

Thursday, June 4, 2026, 11:00 am
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Location (in-person): 20 W Broad Street, Hazelton, PA 18201
Location (virtual): [zoom info](#)

Chair: Fiorella Salas Toledo
Co-Chair: Tracy Brekke
Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos

1. Call to Order

Fiorella Salas Toledo, Community Relations Representative for AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania (ACP) Community HealthChoices (CHC) called the third quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Northeast Zone to order at 11:07 am.

2. Welcome, Introductions, and Updates

Fiorella introduced the Community Outreach team as well as Tracy Brekke, Manager of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) for ACP CHC'S Northeast Zone.

Meeting attendees introduced themselves either in person, virtually, or in the Zoom chat. Fiorella also introduced satellite meetings that were taking place at Edenbrook North Skilled Nursing Facility (Williamsport, PA), Rosewood Rehabilitation and Nursing Home (Pottsville, PA).

Nguyen Nguyen, Manager of Community Outreach, completed the level setting for the meeting. Fiorella reviewed the meeting agenda.

**Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

3. Health Education & Outreach Activities

Fiorella, Community Relations Representative, reviewed the health education and outreach updates for the Northeast, including:

- Last quarter's Community Outreach team activities
- Partners in the Community
- Upcoming Community Outreach team activities
- Activities in your Community
- Wellness and Opportunity Center information and calendar of events
- Participant Communications
- Participant Handbook

Resources:

- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/community/wellness-center-hazleton.aspx>
- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/community/mobile-wellness-center.aspx>



- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/health-wellness/newsletter.aspx>
- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/participant-handbook.aspx>

Feedback:

A Provider PAC member, Cindy Celi from Mom's Meals introduced herself, and commented that June is Alzheimer's' Awareness month and Brain Health Awareness Month.

A PAC member asked if the Bundles of Blessing Diaper Ministry Care Crew activity serves people from one county only? Tracy mentioned the Service Coordinator in charge of this activity provides this service for Columbia County, but they will not turn anyone away. Nguyen mentioned that most of the activities that were presented are open to the public and free.

Next Steps: Fiorella will send this information to the group.

**Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

4. CHC Programs and Updates-CHC Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Interventions

Nguyen Nguyen, Community Outreach Manager, discussed the Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Interventions.

- The Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (CAHPS) Survey is a telephone only survey developed for measuring experience with Medicaid HCBS delivered by providers, including Service Coordinators.
- AmeriHealth Caritas Community HealthChoices- Home and Community Bases Services exceeded the 86% goal for 10 of 16 core survey measures in 2025.
- 2025 HCBS CAHPS Opportunities for Improvement and Improvement Actions:
 - Service Coordinators verify emergency backup plans are current when direct care workers miss shifts, and we analyze data such as participant surveys, complaints, and missed shift reports to identify providers or areas needing improvement.
 - Service Coordinators receive annual and pop-up trainings to keep assessments skills strong.
 - Service Coordinators complete a monthly check-in with participants.
 - Service Coordinators are using updated talking points to ask the participant if the Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP) includes everything that is important to them.
 - There is a Weekly Medical Transportation Management (MTM) Provider meeting to highlight issues our participants experience. Additionally, there is a training series recorded for staff to effectively assist participants.
 - The number of Housing Coordinators will increase to support participants.
 - We will continue our partnership with Senior LAW Center to assist participants with legal services.
 - We will launch a Dental Texting campaign to encourage dental check-up every year, and we will help participants schedule yearly dental visits.
 - Behavioral Health (BH) Coordinators are working to find providers from each Behavioral Health-Managed Care Organization who can offer services in different languages.



- Service Coordinators must complete training every year regarding zero suicide, motivational interviewing, mandatory crisis prevention and intervention, and trauma-informed care.

Feedback:

A PAC member mentioned that according to the survey AmeriHealth Caritas is doing well, and proceeded to ask how many participants received this survey? Nguyen commented that this is an annual telephonic survey performed by an external entity contracted by the state. This external entity conducts surveys for all Managed Care Organizations. The Participants are randomly chosen by this external entity.

