

Thursday, September 3, 2026, 11:00 am
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Location (in-person): 20 W. Broad St, Hazleton, PA 18201
Location (virtual): [zoom info](#)

Chair: Fiorella Salas Toledo
Co-Chair: Tracy Brekke
Scribe: Yolanda Sample

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 11:10 am.

2. Welcome, Introductions, and Updates

Fiorella introduced the Community Outreach team as well as Tracy, Manager of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) for Northeast Zone and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

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).

Nguyen Nguyen, Community Outreach Manager, completed the level setting for the meeting and Tracy reviewed the meeting agenda.

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).

3. Health Education & Outreach Updates

Fiorella, Community Relations Representative, reviewed the health education and outreach updates for the Lehigh Capital zone, including:

- Photos of 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



- Mobile Wellness & Opportunity Center information and calendar of events
- Participant Communications
- Participant Handbook

Feedback:

A Provider PAC Member from Penn State Extension and Clinton County Community Dental Clinic mentioned that AmeriHealth Caritas HealthChoices has an agreement to teach the Dining with Diabetes program for free to Participants. Laurie asked if it would be the same with AmeriHealth Caritas Community HealthChoices Participants. Nguyen confirmed that this program is currently held through the HealthChoices department. Additionally, Nguyen advised reaching out to Fiorella if encountered with Community HealthChoices Participant wanting to attend this program, because there is a possibility we could provide financial sponsorship.

A PAC member asked if these slides will be sent out. Fiorella mentioned we will provide all presentations.

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 & Update: Exercises to Help Lower Your Risk of Falling

Fiorella, Community Relations Representative, did an interactive presentation on different fall prevention exercises that Participants may do to lower their risks of falls. Fiorella gave the disclaimer that all Participants should consult with their doctor before beginning any new type of exercise. Below are the exercises Fiorella demonstrated for the group.

- **Exercises for People Who Can Stand Without Support**
 - **Sit-to-Stand Exercise**
 - Sit in a chair with feet flat on the floor
 - Move to the front of the chair and lean forward
 - Slowly stand up, then sit back down
 - Start with 5 repetitions and gradually work up to 15 repetitions as strength improves
 - **Weight Shifts**
 - Stand with feet hip-width apart
 - Shift weight to one side while lifting the opposite foot slightly off the floor
 - Hold the position as long as possible, up to 30 seconds
 - Repeat on the other side
 - Use a wall or countertop for support if needed
- **Seated Exercises**
 - **Knee Extensions**
 - Sit upright in a chair
 - Straighten one leg and raise the foot off the floor
 - Hold briefly, then lower
 - Repeat 5 times per leg
 - As strength improves, increase the hold to 10 counts or add light ankle weights
 - **Pillow Squeezes**



- Sit upright with a pillow between your thighs
- Squeeze the pillow using your inner thigh muscles
- Hold for a count of 3, then relax
- Repeat 5 times.

Nguyen, Manager of Community Outreach, noted that September is Fall Prevention Month, and encouraged Participants to check in with the Community Outreach team for more fall prevention resources.

Feedback: Nguyen indicated that the first exercise was a fall prevention screening technique; Participants can test themselves see how many repetitions they can do in a minute.

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

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5. Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) Waiver Services Spotlight: Teleservices

Jennifer Ford-Bey, Manager of Behavioral Health and Collaborative Service, presented on Teleservices, as waiver services that HCBS Participants have access to receiving virtually in the CHC program.

There are 5 waiver services that are available to utilize in-person or via Teleservice.

- **Nutritional Counseling**
 - Connects the Participant to a Registered Dietician or Certified Nutrition Specialist to review all needs/preferences and provide guidance on nutritional needs.
- **Benefits Counseling**
 - This service is for Participants who are interested in employment but might be nervous about entering the workforce due to fear of losing benefits. Benefits Counseling provides Participants with the opportunity to sit with a benefits counselor, and review employment areas of interests, current income, how many hours a Participant can be employed and still be able to keep their services.
- **Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy**
 - This service is designed to improve a Participant's cognitive functioning which can include attention, memory, language, or executive functions. It includes consultation, ongoing counseling, coaching/cueing, & training staff and/or family.
- **Behavior Therapy Services**
 - This is not a traditional Behavioral Health service, like those covered by our BH Managed Care Organization (MCO) Partners, but this rather focuses on behavior itself.
 - This service aims to improve functioning and independence with the goal of promoting inclusion in the community. It includes the development of a behavioral support plan, and training to family and/or staff.
- **Counseling Services**



- This is also not a traditional Behavioral Health service, like those covered by our BH Managed Care Organization (MCO) Partners. Instead, it focuses is on resolving social conflicts and family issues to improve a Participant's personal relationships, communication, and positive support networks.
- While may include family members, it is on behalf of the Participant and focuses on their needs.
- Three Points to note with Teleservices
 - A Participant can move from Teleservice to receiving the service in-person at any time; no new assessment would be needed.
 - Requests for services to be provided via this method can only be made by the Participant, meaning a Provider cannot request to provide the service via teleservice.
 - Participants should be aware of the Privacy Practices when utilizing these services. Utilizing online services has its own set of privacy practices the Providers will go over.

