

COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE Meeting Minutes

Date: July 24, 2024

Location: Haven House, 1411 Union Blvd, Allentown, PA 18109. Also, by Zoom for remote attendees. Attendance was recorded in the chat. Note: We had trouble with the audio. The organizers express our sincere apology for any inconvenience.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Chair: Matt Bauder welcomed attendees and facilitated introductions for both in-person and remote participants.

II. Review of May 22, 2024, Meeting Minutes

The minutes from the previous meeting on May 22, 2024, were reviewed and approved.

III. Provider Forum

Discussion Summary:

Attendees shared updates on service needs and opportunities within the provider network. Key focus areas included service access and quality improvements for underserved populations.

- **Holcomb Outpatient Clinics** (Presented by Marissa Turner): Holcomb has openings in their Allentown and Easton outpatient clinics for both adult and child services.
- **Haven House** (Presented by Laura Kelderling): Haven House has recently started seeing members ages six and up. Dr. Duquesne, a new child and adolescent psychiatrist, has joined the staff.
- **Move Forward Counseling** (Presented by Charlotte Leckow): Charlotte shared that Move Forward Counseling is participating in the **Bridge Project** in Pennsylvania, a statewide program offering free online counseling services to homeless students from kindergarten through 12th grade. The program allows schools to submit contact forms via their website to request these services.
- **PeerStar** (Presented by Ronnie Nase): Ronnie provided an update about PeerStar's initiative to staff **Certified Peer Support (CPS)** specialists in the Lehigh County Crisis Center. They are seeking individuals to fill up to 40 additional hours in the program, where CPS specialists would work directly with the county crisis office. They are specifically looking for certified CPS professionals who can commit to consistent 20-hour shifts. The positions are funded through the county and would be employed through PeerStar. Email interest to: rnase@peerstarllc.com

- **Allentown Comprehensive Treatment Center of Acadia:** All Eastern PA outpatient centers are supplying Sublocade (buprenorphine extended-release) Medication Assisted Treatment services.
 - **Crossroads Treatment Centers** (Provided by Kate Favata) Easton and Allentown Centers accepting referrals and provide Brixadi, Sublocade, and Suboxone MAT services to patients. Kate announced the launch of Crossroads **Soft Re-Entry Program** for individuals released from Lehigh and Northampton jail with substance use disorders. Peer Support Specialists, Care Managers, and Care Navigators are available to assist with insurance, transportation, housing, and other community resources.
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IV. Advisory Committee Reports

- **Member/Family Advisory Committee – Ronnie Colbert**
Ronnie provided updates on member concerns and highlighted advocacy efforts aimed at improving experiences of members in treatment and nontreatment services and supports. Ronnie provided advocacy updates on the Lehigh Valley's paratransit service called **LANTaVan**. (Editor's Note: LANTaVan is now operated by a new contractor effective 7/1/24. The new contractor is **Transdev Mobility Services**). Ronnie reported an issue with a new bus driver that treated individuals rudely. Ronnie reported this worker is no longer working for the service. Ronnie stressed the importance of calling the main number to report complaints or issues. (Editor's Note 2: The 2024 Lanta Survey is posted on Lanta's website. Please consider submitting your comments. <https://lantabus.com/annual-survey-2024/>). Ronnie also reported that Haven House is holding an art exhibit at the program.
- **Provider Advisory Committee – Vacant**
This position remains unfilled. Efforts to identify a new committee representative are ongoing.
- **Children's Advisory Committee – Matt Bauder reporting for Mike Ramsey**
Matt discussed initiatives within children's services, focusing on outreach programs and enhancements in behavioral support for youth; specifically summarizing Schott Talley from OMHSAS Children's Bureau updates.

Crisis Services are currently OMHSAS's number 1 priority. Regulations will be developed for all ages, a symposium will be held in October or November regarding working with children in the crisis system. Goal is to build consistent crisis services in all Counties.

Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) regulations update- New regulations would be put out for comments in August. Webinar will be held with stakeholders. (Editor's Note 3: RCPA released the webinar slides. [Here](#) is the link.) (Editor's note 4: RCPA released information on public commentary period for final rule making process [here](#). At this time, the regulations will be open for the submission of public comments from November 2, 2024, to December 1, 2024.).

Family Based Mental Health (FBMH) regulations are still the next item they intend to tackle. Looking at several things including approving waivers if it does not compromise services and talking to FBMH trainers about the length of training.