A PAC member asked how many Spanish speaking participants completed the survey? Nguyen stated we can get a breakdown of the number of surveys that were done in Spanish.

A PAC member asked how do we differentiate this survey from a scammer? What is the introduction to the survey, so we know who is calling? Do they say they are calling on behalf of the Managed Care Organization or the external entity? Nguyen commented that we will ask the Quality department for the verbiage and provide a follow up at the next meeting.

A PAC member commented that dental and behavioral health services access has been a problem across the board. Nguyen commented that AmeriHealth Caritas is working on collaborating with different behavioral health programs to work with the Participants across all Medicaid programs. Nguyen commented we are working on a special Participant Advisory Committee meeting to discuss the barriers preventing participants from not being able to do what they want in the community.

Next Steps: Fiorella will follow up regarding the questions being presented at this meeting. Fiorella will also provide information on the upcoming special Participant Advisory Committee meeting to discuss barriers that prevent participants from doing things in the community.

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5. Resources from our Community Partners- Benefits Counseling Overview

Matt Bailey, Benefits Supervisor and Training Specialist, discussed The Benefits of Work Incentive Planning- An Overview of Benefits Counseling.

Work Incentive Planning is a set of benefits and work incentives counseling strategies, services, and supports that seek to promote work preparation, and advancement, focusing on the enhancement of self sufficiency and independence of individuals with disabilities through informed choice to ultimately increase financial wellbeing.

- Benefits Counseling
 - Assists people with disabilities to understand how employment, increased wages or promotions affect government benefits such as Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI), Medicaid, Waiver, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), etc.
 - A Benefits Counselor can provide guidance and address any questions about working while receiving government benefits.
- Pros of using benefits counseling include the following:
 - Maximize monthly income
 - Continue access to current supports
 - Connect with other community supports



- If interested in Benefits Counseling?
 - Everyone's situation is unique
 - Talk to your Service Coordinator for a referral.

Resources:

Matthew Bailey, Achieva Family Trust. Phone number: 412-995-5000. Email: mbailey@achieva.info

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: Fiorella will send this information to the group.

**Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

6. Home and Community Based Services Waiver Spotlight- Participant Directed Services Video

Lauren Cottingham, Direct Care Worker Workforce Program Manager, presented the Participant-Directed Services Video.

- English version was played for the group. The Spanish version was played at the Hazelton Wellness Center after the meeting.
- English and Spanish versions of the video are available on the AmeriHealth Caritas Community HealthChoices website
- Service Coordinators will present this video to the participants when completing an assessment.
- The video will be translated into Arabic, Haitian Creole, Russian, Nepali and Chinese Mandarin later this year.

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

7. Home and Community Based Services Waiver Spotlight- Carallel Caregiver Support Program

Suzanne Nelson, Customer Success Specialist, presented information on the Carallel Caregiver Support Program, which supports family caregivers in aging and caregiving, with tools, guidance, and community.

Carrallel Caregiver Support Program

- Provides support for any family caregiver supporting an AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania Community HealthChoices Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Participant.
- Support includes:
 - One-on-one personalized coaching
 - 24/7 companion app access to tools, resources and support
 - Virtual Support Groups
 - Webinars on caregiving topics
- How to receive help:



- Call 1-877-870-5225
- <http://app.carallel.com/acpa>
- Join caregiver support groups and education events.

Feedback:

A PAC member asked what the 12-week training slide was about? Suzanne stated the slide provides information about a study that was done regarding the impact of Carallel support.

Next Steps: Fiorella will send this information to the group.

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8. Open Forum

Fiorella encouraged any meeting attendees with specific questions related to the topics presented or any concerns they may have to bring them up at this time.

Nguyen extended a thank you to everyone who participated in today's meeting and encouraged attendees to join the next meeting.

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

**Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

9. Next Meeting

The third quarter Participant Advisory Committee meeting for the Northeast zone will be held on September 3rd, 2026. Fiorella will follow up with mail, phone calls, and email reminders.

