

Tuesday, December 10th, 2024, 11:00 am
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Location (in-person): 600 Penn St 3rd FL Reading, PA 19602
Location (virtual): [zoom info](#)

Chair: Nguyen Nguyen
Co-Chair: Carrie Wilcox
Scribe: Nicole Ragab

1. Call to Order

Nguyen Nguyen, Community Relations Representative (CRR), called the meeting to order at 11:01 am.

Feedback: N/A
Action Items: N/A

2. Welcome and Introductions

Nguyen Nguyen welcomed the group to the fourth quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Lehigh Capital zone. The level setting was completed, which included reminders not to share Personal Health Information (PHI) during the meeting and that video and audio recording was prohibited during this meeting. The group was informed that they can contact Nicole Ragab, Nguyen Nguyen, Jasmine Moore, Ally Hindman, and Fiorella Salas Toledo with any personal service-related questions, and they will help to connect them to their Service Coordinator.

Feedback: N/A
Action Items: N/A

3. PAC Member Updates & Discussion

Nguyen Nguyen welcomed new members to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves and their organizations. New Provider PAC members included: Tim Myers (Guiding Hand Elder Care), and Chelsea Steis (Holistic Hospice). Nguyen Nguyen informed the group that that in addition to virtual attendees and the in-person group of members at the Wellness Center, there were two nursing facility satellite meetings taking place at The Gardens at West Shore (Cumberland County), and Bethlehem South Skilled Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (Northampton County).

Carrie Wilcox, Manager of Service Coordination, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda and presenter information.

Feedback: N/A
Action Items: N/A

4. Health Education & Outreach/Updates

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



- Participant Newsletter –3rd Edition 2024
 - Nguyen Nguyen reminded the group that the Participant Newsletters are now in digital format by default, but that physical copies can be made available to any Participant who requests them.
 - Link to newsletter: <https://www.amerhealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/health-wellness/newsletter.aspx>.
- Outreach Team Activities
 - 12/11 – Dauphin County Community Support Program Holiday Event – Dauphin County
 - 12/18 –Lancaster Senior Center Holiday Event– Lancaster County
 - 12/20 – White Rose Senior Center Holiday Meal Event – York County
 - 01/10 – Lebanon Council of Human Service Providers- Lebanon County
 - 02/03 – 35th Annual Souper Bowl – Berks County
- Activities in Your Community
 - Center for Independent Living of Central Pennsylvania <https://cilcp.org> 3211 North Front Street, Suite 100 Harrisburg, PA 17110
 - Center For Independent Living Opportunities, <https://cilopportunities.org> 139 E Market St FL 1 York, PA 17401
 - Lehigh Valley Center for Independent Living, <https://lvcil.org> 713 North 13th Street Allentown, PA 18102
 - Abilities In Motion (AIM), <https://www.abilitiesinmotion.org/> 755 Hiesters Lane, Reading, PA 19605
 - Disability Empowerment Center (DEC), <https://www.decpa.org/> 941 Wheatland Ave Suite B-1, Lancaster, PA 17603
 - Centers for Independent Living of South Central PA, <https://cilscpa.org/> 3013 Beale Ave, Altoona, PA 16601
- Reading Wellness Center – 600 Penn Street, Reading PA 19601
 - Mondays 10:00am and 02:00pm- Coffee and Conversations
 - 12/10 at 2:30 pm – 25 Ways to Wellness
 - 12/13 at 11:00 am – Men’s Health Presentation
 - 12/19 at 12:30 pm – Women’s Health Presentation
 - 12/27 at 11:00 am – Poison Prevention
- Mobile Wellness Unit (Lehigh Capital)
 - 12/19 at 6:00pm – Lancaster Recreational Commission Winter Carnival
 - <https://www.amerhealthcaritaspa.com/community/mobile-wellness-center.aspx>

Feedback

- *An in-person PAC Member asked, “Will the (mobile wellness unit) calendar be sent out to everyone?”*
 - Nguyen Nguyen responded that the presentations along with the calendar will be emailed out to our attendees. Additionally, Nguyen Nguyen asked and encouraged Participants and Providers share any events in the future that serve our shared communities so that we can support and attend the same events as our Participants.
- *A virtual PAC Member expressed that they received a call from Wider Circle and wanted to know about the program.*



- Nguyen Nguyen replied that Wilder Circle is a program for our Nursing Facility Ineligible (NFI) Participants in CHC focusing on Social Determinants of Health (SDoH).

Action Items:

- Nguyen Nguyen was able to connect with the virtual PAC Member telephonically later in the day on 12/10 to discuss their specific questions.