Feedback:

A PAC Participant Member asked about psychologist services. Nguyen and Fiorella will connect with her after the meeting.

A PAC Participant Member and community advocate asked if teleservices are only for those receiving Home and Community Based Services or is it also for those receiving medical assistance. Nguyen mentioned that the teleservices are only for those who are Community HealthChoices Participants.

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

Feedback:

A PAC Participant Member and community advocate stated that as a Participant she has done a lot of research and participates in the LTSS Subcommittee meetings. However, she mentioned it has been extremely difficult to access services. How can Participants have a better way to access the services personally. Nguyen acknowledges that Participants may have a difficult time accessing services because they may not know about them. Hence, the first step is the education piece, which is what we do at the Participant Advisory Committee meetings. Once the education piece is fulfilled, then access comes a little easier. Nguyen stated that most service requests must come from the Participants, not from Providers. Nguyen also encouraged PAC Members to provide suggestions on how to better access the services and that message would be relayed to leadership.



A PAC Participant Member inquired about an update on transportation issues discussed at the Ad Hoc PAC meeting. Nguyen stated that there will be interventions put in place including additional training for Service Coordinators and them having conversations with Participants to support their needs. Additionally, Nguyen offered to direct her concerns to Medical Transportation Management (MTM) if needed. PAC Member confirmed that she has met with MTM. Nguyen mentioned that meetings with herself and Fiorella can help resolve issues regarding transportation.

A PAC Participant Member suggested having a Service Coordination presentation at one of the PAC meetings in the future, because it would help Participants understand the role and processes of the Service Coordinator. Nguyen mentioned this is a great suggestion and opportunity that will be considered for future PAC meetings.

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

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7. Next Meeting

The fourth quarter PAC meeting for the Northeast Zone will be held on Thursday, December 3, 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.

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

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8. Meeting Adjourned

Fiorella adjourned the meeting at 1:00 pm after all inquiries from the Participants were addressed.

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

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**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	Lione W.	Coordinator Employment LTSS
V	Lindsay H.	Supervisor SC
V	Robert M.	Housing Program Manager
V	Lauren C.	Direct Care Worker Workforce Program Manager
V	Melanie W.	Behavioral Health Coordinator
V	Alicia C.	Supervisor SC
V	Jennifer N.	Supervisor SC
V	Andrea Flexer	Service Coordinator
P	Madison B.	Service Coordinator
V	Jennifer F.B.	Manager of Behavioral Health and Collaborative Services

**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
P	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
V	KL	CBO-MyCIL
V	CC, KD	LTSS Provider- HDM- Mom's Meals
M	MG	CBO-UNC
M	SB	LTSS Provider- PERS- VRI Cares
M	AC, JH	CBO- RTFCIL
V	KH	CBO- CRI
M	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
V	KM	Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- The Wright Center
M	ER	Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- Star Community Health
M	DM	Community Resource- PA American Water-Customer Program Assistance Specialist
V	LAWW	Penn State Extension & Clinton County Dental Health



V	LA	Medical Transportation Management
P	JH, TD	PeerStar
P	LY	Inglis SDHP
P	KF	Wyoming Valley Behavioral Health
V	JH	LTSS Participant
M	BN	LTSS Participant
M	AMN	Family member
M	ET	LTSS Participant
P	MT	Caregiver
P	JT	LTSS Participant
P	JG	Caregiver
P	CF	Caregiver
P	GR	Caregiver
P	MDLC	Family member
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
M	AV	LTSS Participant
M	TM	NFI Participant
M	KS	NFI Participant
M	BL	NFI Participant
M	MG	NFI Participant
P	NP	NFI Participant
M	MC	LTSS Participant



M	CP	LTSS Participant
M	SB	LTSS Provider- PAS- Help at Home
M	LCM	LTSS Participant
V	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
M	MB	LTSS Provider- Achieva Family Trust- Benefits Counseling
M	SN	LTSS Provider- Carallel
V	DA	NF Participant
V	GB	NF Participant
P	ES	NF Participant
P	KD	NF Participant
P	MH	NF Participant
P	CK	NF Participant
V	MR	NF Participant
V	AB	NF Participant