

Tuesday, September 8, 2026, 11:00 am
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Location (in-person): 600 Penn St 3rd FL Reading, PA 19602
Location (virtual): [zoom info](#)

Chair: Jasmin Botero
Co-Chair: Johnny Cartagena
Scribe: Fiorella Salas Toledo

1. Call to Order

Jasmin Botero, Community Relations Representative for AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania (ACP) Community HealthChoices (CHC) called the third quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Lehigh Capital Zone to order at 11:05am.

2. Welcome, Introductions, and Updates

Jasmin Botero introduced the Community Outreach team as well as Johnny Cartagenna, Manager of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) for Lehigh/Capital Zone and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Meeting attendees introduced themselves either in person, virtually, or in the Zoom chat. Jasmin Botero also introduced satellite meetings that were taking place at The Gardens of Easton and Transitions Healthcare.

Jasmin Botero, Community Relations Representative, completed the level setting for the meeting and Johnny Cartagenna, Manager LTSS Service Coordination, reviewed the meeting agenda.

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

3. Health Education & Outreach Updates

Jasmin Botero, 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:

Melisha Melecio, Wellness Center Administrator with AmeriHealth Caritas, shared information about the Mobile Wellness Unit and its services.

A PAC member shared that Zion Mennonite church is hosting a community yard sale on September 12th.

The group discussed opportunities for nursing facility residents to participate in community activities.

Nguyen introduced a new Service Coordinator bulletin board initiative to promote community events to our participants.

Next Steps: Jasmin will be providing presentations and a flyer to the group.

4. CHC Programs & Update: Exercises to Help Lower Your Risk of Falling

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

Feedback:



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.

Cindy Celi, Mom's Meals Provider PAC Member, highlighted *National Food is Medicine Day on September 14, Emphasizing the connection between nutritious food and overall health.*

Nguyen shared information about a fall prevention event at Alvernia University on September 24th, and a PAC member and community-based organization (Casa Oasis) will provide transportation to the event for participants residing in Reading.

A PAC member raised questions regarding potential Community HealthChoices changes, including redetermination, attendance care, prescriptions, work requirements, and whether Participant service hours could be reduced. Nguyen shared that clear participant communication remains a priority. While some Participants may be impacted by upcoming changes, there are currently no discussions about reducing service hours. AmeriHealth Caritas will continue supporting Participants based on their needs and medical necessity, with additional communications being developed to help Participants understand any changes.

Cindy asked *whether monthly Office of Long-Term Living, Managed Long Term Services and Supports Subcommittee meetings are available to participants.* Nguyen confirmed that participants are welcome to attend and encourage nursing facility nursing participants who experience barriers to contact their Service Coordinator for assistance.

Next Steps: Jasmin will provide this information, including presentations to all Participants.

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

Jennifer Ford Bey, Manager LTSS Behavioral Health/Collaboration Svc CHC Collaborative Services, 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 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:

Laurie Gustalla, Supervisor for Service Coordination, wrote in the chat, please clarify for the Nursing Facility Participants that these Telehealth Services are not available to them in the Nursing Facility, and these are only for Home and Community Based Services waiver participants. Jennifer Ford- Bey clarified that Nursing Facility Participants do not have access to Home and Community Based Services telehealth services while residing in a nursing facility, as the facility generally provides those services. Once Participants transition back into the community, they may become eligible for these services. A very helpful resource for a participant in this situation would be Nutritional counseling since it supports learning to have a healthier lifestyle and overseeing your own nutrition.

A PAC Member asked *whether written documentation of the information presented would be available.* Nguyen confirmed that the information would be included in the PAC Meeting notes.

Lina Schniede, Community Health Worker for AmeriHealth Caritas, asked how Participants can access these services. Nguyen mentioned that participants should first contact their Service Coordinator, who can assist with connecting them to available services. Additional information and service definitions are available in the Participant Handbook.

Next Steps: Jasmin will provide this information, including presentations to all Participants.



6. Open Forum

Jasmin Botero, AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania (ACP) Community HealthChoices (CHC) 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.

Feedback:

A PAC member expressed interest in learning more about Care Crew activities. Jasmin will share Volunteer opportunities and along with, Nguyen, assist her with getting involved. Nguyen added that Nursing Facility Participants can also participate in volunteer activities, including opportunities such as Coloring a Smile.

A PAC member shared he had difficulty hearing portions of the meeting and had not received the information for next meeting date and time. Jasmin and Nguyen reminded Participant that a meeting invite was sent out and that the time does not change. Jasmin will follow up with calendar invitation which Participant initially wanted a separate calendar invite for.

A PAC member asked for an update on specialized services. Nguyen shared that she followed up with a participant regarding specialized services and continued discussions with Community HealthChoices leadership about expanding network.