Our Community Connections group, co-chaired by Tom Walker. Our group is planning to support volunteer projects at the annual [United Way Day of Caring](#) events. Tom will send instructions out to the CHA group.

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

- **Patty Marth - Compliance**
Patty reviewed recent compliance updates.

Email Blasts:

May 2024: includes information for Peer Support Services (including Recovery Support Services) and Case Management Services to clarify regulations concerning time spent in [travel or transportation while rendering services](#) to Magellan HealthChoices members.

June 2024: serves as a reminder about [ACT 62 billing requirements](#).

Bulletins:

Shapiro Administration, Substance Use Disorder Treatment Provider Gaudenzia Unveil Pennsylvania's First Mobile Licensed Narcotic Treatment Program

The Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs and our partner agencies in the Shapiro Administration are excited to announce the launch of our new website dedicated to the Enterprise Licensing System (ELS) project. The ELS will be rolled out by Commonwealth Program offices over the next two years. Stakeholders in impacted program areas will be notified when their specific programs are scheduled for rollout, ensuring they have ample time to prepare. ELS will enable staff to manage and process licensing, permitting, registration, certification and related inspection or survey activities from initial application through issuance, as well as offer extensive reporting capabilities. Additionally, the ELS will be used to record, review, investigate, and analyze incidents and complaints.

The Bureau of Children's Behavioral Health Services is pleased to invite stakeholders to an informational webinar. This webinar, scheduled for Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 1:00 pm, will highlight significant sections of the proposed Psychiatric Residential Treatment Facility (PRTF) regulations prior to the public comment period. Please note that comments and questions will not be addressed as part of this webinar but may be submitted during the public comment period.

The Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) Deputy Secretary Jen Smith recently provided an update on the federal four walls rule. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has issued a proposed rule, or Notice of Public Rulemaking, that could create exceptions to the existing four walls requirement for IHS/Tribal clinics, behavioral health clinics, and clinics located in rural areas.

The Governor also signed sign SB 739 into law, expanding access to telemedicine services for residents across the Commonwealth by requiring health insurers and managed care plans to pay for covered health care services provided through telemedicine. Among the telehealth flexibilities set in law now, insurers that provide coverage for a health care service that is performed in-person, now must also cover that same service via telemedicine as long as the required standard of care is met. SB 739 also sets telehealth accessibility standards for Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

- **Mike Ditty – Network**

Mike addressed network reminders.

Reminders to please review Third Party Liability requirements. Specifically, Section 5 of the [National Provider Handbook](#).

Mike announced Magellan's Provider Town Hall event on 9/17/24. (Editor's note 5: The recording of Magellan's Town Hall meeting is available [here](#).)

- **John Lees - Member and Family Advocate**

John highlighted ongoing family advocacy initiatives and resources available to members, including support programs.

Recruiting for Complaint and Grievance Review Hearings: Magellan is actively recruiting members or their parents for participation in complaint and grievance review hearings. They are particularly in need of individuals with lived experience in mental health or substance use disorders. These participants will be compensated for their time and receive training. The hearings are typically virtual and last about three hours, including some preparatory and follow-up work. Interested individuals can [reach out to Tom](#) and be connected with the complaint and grievance manager.

Behavioral Health Matters Podcast: The latest episode (Episode 6) of the Behavioral Health Matters Podcast has been posted on Magellan's YouTube page. It features Tom Applebach from Lehigh County's Office of Veteran Affairs discussing PTSD, mental health, and oral injury among veterans. [The episode is available through the Magellan-PA website](#).

- **Janet Verga – Recovery and Resiliency**

Janet discussed Magellan's focus on resilience-building programs and recovery support services. She outlined recent efforts to enhance community partnerships.

Magellan's Complaints/Grievance Panel Recruitments: The grievance panel requirement states that members must be in recovery, though the length of recovery and specific responsibilities are not defined. The panel members must be reliable, such as showing up to meetings on time.

QPR Training: A QPR training session was conducted at Haven House for the Psychiatric Rehabilitation staff, and it was reported as successful.

Community Meetings and Peer Support: Discussions occurred around community meetings like the Peer Support Network and the Employment Task Force. Efforts are ongoing to promote webinars to help individuals re-enter the workforce. There are immediate openings in peer support, and the speaker is offering to help connect people to available positions.

Upcoming Employment Webinar: The Employment Task Force is working on a webinar focused on job search skills but is still seeking a provider to lead the session.

