

Tuesday, June 11th, 2024, 11:00am

Virtual Meeting ([ZOOM info](#))

In-Person Location: 600 Penn St, FL 3 Reading, PA 19602 (AmeriHealth Wellness and Opportunity Center)

Meeting Chair: Carrie Wilcox

Co-Chair: Nguyen Nguyen

Meeting Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos

1. Call to Order

Nicole Ragab, Community Outreach Program Manager, called the meeting to order at 11:00 am.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Nguyen welcomed the group to the second quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Northeast zone. Carrie Wilcox, Lehigh Capital Service Coordination Manager, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda and presenters. Nguyen also welcomed Kathleen Warman, Nursing Facility Service Coordinator who set up a virtual viewing of the meeting at Kingston Court NF for the Participants there.

Action items: N/A

3. PAC Member Updates/Discussion

This meeting is hybrid, with options for PAC members to join either in-person or virtually. Nguyen facilitated introductions; the in-person group introduced themselves followed by those online.

Action items: N/A

4. Health Education & Outreach Updates

Nguyen presented the health education and outreach updates in the Northeast zone for the Community Outreach team. The following was presented:

- Participant Newsletter June 2024
 - Nguyen updated the group that the Participant Newsletters will not be mailed out anymore, but will be available as a digital copy. Physical copies can be made available to any Participant who requests them.
- Outreach Team Activities
 - 06/17- Harrisburg Juneteenth Press Conference
 - 07/20- Lehigh Valley Disability Pride
 - 07/24- Health Education/Bingo at White Rose Senior Center
 - 09/04- Berks County Centenarian Luncheon
- Activities in Your Community:
 - Reading Wellness Center – 600 Penn St Fl 3, Reading, PA 19602
 - 06/11- Adult Dental Presentation
 - 06/12- Asthma Management Education
 - 06/13- Work Readiness Event ft. Boscov's
 - 06/27- Outdoor Safety



- Mobile Wellness Unit Calendar
 - Website: <https://www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/community/mobile-wellness-center.aspx>
 - 06/15- Allentown Juneteenth Celebration
- Community Resources:
 - Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania <https://cilcp.org> 3211 North Front Street, Suite 100 Harrisburg, PA 17110
 - CIL of York, Adams Franklin Counties, <https://cilofyaf.org> 127 W Market St Ste 100 York, PA 17401
 - Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, <https://lvcil.org> 713 North 13th Street Allentown, PA 18102

Feedback

- *PAC Member expressed that she was recently denied coverage for a virtual pain management appointment that she had previously attend without issue. She wanted more insight into this. She also wanted to know if dental implants were covered.*
 - Nguyen and Nicole both noted this and will follow up to address these individual needs privately.
- *Nguyen asked Provider PAC Member from the Berks AAA to talk more about the upcoming Berks Centenarian Luncheon.*
 - PAC Member explained that this celebration is open to any Berks County resident who will be turning 100 within the 2024 calendar year. They get one additional ticket for free for anyone they would like to have attend the event with them.
- *Provider PAC Member noted that Northampton County does a similar Centenarian event.*

Action items: N/A

5. CHC Programs & Updates/Redetermination Reminder

Nicole presented the following to the group:

- Make sure address and phone are up to date via online www.dhs.pa.ove/COMPASS, mobile App: myCOMPASS PA, phone at 1-877-395-8930 or in person at the County Assistance Office
- Sign up for alerts – at www.dhs.pa.gov/TEXT or eNotices at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS
- Complete Renewal forms in timely manner at online www.dhs.pa.ove/COMPASS, on paper on in person at the County Assistance Office or via phone at 1-866-550-4355

Feedback

- *Provider PAC Member noted that, “It’s interesting that the PHE is ending yet the biggest NF in the zone if having a huge flare up of COVID.”*
 - Nicole asked to connect privately to get the name of the Nursing Facility that Provider is referencing.
- *In-person PAC Member shared that they, “Have to be diligent with MA renewal process because they don’t send regular updates or let you know when they need more information.” Another in-person PAC Member added that “it’s difficult to upload docs online. I have to keep checking the app because the updates are not reliable.”*
 - Nguyen encouraged Participants to be proactive about their renewals, and to connect with their SC should they have issues. Nguyen also encouraged Participant to complete paper forms which are available at their county assistance office should the online version be an



issue. Additionally, Participants can connect directly to the outreach team to find more community resources that will help with MA redeterminations.

- PAC Member shared that her organization helps with MA redetermination and gave PAC Participants the option to contact her directly should they need assisting getting a hold of help.