Laurie Gustalla, Supervisor for Service Coordination, asked about updates and the location for the December meeting. Nguyen stated that details are still being determined and will be communicated before the meeting so participants can make necessary changes.

Lina Schneide asked whether all Community HealthChoices Participants have a Service Coordinator. Nguyen clarified that not all Participants qualify for that level of care. Participants who are unsure can contact Member Services for assistance and connection to the appropriate resources.

Carmen from Casa Oasis shared that they are partnering with Allentown Housing Authority for an event named End of Summer Senior Resource Fair at Gross Towers on September 11th. Nguyen mentioned that AmeriHealth Caritas Community HealthChoices has partnered with Casa Oasis multiple times and encouraged others to explore opportunities for collaboration.

Carmen from Casa Oasis shared plans to open a senior lounge for older adults and is currently fundraising to expand community services. Information and flyers will be shared with the Community Outreach team and Service Coordinators. Carmen also shared that stretcher transportation service will be available at independent and senior living facilities, and information can also be shared with nursing facility and service coordinators.

Nguyen mentioned that Participants interested in behavioral health information may Contact Jasmin Botero for additional resources.

Next Steps: Jasmin will send upcoming volunteer opportunities, including the presentation to the group.



7. Next Meeting

The fourth quarter PAC meeting for the Lehigh Capital Zone will be held on Tuesday, December 8th, 2026. Jasmin Botero 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.

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

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

8. Meeting Adjourned

Jasmin Botero adjourned the meeting at 12:19 pm after all inquiries from the Participants were addressed.

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A


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	Jasmin B.	Community Relations Rep
V	Johnny C.	Co-chair/Manager SC
V	Carrie W.	Manager/LTSS PA CHC
V	Stephanie F.	Supervisor SC
V	Rhonda H.	Technical Support Manager CHC/LTSS Plan Operations
V	Laurie G.	Supervisor SC
V	Rebecca H.	
V	Lanie Smith	Supervisor SC
V	Mary B.	Supervisor SC
V	Lindsey H.	Supervisor SC
V	Joanna C.	Housing Coordinator
V	Jessica C.	Housing Coordinator
V	Lauren C.	Direct Care Worker Workforce Program Manager
V	Jocelyn S.	Director Service Coordinator LTSS
V	Lea S.	Housing Coordinator
V	Marci K.	Director Quality Management
V	Melanie W.	Behavioral Health Coordinator
V	Samara F.	Workforce Initiative Program Manager
V	Shirleyanne W.	Coordinator Quality Improvement
V	Yvette T.	Regulatory Affairs Analyst
V	Jennifer F.B.	Manager LTSS Behavioral Health/Collaborative Services
V	Ashley G.	Service Coordinator
V	Madison B.	Service Coordinator
V	Nicole S.	Service Coordinator
V	Caitlyn D.	Supervisor Service Coordinator
V	Lionel W.	Coord. Employment LTSS/CHC Collaborative Services
V	Romig Jr. R.	Supervisor SC/Lehigh
V	Robert M.	Housing Program Manager/CHC Collaborative Services
V	Cassick S.	Behavioral Health Coordinator/CHC Collaborative Services
P	Deanna S.	SC Supervisor
P	Melisha M.	Wellness Admin B
P	Carol.	Aide


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

Method of Participation	Name	Title
P	MG	LTSS Participant
M	Th. W	NF Participant
M	Ti. W	NF Participant
P	HW	LTSS Participant
V	GG	LTSS Participant
P	CD	LTSS Provider
M	AV	Dental, BH, PH
M	KS	LTSS Provider BH
V	CT	LTSS Provider-Aveanna
V	RS	NF Participant
V	SB	LTSS Provider- VRI
V	CC	LTSS Provider- Mom's Meals
V	WK	LTSS Provider- Aveanna
V	AE	Allentown Food Bank
M	ER	Dental, BH, PH
M	EPP	LTSS Participant
M	EB	LTSS Participant
M	KG	DCW
M	DH	NF Participant
M	BO	NF Participant
M	ME	NF Participant
M	MD	NF Participant
M	EN	NF Participant
M	JK	NF Participant
M	BB	NF Participant
V	AM	Caregiver's America
V	BC	LTSS Participant
V	EG	LTSS Participant
V	MB	LTSS Provider
V	CR	OLTL
V	RK	LTSS Participant
V	SB	LTSS Participant
V	T.V K.	LTSS Participant
P	AV	LTSS Participant
P	JR	LTSS Participant
P	MG	LTSS Provider
P	ES	LTSS Participant
V	KH	LTSS Participant
V	KM	LTSS Participant
V	LA	LTSS Participant
V	RYA	LTSS Participant



P	CG	LTSS Participant
P	CS	CHC ACPA