Today's attendees will receive a post-PAC follow-up email with the resources from today's meeting as well as a feedback survey. Attendees are encouraged to complete the survey and return it to the Community Outreach team.

**Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

10. Meeting Adjourned

Fiorella adjourned the meeting at 1:18 pm after all inquiries were answered.

**Internal Attendance****(In-person= P, Virtual = V)**

Method of Participation	Internal Staff	Title
P	Nguyen N.	Manager, Community Outreach
V	Ally H.	Community Relations Rep
P	Fiorella S. T.	Community Relations Rep
V	Yolanda S.	Community Relations Rep
P	Tracy B.	Co-chair/Manager SC
P	Michelle B.	Supervisor SC
P	Alyson B.	Supervisor SC
V	Ashley V.	Behavioral Health Coordinator
V	Lionel Waritay	Coordinator Employment LTSS
V	Joanna C.	Housing Coordinator
V	Robert Malone	Housing Program Manager
V	Lauren C.	Direct Care Worker Workforce Program Manager
V	Melanie W.	Behavioral Health Coordinator
V	Kathleen S.	Executive Assistant II
P	Ann Wilson	Service Coordinator
P	Madison B.	Service Coordinator

**External Attendance (In-person= P, Virtual = V, Member not present= M)**

Method of Participation	Name	Title
M	PRM	LTSS Participant
M	LL	Family Member
M	LN	Caregiver
M	FT	NFI Participant
M	JA	NFI Participant
M	OV	LTSS Participant
P	CN, EM	LTSS Provider- PAS-Age in Place
M	TB, JDS	LTSS Provider- Genentech
V	VW	LTSS Participant
V	MW	Family Caregiver
M	CS	CBO- BFSA
M	KL	CBO-MyCIL
V	CC	LTSS Provider- HDM- Mom's Meals
V	MG	CBO-UNC
M	SB	LTSS Provider- PERS- VRI Cares
M	AC	CBO- RTFCIL
V	KH	CBO- CRI
V	DK, JM,	Behavioral Health- Lycoming- Clinton Joinder Programs
M	KK	LTSS Provider-PAS- Comfort Keepers
M	S	LTSS Provider- PAS- Global Health and Home Care
M	JD	CBO- UDS Foundation
M	MB	Physical Health Provider- AR Health
M	CJ	Behavioral Health- Clarion Psychiatric Center
M	DS	CBO- Alzheimer's Association
M	CB	Hospice Provider- Commonwealth Hospice of Berwick



M	KS	Lackawanna AAA- SHARE program
M	NF, BE	Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- The Wright Center
V	ER	Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- Star Community Health
V	DM	Community Resource- PA American Water- Customer Program Assistance Specialist
M	JH	LTSS Participant
M	BN	LTSS Participant
M	AMN	Family member
P	ET	LTSS Participant
P	MT	Caregiver
P	JT	LTSS Participant
P	NA	LTSS Participant
M	JGP	LTSS Participant
M	MMC	LTSS Participant
M	LF	NFI Participant
M	MG	NFI Participant
P	AR	NFI Participant
P	NV	LTSS Participant
M	VM	NFI Participant
M	MMM	LTSS Participant
P	AV	LTSS Participant
M	TM	NFI Participant
M	KS	NFI Participant
M	BL	NFI Participant
M	MG	NFI Participant
P	NP	NFI Participant
P	MC	LTSS Participant



P	CP	LTSS Participant
M	SB	LTSS Provider- PAS- Help at Home
P	LCM	LTSS Participant
P	NG	LTSS Participant/ Community Justice Project
M	MA	Wider Circle
M	MK	Wider Circle
M	RP	CBO-Hazleton Integration Project
M	ER	CBO-Hazleton Integration Project
V	MB	LTSS Provider- Achieva Family Trust- Benefits Counseling
V	SN	LTSS Provider- Carallel
P	DA	NF Participant
P	GB	NF Participant
P	ES	NF Participant
P	KD	NF Participant
P	MH	NF Participant
P	CK	NF Participant
P	MR	NF Participant
P	AB	NF Participant