Action items: N/A

6. CHC Programs & Updates/Quality—HCBS CAHPS Interventions

Marci Kramer, Director of Quality Management for CHC presented on the following interventions:

- Areas for Improvement:
 - Staff Are Reliable and Helpful
 - Choosing the Services That Matter to You
 - Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP) Includes All the Things Important to You
 - Planning Your Time and Activities
 - Transportation to Medical Appointments
 - Aware of Housing Rights and How to Get Information for Preventing Eviction/Foreclosure
 - Rating of Dental Care
 - Mental Health Treatment – Ability to Get an Appointment for Counseling or Mental Health Treatment as Soon as You Needed
 - Participants’ Knowledge on How to Apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits to Help Buy Food
- Improvement Actions Taken:
 - Enhance Service Coordinator training.
 - New LTSS Benefits Video and SNAP Benefits Video have been added to the Participant Website
 - Increase number of Housing Coordinators
 - Dental Visit reminders. Outreach to those who have not used their Dental visit and provide assistance.
 - Urge Participants to use virtual appointments and waiting lists.
 - BDT contacts Participants who may be eligible for SNAP and help with enrollment.

Feedback

- *In-person PAC Member expressed that BDT tries to dual-enroll Participants in the Advantage Plan. They noted that there should be a way to opt out permanently from being asked that.*
- *Provider PAC Member asked, “Can the length of the survey be broken up and completed in sections? People with disabilities can have trouble sitting through the whole thing?”*
 - Marci noted that this is a national survey that is standardized across the country. At this time, we do not have the option of breaking it into multiple parts but will not this feedback.
- *Provider PAC Member also asked, “Does the Plan send a letter to let Participants know they may be selected for the survey? This may drive engagement?”*
 - Marci answered that, yes, The Plan does send out a letter to all Participants alerting them of the upcoming survey.
- *In-person PAC Member asked, “Can the mailed reminder and survey introduction be amended to improve accessibility i.e., font size, language, etc.? Also, the LC zone has a large Haitian Creole population, and it would help to have the survey available in more than English/Spanish versions.”*
 - Marci noted that the survey is phone only; we will note the language needs of the area.

Action items: N/A



7. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/ LTSS Benefits Video

For each PAC meeting in 2024, the CHC Community Outreach Team will be presenting a “HCBS Waiver Spotlight”, which will highlight the 32 LTSS benefits that are available to our Participants.

Nicole presented the new LTSS Benefits Video:

- The LTSS Benefits Video was shown to the group. Lori explained it will be a new tool for SCs to use and show to Participants during initial visits/assessments.
- The video can be found on our website in the participant portal by scrolling to the bottom at: <https://www.amerhealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/benefits/index.aspx>

Feedback

- *In-person PAC Member asked, “how do I get help with end of life care and planning that’s listed in the video?”*
 - Carrie explained that they can bring up this need with their SC. Nguyen also informed them about ACPA CHC’s partnership with the Senior Law Center, and that AmeriHealth CHC Participants have out own special line that they can call and get support with such tasks at no cost to them. Nguyen provided the Participant with a Senior Law info flyer.
- *Provider PAC Member inquired, “Is the video captioned? Having the info about the appeals process is very helpful...Can SCs advocate for Participants in the appeals process and help them navigate? Will there be ASL accommodations and other languages for the video?”*
 - Nicole answered that the video is captioned online; the SC version will be captioned as well. We are also currently working on adapting the videos to other popular languages to improve accessibility. Carrie added that SCs cannot be advocates during appeals but can assist with navigating the appeal process by providing contact info and educating the Participant on what they can expect.

Action items: N/A

8. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/ Home & Vehicle Modifications, Pest Eradication & Assistive Technology

Nguyen presented on the CHC benefits related to Home/Vehicle Modifications, Pest Eradication & Assistive Technology. These services:

- Help Participants have more independence in the home and community as well as protect their health, welfare, and safety.
- Shown to be needed as a result of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and are detailed in the Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP).
- Home Adaptions are:
 - Physical adaptations to the primary private residence of the Participant.
 - Includes installation, maintenance, permits, inspections, and warranties.
 - Can be for completed for Participants who own or rent (with landlord’s permission) their homes.
- Vehicle Modifications are:
 - Changes to a vehicle that help Participants have more independence and promote health, welfare, and safety.



- Pest Eradication are:
 - Services that treat pest in the participant home and help keep home free of pests which include but are not limited to cockroaches, bed bugs and mice.
- Assistive Technology is:
 - an item, piece of equipment or product that helps in/with communication, self-help, self-direction, life-supports, and adaptive capabilities.