5. Health Education & Outreach/Redetermination Reminder

Nicole Ragab presented the following redetermination reminder to the group:

- Participants should ensure their address and phone numbers are updated with the Department of Human Services. They can update their information in the following ways:
 - Online via www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS
 - Through the COMPASS mobile App: myCOMPASS PA
 - By phone at 1-877-395-8930 or in person at the County Assistance Office.
- Participants should sign up for email and text alerts for the most up-to-date information. Participants can sign up for text alerts: at www.dhs.pa.gov/TEXT and eNotices: at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS.
- Finally, Participants should complete their annual renewal forms promptly. Participants can complete their yearly renewal forms in the following ways:
 - Online at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS
 - Via mail or in-person at the County Assistance Office
 - Or via phone at 1-866-550-4355

Feedback:

- *A virtual PAC Member shared news of the Harrisburg State Hospital and expressed concerns of a lack of behavioral health services. They asked how this will affect the CHC population.*
 - Nguyen Nguyen shared the PAC member's concern but also informed the group about the newly opened Connection Emergency Behavioral Health Crisis Walk-In Center located at 1100 S Cameron Street in Harrisburg. This center brings new behavioral health services to Dauphin, Cumberland, and Perry counties. The center includes a 24/7 crisis walk-in center, and a community mobile crisis team.

Action Items: N/A

6. Health Education & Outreach/Ad Hoc PAC Update

Nicole Ragab provided follow-up from the Ad Hoc PAC meeting that was held in August regarding the Participant's Plan of Care (POC). She informed that there will be some changes put in place in the Plan of Care to improve the experience for the Participant, based in part on the feedback received during the Ad Hoc meeting.

Feedback: N/A

Action Items: N/A

7. Health Education & Outreach/Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

Nicole Ragab presented on Low Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP):

- Program enrollment is between 11/04/2024-04/04/2025.



- Helps low-income families and individuals pay heating bills.
- Provides cash grants of \$300-\$1000, depending on household size, income, and fuel type.
- Apply online at www.compass.state.pa.us or download or request paper application at www.dhs.pa.gov or your County Assistance Office or contact LIHEAP.
- Toll-free hotline 1-866-857-7095
- Other Stay Warm Programs:
 - Your utility company may be able to help explain what programs are available and help you get set up with the one that is right for you.
 - Dollar Energy Fund's Hardship Program – one time grant applied directly to your utility bill. Call 1-800-683-7036 or visit the website <https://www.dollarenergy.org/programs/?state=pennsylvania> for more information.

Feedback: N/A

Action Items: N/A

8. CHC Programs & Updates/Health Equity 2023 Program Goals

Anne Dodd, Health Equity & Quality Analyst, presented and reviewed the Health Equity and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (HECLAS) 2023 Program \ Goals:

- Create program to help African American and Hispanic participants control their blood pressure: Goal Partially Met.
- Create a Health Equity advisory workgroup to discuss Health Equity Projects: Goal Met.
- Host at least two webinars for all employees focused on Culturally Responsive Care: Goal Met.

Feedback: N/A

Action Items: N/A

9. CHC Programs & Updates/Quality—Flu Shot and Screening Reminders

Marci Kramer, Director of Quality Management presented reminders for flu vaccines and breast cancer screenings.

- Flu Shot
 - CHC recommends everyone over the age of 6 months receive the flu vaccine.
 - You should speak with your doctor to make sure it is right for your situation.
 - To prevent the spreading of germs, wash hands often, cover your mouth when you cough, and don't touch your eyes, nose, or mouth.
 - You can receive your flu shot or nasal flu vaccine from your doctor or a participating pharmacy.
- Breast Cancer
 - Most common cancer in women.
 - CDC recommends if you are ages of 40-49 talk to doctor about when you should receive screening; if you are age 50-74 you should have a screening mammogram every two years.
 - Women with disabilities - let scheduling know you have specific needs. Talk with your doctor about your concerns and need for accommodations.
 - Resources - CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/righttoknow/>.

Feedback: N/A



Action Items: N/A

10. CHC Programs & Updates/Winter Blues—Signs and Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder

Jennifer Ford-Bey, Manager of LTSS Behavioral Health & Collaborative Services presented the following information on Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD):

- Seasonal Affective Disorder is a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons, with symptoms typically starting in the late fall or early winter and going away during the spring and summer.
 - Symptoms –include depression in a recurrent seasonal pattern, oversleeping, overeating, and social withdrawal.
 - Diagnosis – symptoms of winter or summer pattern SAD; episodes occur during specified season for at least two consecutive years; depressive episodes are more frequent than at other time of the year.
 - Treatment – includes light therapy, psychotherapy, antidepressant medication, and vitamin D supplements.
 - Talk to your healthcare provider about the benefits and risks of treatment options.
- National Warmlines – 24 hours a day, can be called for any reason, even if you just want to speak with someone.
- Resources
 - www.nami.org
 - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder>
 - <https://www.warmline.org/>
 - Crisis Lifeline by calling or texting 988 or using the chat box at 988lifeline.org; text “MHA” to 741-741 to reach the Crisis Text Line.

