Drew updated on QI
 - Working on PIP improvement plan. Looking at a variety of things we do and looking at interventions to make improvements. Such as; AMA and AWOL Discharges from Substance use facilities. Learning from those doing well and trying to implement those strategies.

- Triennial-changes made due to them have started and are implementing them. Such as Complain Grievance and Denial process and audit. There have been an increase in Grievances hearings this year. Ties back to implementation of ASAM criteria for levels of care.
- NAMI-Maggie was at the block grant hearing and let her know that we are actively seeking members for the panels. Family member or member could participate in the process and sit on the 3 person panel.

VIII. Adjournment

Next meeting will be held on **August 15 at 2:00pm** at the Valley Youth House office or via Zoom depending on circumstances.