

Thursday, December 15, 2022, 1:30-3:00pm
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Meeting Chair: Carrie Wilcox

Meeting Co-Chair: Nicole Ragab

Meeting Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos

1. Call to Order

Nicole Ragab, Community Outreach Program Manager, called the meeting to order at 1:32 pm.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Carrie Wilcox, Manager LTSS PA CHC, welcomed the group to the fourth quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Lehigh/Capital zone and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Carrie introduced Ally Hindman, Community Relations Representative, to the group. Nicole completed the virtual meeting level setting, including a reminder not to share Personal Health Information (PHI) during the meetings. Ally reminded the members that they can contact her with any personal service-related questions, and she will help to connect them to their Service Coordinator.

3. New Business/Updates: Quality

Michelle Burton, Coordinator, Supervisor Quality Management, provided Quality Department updates including a reminder about flu shots, an explanation of diabetes, information related to RSV (Respiratory syncytial virus), and some insight into helping with seasonal depression “winter blues”. See details below:

- Getting a flu shot is a safe and effective way to protect yourself and your family this flu season.

Diabetes

- According to the American Diabetes Association and Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, more than 30 million Americans, or approximately 10 percent of the nation’s population, have diabetes.
- Managing blood sugar levels within your target range has a direct correlation to all other diabetes-related conditions as well.

RSV (Respiratory Syncytial Virus):

- Per the CDC, RSV is a common respiratory virus that usually causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Most people recover in a week or two, but RSV can be serious, especially for infants and older adults.
- RSV infection symptoms can range anywhere from mild cold-like symptoms including runny nose, sore throat, cough, and headache. But can sometimes lead to serious conditions such as:
- RSV infection symptoms can range anywhere from mild cold-like symptoms including runny nose, sore throat, cough, and headache.

Tips for stopping the spread of germs and illness this winter:



- Protect yourself and loved ones by washing your hands often with soap and water for 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands. Avoid close contact, such as kissing, sharing cups, or eating utensils with people with cold-like symptoms.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. Throw the tissue in the trash afterward.
- Clean and disinfect surfaces that people frequently touch, such as doorknobs.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and public areas when you are sick. This will help protect others from catching your illness.

Winter Blues: in the winter months and it's harder to get out and about. Michelle provided some activities that can help you overcome the Winter Blues:

- Participating in public activities and programs
- Volunteering in your community
- Staying active
- Spending time with family and friends

Feedback:

PAC Member asked what if people are homebound-is there a vaccine option for them? Carrie explained that the Participant should work with their Primary Care Provider to overcome the homebound barrier.

In response to the topic of Winter Blues, PAC Member suggested that Service Coordinators should remind their Participants that they have transportation options to become more involved in the community. Carrie thanked the member for the contribution and agreed that the Service Coordinators could add that suggestion when talking to the Participants about their activity in the community.

Action Items: N/A

4. Service Coordinator Corner: Updates and Reminders

Carrie Wilcox, Manager of Service Coordination, LTSS, presented Service Coordination department updates and reminders including the following:

- The person-centered approach to participant care
- An overview of the Collaborative services and teams.
- An overview of Care Transitions
- Guidelines for participant visits in the community
- Service Coordinator safety measures

Action Items: N/A



5. New Business/Updates: Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging-Behavioral Health Presentation

Nicole Ragab on behalf of Lynn Cooper, Behavioral Health Policy Specialist for the Pennsylvania Association of Area Agencies on Aging (P4A), provided a presentation on the current state of mental and behavioral health and support for older adults in Pennsylvania. The presentation includes an overview of Pennsylvania's network of Area Agencies on Aging (AAA) and the role they play in the care of older adults. Many older adults have minimal access to mental health and substance use disorder services for a variety of reasons, including.

- Stigma
- Biases
- Denial
- Lack of knowledge/education
- Staffing shortages
- Medicare
- Limited funding
- Personal financial limitations
- Regulatory barriers

Finally, P4A is involved in the development of initiatives designed to improve and increase access to mental health and substance use disorder services in the community, designed to meet older adults where they are.

Action Items: N/A

6. Community Outreach Update: LIHEAP and Post PAC Survey

Ally Hindman presented on the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). Including information about the grants, qualifications, and the LIHEAP Crisis program. Ally also discussed how to apply for these benefits and the guidelines around the income limits for qualification.

Resources:

Statewide Toll-Free LIHEAP Hotline: 1-866-857-7095

Luzerne County: Commission on Economic Opportunity 1-800-822-0359

Wyoming County: Commission on Economic Opportunity 1-800-836-4090

<https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>

Nicole also informed meeting participants about the Post PAC Survey and showed the survey and asked for feedback to help improve upcoming Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meetings.

Action Items: N/A



7. Open Forum

Nicole 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.

Action Items: N/A

8. Next Meeting

Nicole announced that the fourth quarter PAC meeting for the Lehigh/Capital zone will be held on March 14, 2023, at 1:30 pm.

9. Meeting Adjourned

Nicole adjourned the meeting at 3:35 pm after all inquiries from the member were addressed.