

HealthChoices Advisory Board

Zoom Meeting February 15, 2024

- 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 November 16, 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 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 noted that a question came up regarding how much groceries members are allowed to bring on Lanta?
 - Matt noted that members are allowed up to three bags of groceries during a trip.

Provider Advisory Committee – Position is open

- No updates provided

Children's Advisory Committee – Mike Ramsey

- Mike noted that Valley Youth House has been receiving increased calls for assistance in applying for and obtaining Medical Assistance
- Some of these callers are looking to obtain services from Valley Youth House and other callers are just looking for general assistance
- Mike reported that the guidelines for Certified Peer Specialists are changing
 - Mike indicated that a Serious Mental Illness is no longer required and added that individuals interested in CPS no just need a self-identified diagnosis
 - A diploma and/or GED are no longer required as well
 - The hope is these changes will increase access for CPS services
- Mike informed the group that the Shatter the Silence event at Northampton High School in December was well attended. Mike was able to facilitate a discussion with

teachers and answer questions. There was good attendance of students at the Saturday event as well.

IV. NAMI/OMHSAS/Provider/Peer/News

- Donna reported that the Family to Family class is beginning on March 6th. This is an 8 week course that occurs Monday evenings at the Oasis. It is free to attend but registration is required.
- Donna added that the Peer to Peer class is also on-going. 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.
- Donna offered to do a training on Peer to Peer and Family to Family to help those in the community better understand what these resources are.
- Janet spoke about the Peer Support Network that exists.
 - Janet added that speakers and plans for the meetings have been made now for the rest of the year. She noted that they have been trying to target a variety of community supports and resources for educational opportunities.

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- Tom spoke at length about the Public Health Emergency unwinding that continues to occur
- 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
 - Tom indicated that the PH 95 loophole that exists for Children in Pennsylvania requires Mental Health documentation in order for a family to apply for such
- Tom reported that MA enrollment is down and medical claims expenses have increased
- Tom is attempting to arrange for some educational opportunities for providers so families can be assisted through the MA and PH 95 loophole application process
- Tom promoted the newest Behavioral Health Matters podcast, which centered around Drug and Alcohol Recovery and Resiliency
- Tom indicated that a Mental Health/Intellectual Disability Crisis training occurred in the 4th Quarter 2023
 - Tom noted it was well attended and received
 - Tom reported that attendees were able to learn about the individualization needed to be able to attend to each unique member and their needs.
- Lastly, Tom promoted the Community Based Care Management program through the Conference of Churches being implemented by both Lehigh and Northampton Counties
 - 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

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.
 - Kristy added that the Conferences Easton location is now open and the program is slowly growing.
 - Kristy noted that the Conference of Churches is also implementing Northampton's Social Determinants of Health reinvestment program
 - Kristy indicated that the ORLTSR now called the Restoration LTSR has obtained the Certificate of Occupancy and has been licensed by the state. This 8-bed program is now going through Magellan licensure as it prepared to accept its first members.
 - Kristy reported that she has been in discussion with Concern Behavioral Health in regards to a Respite program. Kristy is currently waiting on a proposal from Concern and is hoping to have an update at the next meeting.
 - Kristy noted that she submitted new reinvestment plans in September for High-Fidelity Wraparound Services as well as CAMS Care, a program that looks to address students that are at high risk for an acute mental health episode. Kristy indicated that minor questions have been posed and responded to but that the plans have not yet been approved.

VII. Lehigh County HealthChoices Report

- Matt provided updates related to Lehigh County's reinvestment plans
 - Discussions have been held with Concern Behavioral Health about implementing a Home based, Family Driven and Site Based respite program. Concern and Lehigh County will execute a contract with an April/May initial implementation date. Further updates to be provided at future meetings.
 - High Fidelity Wraparound through Pinebrook/Family Answers served 19 members in January with 10 additional cases pending or in the process of being enrolled.
 - Housing Clearinghouse through Conference of Churches served 22 members in December with 264 unduplicated members served in 2023.
 - The 2:1 ABA Support program offered through ABA support Services continues to serve one member in the program.
 - The Social Determinants of Health program through the Conference of Churches served 26 members in December with housing, coordination with physical health, education, and food/clothing being the main areas of focus.

VIII. Adjournment

Next meeting will be held on **May 30, 2024 at 2:00pm** at the Valley Youth House office or via Zoom depending on circumstances.