Peer Support Network: The next Peer Support Network meeting is scheduled for August 14th, with a speaker, Marcus Blackpow, sharing his personal experience with Medication-Assisted Treatment (MAT).

- **Tom Walker - Strategic**

Tom presented on strategic initiatives at Magellan, including long-term plans for community engagement and resource allocation to address emerging behavioral health needs.

Pennsylvania Report (2024): Tom handed out the latest Pennsylvania report, highlighting the importance of mental health, wellness, recovery, and peer support. He encouraged staff to read the report and discuss it, particularly focusing on the impact of peer support and the available resources for overcoming opioid use disorders and addressing social determinants of health.

Social Connections Group: Tom invited everyone to join the **Social Connections Group**, which will meet on **August 9th** at Valley Youth House. The group aims to engage in service projects, starting with the **United Way Day of Caring** on **September 9th**. Tom emphasized the value of volunteerism in human services, with plans to sign up participants and announced T-shirts for the event.

Behavioral Health Symposium: Tom announced the upcoming **Behavioral Health Symposium**, set for 10/23/24. The event will focus on four core areas: workforce development, emergency department boarding, social determinants of health (including diversity, equity, and inclusion), and the county's continuum of care. The symposium will

encourage collaboration among agency executive directors and leaders, aiming to build partnerships and share key contacts. Registration will open in **August**.

VI. Lehigh County: Updates / Reinvestment / Issues

Presented by: Matt Bauder and Drew Lazo

Matt Bauder's Reinvestment Plan Updates:

- **High-Fidelity Wraparound Program:** Pinebrook Family is currently serving 18 active cases, with 4 pending.
- **2-to-1 ABA Program:** Designed for individuals with autism and severe behavioral issues, it had one discharge and is awaiting a new referral, which is expected to join in August.
- **Housing Clearinghouse (Conference of Churches):** Served 20 new members in June, totaling 194 served year-to-date. Additionally, they continue operating the Social Determinants of Health reinvestment program, which has served 18 members this year. One member may use childcare services, a first for the program.
- **Concern Respite Program:** Four Lehigh County members have already been referred, and respite workers have been identified for home-based options. A family-driven option is also available where families can hire and get paid for respite care. Concern will present on these services at the September IBHS Collaborative.

Andrew Lazo's Updates:

- No additional updates from Andrew, other than acknowledging the complaint and grievance panel members, which were already covered by others.
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VII. Northampton County: Updates / Reinvestment / Issues

Presented by: Kristy Cole and Robyn Barbosa

Reinvestment Plans (Kristy Cole): Health Choices continues funding the housing and Social Determinants of Health (SDH) programs, particularly through high-cost churches.

- **Safe Harbor Expansion:** A physical expansion is underway with a projected ground-breaking soon.
- **Restoration LTSR Program:** The program is licensed and ready, but they are waiting for a psychiatrist to start (originally expected in mid-July, now aiming for mid-August).

The first individual is expected to start in August, with more people in the pipeline once the program opens.

- **Respite through Concern Behavioral Health:** Contracts are signed, and promotional materials are being worked on.
 - **High-Fidelity Wraparound (Pinebrook):** Contracts are signed to provide direct funding for families not funded through Children & Youth.
 - **CAMS Suicide Prevention Training for Clinicians:** The information session planned for July is postponed to the fall, likely October. Details about the program and a request for providers to send staff will follow.
 - **Mental Health Updates:**
 - There are several staffing vacancies in Northampton County's mental health department, impacting caseworker roles.
 - Mental health programs continue under the current budget, with a new contract with Pennsylvania Integrated Clinical Services for base-funded outpatient services and a part-time embedded peer support service at Northampton County Jail.
 - There was minimal funding increase for county mental health services, limiting the ability to expand programs.
 - **Drug and Alcohol Department Update (Robyn Barbosa):**
September as Recovery and Suicide Prevention Month: Northampton County will host the second Live Well, Be Well event on **September 21st** at Northeast Middle School in Bethlehem, featuring speaker Tony Hoffman. The event will include food trucks, free activities, and information on community resources. Organizations can reserve a resource table.
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VIII. Other

Meeting Updates:

- The **next meeting** will be on **November 20th**, as the September 25th meeting is canceled due to the RCPA conference in Hershey.
- Starting in **2025**, the meetings will return to **in-person** only, with no Zoom option, to address ongoing technology issues and improve engagement.