Feedback: N/A

Action Items: N/A

11. HCBS Waiver Spotlight/Home Health Aide, Nursing, Physical, Occupational, and Speech & Language Therapies

Carrie Wilcox, Manager of Service Coordination presented on the following LTSS benefits:

- Home Health Aide
 - Services order by a physician which includes help with personal care, integration into the community setting, health management, welfare and safety and provided by a home health aide who is supervised by a registered nurse.
- Nursing
 - Services of a registered nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) ordered by a physician and may include diagnosing and treating health problems through health teaching, health counseling and skilled care prescribed by the doctor.
- Physical Therapy (PT)



- Services ordered by a physician, which may include evaluation and treatment of a Participant to limit or prevent disability after an injury or illness.
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
 - Ordered by a physician, which include evaluation and treatment of a Participant to limit or prevent disability after an injury or illness.
- Speech and Language Therapy
 - Services of a licensed American Speech-Language-Hearing associate or certified speech-language pathologist and ordered by a physician, which include evaluation, counseling, and rehabilitation of a Participant with speech disabilities.
- *Note: These services may only be funded through the waiver when the services are not covered by Medicare or private insurance.*

Feedback

- *An in-person PAC member asked, "Is there a cap amount for these services?"*
 - Carrie Wilcox responded that she did not have the exact figure at the time but can get it to Participant.

Action Items:

- Follow up to Participant with information regarding their question will be made before the next PAC meeting.

12. HCBS Waiver Spotlight/ Community Integration & Specialized Medical Equipment and Supplies

Jennifer Ford-Bey, Manager of LTSS Behavioral Health & Collaborative Services presented on the following topic:

- Community Integration:
 - Short-term goal-based services to improve self-help, communication, socialization, and other skills needed to live in the community.
 - Provided during life-changing events such as moving from a nursing home a new community or other change that requires new skills.
 - Reviewed/updated quarterly – Service Coordinator (SC) reviews progress of goals, how goals are affecting ability to complete tasks integrated in the Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP).

Carrie Wilcox, Manager of Service Coordination presented on the following topic:

- Specialized Medical Equipment and Supplies:
 - Items specified in the PCSP that allow participants to increase or maintain the ability to perform daily living activities.
 - May only be funded through the waiver when the services are not covered by a responsible third-party, such as Medicare or private insurance.
 - Requires an independent evaluation by a medical professional and a physician's prescription.

Feedback:

- *A virtual PAC member questioned, "...You mentioned transition and nutrition, is there a consideration for the amount of protein people need and how to get that from their home-delivered meal benefit?"*
 - Jennifer Ford Bey responded that meals are based on Participant need and Participants should be supplementing additional meals, drinks, snacks based on their needs. CRR Nguyen Nguyen



also noted that she will work with Participant to get them connected to their Service Coordinator for further assistance.

- *An in-person PAC member shared their desire to obtain a motorized attachment for their manual wheelchair. They expressed that this would help them navigate their exterior ramp and other situations independently and not being approved could limit her progress and function.*
 - Participant's Service Coordinator, Deanna Snyder was also in attendance of the meeting, and noted that they can begin the request process together later in the week.
 - Carrie Wilcox explained that although she does not have firsthand experience with this type of device, this is something that Participant is more than welcome to explore with her Service Coordinator as there is not finite list of approved items.
 - Provider PAC Member Tim Myers from Guiding Hands Elder Care shared his experience with Durable Medical Equipment (DME) and reminded the Participant that they might be approved for an entire electric wheelchair should this device not be approved.
 - A virtual PAC Participant also echoed that navigating this process could be complicated and suggested getting support from a social worker as well.

Action Items:

- CRR Nguyen Nguyen was able to connect with virtual Participant later in the same day to give them additionally information on Home Delivered Meals options.

13. HCBS Waiver Spotlight/Telecare

Carrie Wilcox, Manager of Service Coordination presented the following on the telecare service:

- Includes three services that use technology to help participants be as independent as possible: Health Status Measuring & Monitoring Activity, Sensor Monitoring Medication Dispensing, and Monitoring Services.
- Services must coincide with a need documented in the Participant's PSCP.
- Services may only be funded through the waiver when the services are not covered by Medicare or private insurance.

Feedback: N/A

Action Items: N/A

14. Group Discussion & 2024 Wrap Up

Nguyen Nguyen noted that a few new Provider PAC members joined mid-meeting and opened the floor for these providers to introduce themselves and speak about their organizations.

- Michelle Scribbik from Commute PA—a federally funded, non-profit which provides free transportation resources for central PA. They also have an app that helps the community connect to find a ride share match for rides to work. Recently they have been implementing single-event rides for doctor's appts, pharmacy, shopping, etc.
- Carmen Diaz—A community engagement partner and consultant who supports seniors with getting services. She partnered with Supporting Homecare and Pristine Homecare working to establish transportation for Caregivers and Participants in the Allentown, Lancaster, Philadelphia areas.



15. Next Meeting

Nguyen Nguyen announced that the 2025 Quarter 1 PAC meeting for the Lehigh Capital zone will be held in-person on March 11th, 2025, at the Reading Wellness Center. There will be the option to participate via zoom. We will follow up with mail, phone calls and email.

Feedback: N/A

Action Items: N/A

16. Meeting Adjourned

Nicole Ragab adjourned the virtual meeting at 12:45pm after all inquiries from the member were answered. The in-person portion of the meeting continued afterwards with lunch. One Participant was able to start her Durable Medical Equipment (DME) request with her Service Coordinator. Providers also shared resources and materials from their organization with the group. The in-person portion of the meeting adjourned at 1:25pm.