Feedback

- *In-person PAC Member asked, "Do home mods apply for Participants in subsidized housing?"*
 - Home Mod Specialist Supervisor John Greenwood explained, "Yes, but CHC is the payer of last resort. We will help the Participant seek reasonable accommodations from their landlord/housing program, but CHC will cover home mods if the landlord/housing program won't."
- *In-person PAC Member asked if there was a list of available assistive technology?*
 - John explained that there is no complete list at this time, and that oftentimes new AT solutions are discovered/approved based on the Participants' needs; they are determined on a case-by-case basis. Nguyen also noted that Participants can try out a variety of AT products at their local Centers for Independent Living (CILs).
- *In-person PAC Member asked if the waiver has ever covered bioptics?*
 - John has noted that in his experience, no.

Action items: N/A

9. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/Behavioral Therapy, Counseling, and Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy

Singin Cassick, Behavioral Health Coordinator and Dominique Oputa, Service Coordination Manager presented on the following:

- Behavior Therapy
 - Help improve Participants level of function, independence, and ability to be part of the community.
 - Includes functional behavioral assessment, behavioral support plan and training for Participants, family, and direct service providers.
- Counseling
 - Non-medical counseling services to help with individual or social conflicts and family issues.
 - Help to build and keep positive support networks, improve personal relationships, and Improve communication with family members or others.
 - You must use available Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization (BH-MCOs) services before you can get these services through the CHC waiver.
 - <https://www.pa.gov/en/agencies/dhs/resources/medicaid/bhc/bhc-mcos.html>
- Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy (CRT)
 - Goal Oriented therapy that includes consultation, ongoing counseling, coaching, and cueing training of family members/staff and help to carry out the CRT plan.

Feedback



- *In-person PAC Member asked, “Can providers be given a list of in-network providers for the CHC-MCO and the BH-MCO to help connect/coordinate for Participants? Can we get a list that connects/streamlines both coverages?”*
 - Singin explained that there is no comprehensive list, but the BH coordinators receive referrals and can help Participants navigate their coverage and find providers within their network.

Action items: N/A

10. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/Home Delivered Meals & Nutrition Counseling

Carrie presented on the following:

- Home Delivered Meals
 - Participants in the CHC program who cannot prepare meals for themselves can get up to two meals per day – hot, cold, frozen, or shelf-stable.
 - Providers can accommodate Participant’s dietary needs and preferences.
 - Contact your SC to find out what is available in your area.
- Nutrition Counseling
 - Participants, through their doctor’s approval, have access to nutrition counseling provided by registered dietician or certified Nutrition Specialist.
 - This benefit support Participants in creating a diet and meal plan that meet their health needs and address nutrition needs.

Feedback

- *In-person PAC Member shared that she recently switched to HDM provider Meals America and “loves the food options”. She explains that in addition to the meals, Participants get a loaf of bread, and milk each week.*
- *In-person Provider PAC Member asked, “For Participants in a NF, how can the meal plan be adjusted when they discharge?”*
 - Carrie encouraged the Participant to work with their SC to request the adjustment during their trigger assessment.
- *HDM Provider CC from Mom’s Meals wanted to encourage all Participants to work with their SC to discuss any dietary needs, and chronic care conditions. She explained that each meal should meet 1/3 of the referenced daily intake (RDI), and cultural specifications; needs will be honored by all HDM providers (halal, kosher, etc.)*

11. Open Forum

The 2024 PAC meetings will be held in person and zoom. Resources that we share or are requested during the PAC meetings will be sent to the group after the meeting. They will also be on the AmeriHealth Caritas Community HealthChoices website under the Community tab. It is currently undergoing some updates but there are many resources on the site. <https://www.amerihealthcaritaschc.com/community/index.aspx>

Nguyen encouraged any meeting attendees with specific questions related to the presented topics or any concerns they may have, to bring them up at this time. The post PAC survey will be sent out along with the meeting materials.

Action items: N/A



12. Next Meeting

Nguyen announced that the 2024 second quarter PAC meeting for the Lehigh Capital zone will be held on September 10, 2024. The meeting again will be hosted in-person and virtually. We will follow up with mail, phone calls and email.

Action items: N/A

13. Meeting Adjourned

Nicole adjourned the virtual meeting at 1:00 pm. At the in-person session, PAC Members were given a catered, hot lunch and spent time sharing food resources in the local Reading area with each other. Additionally, a PAC Member was able to discuss their upcoming transition from NFI to NFCE status within CHC. Another PAC Member was able to express some specific transportation concern with Carrie and the SC team. The in-person meeting adjourned at 1:55pm.

Action items: Nguyen will connect Participant MG with the OLTL Transportation Summit second session once it has been announced.