

Tuesday, December 17, 2024, 11:00 am  
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)  
Location (in-person): 622 N. Homewood Avenue Pittsburgh, PA 15208

*Chair: Ally Hindman*  
*Co-Chair: Nicole Burton*  
*Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos*

## 1. Call to Order

Ally Hindman, Community Relations Representative, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

## 2. Welcome and Introductions

Ally Hindman welcomed the group to the fourth quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Southwest zone and made introductions.

Ally Hindman reminded the group that they can contact her or Nicole Burton, Manager of Service Coordination, with any personal service-related questions, and they will help connect them to their Service Coordinator.

Nicole Ragab, Manager of Community Outreach, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda and presenters. Meeting attendees introduced themselves and provided updates and information related to community events, initiatives, and provider updates.

**Feedback: N/A**

**Action Items: N/A**

## 3. Health Education and Outreach Updates & Redetermination Reminder

Ally Hindman presented the Community Outreach Team's health education and outreach updates. The following were presented:

- Community Outreach team activities.
- Participant Communications' mailing and web updates.
- Opportunities to get involved in activities in the community.
- Mobile Wellness Unit calendar for upcoming events.

Ally Hindman invited the community organizations that attended the meeting to share some of their upcoming activities.

Ally Hindman shared AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania (PA) Community HealthChoices (CHC) Redetermination flyer and reminded the group how to get assistance if needed.

As a follow up, Nicole Ragab recapped the Ad Hoc PAC meeting in August.

There will be some changes put in place in the Plan of Care (POC) including:



- Reordering of sections for better flow.
- Revising essential information regarding self-direction.
- Adding free text fields to some areas including
  - health information.
  - prioritization of trigger events that lead to goals.
  - strengths and capabilities.

**Feedback: N/A**

**Action Items: N/A**

#### 4. CHC Programs & Updates/ LIHEAP

Nicole Ragab presented program information on the Low-Income Household Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) including information about the grants, qualifications, and the LIHEAP Crisis program. Nicole Ragab 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
- <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/Services/Assistance/Pages/LIHEAP.aspx>
- The Participant Services line can also assist connecting Participants to resources at 1-855-235-5115 (TTY 1-855-235-5112)
- Dollar Energy Fund's Hardship Program – A one-time grant applied directly to the 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**

#### 5. CHC Programs & Updates /Quality- 2023 Program Evaluation

Anne Dodd, Health Equity and Quality Analyst overviewed the 2023 Program Goals. Anne Dodd presented the following goals:

- Creation of program to help African American and Hispanic participants control their blood pressure.
- Creation of a Health Equity advisory workgroup to discuss Health Equity Projects.
- Hosted at least two webinars for all employees focused on Culturally Responsive Care.

**Feedback:**

A PAC Member asked where the data comes from for this? Anne Dodd explained that the data comes from the HEDIS information collected. The Participant wanted to know who this data comes from. Anne Dodd explained that the data comes from Participants. The Health Equity team develops goals from the data reported to minimize gaps in care. The data is received from the Health Reports. The race and ethnicity data are self-reported.

**Action Items: N/A**



## 6. CHC Programs & Updates/ Quality- Flu Shot and Screening Reminders

Marci Kramer, Director of Quality Services, provided information on flu shot information and screening reminders for breast cancer.

Marci Kramer presented the following information:

- Flu shot
  - CHC recommends everyone over the age of 6 months receive the vaccine.
  - Reminder to speak to the doctor to make sure it is right for your situation.
  - Germ prevention reminders.
  - Participants can receive your flu shot or nasal flu vaccine from the doctor or a participating pharmacy.
- Breast Cancer
  - Most common cancer in women.
  - CDC recommends that women aged 40-49 talk to doctor about when they should receive screening and women aged 50-74 should have a screening mammogram every two years.
  - Women with disabilities should let the scheduler or doctor know you have specific needs. Talk with your doctor about screening concerns.

**Resources:** CDC website <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/disabilityandhealth/righttoknow/>

**Feedback:** N/A

**Action Items:** N/A

## 7. CHC Programs & Updates/ Winter Blues- Signs and Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder

Jennifer Ford-Bey, Manager of Behavioral Health and Collaborative Services, provided information on Seasonal Affective Disorder.

- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) 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 of SAD include depression in a recurrent seasonal pattern, oversleeping, overeating, and social withdrawal.
  - Diagnosis for SAD include 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.
  - Participants should talk to their healthcare provider about the benefits and risks of treatment options.
- National Warmlines are usually 24 hours a day and can be called for any reason if anyone needs support.

**Resources:**



[www.nami.org](http://www.nami.org)

<https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder>

<https://www.warmline.org/>

**Feedback: N/A**

**Action Items: N/A**

## 8. CHC Programs & Updates/ HCBS Waiver Spotlight: LTSS Benefit Guide/ Home Health Aide, Nursing, Physical Therapy, Speech, and Language Therapy

Nicole Burton provided information on home health aide, nursing, physical therapy, speech, and language therapy services:

- Home Health Aid
  - Services are ordered by a physician that includes help with personal care, integration into the community -setting, ensuring health, welfare and safety and provided by a home health aide who is supervised by a registered nurse.
- Nursing
  - Services of registered nurse or Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN) ordered by a physician and includes 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 include evaluation and treatment of a Participant to limit or prevent disability after an injury or illness.
- Occupational Therapy (OT)
  - Ordered by a doctor, which includes 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 doctor, 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: N/A**

**Action Items: N/A**

## 9. CHC Programs & Updates/ HCBS Waiver Spotlight: Community Integration

Jennifer Ford-Bey presented on community integration services.

- 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 the Participants service coordinator reviews progress of goals, how goals are affecting ability to complete tasks integrated in the Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP).



**Feedback: N/A**

**Action Items: N/A**

## 10. CHC Programs & Updates/ HCBS Waiver Spotlight: LTSS Benefit Guide/ Specialized Medical Equipment and Supplies

Nicole Burton provided information on specialized medical equipment and supplies.

- Items specified in the Person-Centered Service Plan 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.
- These services require an independent evaluation by a medical professional and a physician's prescription.

**Feedback: N/A**

**Action Items: N/A**

## 11. CHC Programs & Updates/ HCBS Waiver Spotlight: LTSS Benefit Guide/ Telecare

Nicole Burton provided information on specialized medical equipment and supplies.

- Includes three services that use technology to help participants be as independent as possible.
  - Health Status Measuring and Monitoring
  - Activity and Sensor Monitoring
  - Medication Dispensing and Monitoring
- Services must be for a need documented in the Participant's Person-Centered Service Plan (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**

## 12. Open Forum

Ally Hindman encouraged any meeting attendees with specific questions related to the presented topics or any concerns they may have to bring up the topic. The post-PAC survey will be sent out along with the meeting materials.

**Feedback:**

A Participant had a comment regarding transportation. The Participant said that they tried scheduling one week in advance, they can never get the times correct. The SC team responded to comment and explained that the concern would be looked at and passed to the team that reviews these concerns.

SC team discussed setting up transportation for the next years PAC meetings in advance. Also, the Participants can talk to their Service Coordinator to see if they can contact the transportation provider to help confirm rides and make sure they are providing the service.



**Action Items: Ally Hindman to follow up with Participant to confirm next year's Participant Advisory Schedule with Participant to get it scheduled with transportation.**

### 13. Next Meeting

Ally Hindman announced that the First quarter PAC meeting for the Southwest zone will be held on March 18, 2025.

### 14. Meeting Adjourned

Ally Hindman adjourned the meeting at 12:17 p.m.