

COMMUNITY HEALTHCARE ALLIANCE Minutes

Date: November 19, 2025

Time: 2:00 PM

Location: Haven House, 1411 Union Blvd, Allentown, PA 18109

Chair: Matt Bauder, Lehigh County HealthChoices

Minutes: Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania

I. Welcome and Introductions

Matt Bauder called the meeting to order and reviewed recording procedures to support accurate minute-taking. Attendees were asked to identify themselves when speaking. A sign-in sheet was circulated. Introductions were completed by all attendees, including representatives from Lehigh County, Northampton County, Magellan Behavioral Health, provider agencies, peer and family advocacy organizations, and community partners.

II. Review of September 24, 2025 Meeting Minutes

The September 24, 2025 minutes were reviewed.

A correction was noted by Northampton County: the minutes referenced the incorrect plan name. The Supportive Housing Plan was already in place; the reference should have been to the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) plan. This was identified as a transcription/translation error and will be corrected. With this correction noted, the minutes were accepted.

III. Provider Forum

Treatment Trends

An open house and grand opening for the Slatington outpatient location was held and well attended. The Allentown residential program is awaiting final approvals and is on track to open before the end of the year. Positive local press coverage was noted, and the need for services in the Slatington area was emphasized.

KidsPeace

A bingo basket fundraiser raised over \$16,000 with record attendance. A Holiday Zumbathon benefiting KidsPeace Autism Services will be held December 14. A food and hygiene drive is underway for the Green Street outpatient program, with donations accepted at program locations. Flyers are available upon request.

Holcomb Behavioral Health

Immediate openings were reported across outpatient mental health (Easton and Allentown), substance use treatment (Bethlehem and Easton), case management (Lehigh and Northampton), IBHS, and a family-based program in Montgomery County. Spanish-speaking staff availability was noted.

Haven House / Psychiatric Rehabilitation Services

Openings are available for site-based and mobile psychiatric rehabilitation services. Bilingual staff capacity includes Spanish and Arabic. Referral forms were made available; a medical necessity determination from a licensed practitioner is required.

St. Luke's Penn Foundation

An overview was provided of the reorganization of behavioral health services across inpatient, outpatient, substance use, psychiatric rehabilitation, peer support, case management, and residential programs across multiple counties. A new adolescent partial hospitalization program has recently opened. Ongoing system integration efforts were described.

Community Announcement

Neighborhood House (Coalition of Downtown Allentown Churches) has reopened for the cold season at

Christ Church (13th & Hamilton, Allentown), providing Sunday hot meals and warming space to bridge gaps between shelter services. A volunteer sign-up opportunity was shared and will be included in follow-up materials.

IV. Advisory Committee Reports

Member/Family Advisory Committee

Ronnie Colbert was not in attendance and sent regrets. No formal report was provided.

Provider Advisory Committee

John Jones was not in attendance. No formal report was provided.

Children's Advisory Committee

Mike Ramsey reported that the next Service Delivery meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2025.

V. Magellan Behavioral Health Report

Compliance

Updates were provided on compliance alerts, the November 14 Compliance Forum (recording available), and guidance related to group psychotherapy and psychoeducational services. The close of public comment for crisis services rulemaking was noted. Providers were reminded of Population Improvement Program (PIP) screening requirements and zero-pay coding expectations, which are subject to audit.

Network

Technical issues with the provider portal were acknowledged; providers experiencing issues were advised to contact Magellan Network staff. A Provider Town Hall is scheduled for December 15, 2025.

Retrospective rate increases will be issued as lump-sum payments and sustained prospectively.

Community-based services are included, with certain exclusions noted. Payments are anticipated by the end of December. Program expansion requests will resume following allocation of rate increases, with strategic review continuing into Q1 2026.

Billing guidance emphasized billing usual and customary charges up to contract ceilings.

Member and Family Advocacy

The Magellan PA website and provider directory were highlighted as key resources. Providers were encouraged to verify directory accuracy. The Behavioral Health Matters podcast continues to expand, including a recent episode featuring Pennsylvania Supreme Court Justice Kevin Dougherty and upcoming holiday-focused content.

Recovery and Resiliency

Peer Network updates included review of revised Pennsylvania Certification Board ethics standards, ongoing peer support service openings (including Spanish-speaking CPS capacity), and workforce challenges related to training access and employment pipelines.

Strategic Updates

State budget highlights were reviewed, including Medical Assistance capitation increases and continued advocacy needs. Upcoming events include the December 5 Behavioral Health Symposium at LVHN Muhlenberg and the December 12 Magellan Advisory Work Group at the Goodwill Clubhouse, focused on social determinants of health and MA enrollment.

VI. Northampton County Updates / Reinvestment / Issues

Northampton County reported on ongoing reinvestment initiatives, including Supportive Housing programs, the Social Determinants of Health (SDOH) plan, DUOS program expansion planning, CAMS-Care training progress, respite services, Hi-Fi Wraparound, and Safe Harbor facility expansion.

Budget stabilization was noted, with departments resuming invoice payments. Upcoming county leadership transitions were acknowledged.

VII. Lehigh County Updates / Reinvestment / Issues

Lehigh County provided the following updates:

A specialized 2-to-1 ABA school-based program continues to serve a member with autism and complex behavioral needs. After hospitalization in September and re-emerging challenges, services were re-engaged. Progress is being made, with cautious optimism for transition readiness early in the new year. Due to the intensity of the model, services are provided one member at a time.

The Clearinghouse program (bridge and contingency supports) serves approximately 17 members monthly, with continued waiting demand. To date, 188 members have been served, including 49 new members identified in October. Most members utilize contingency supports for housing stabilization such as first/last month's rent, security deposits, and utility assistance. A smaller number utilize bridge subsidies for short-term support (three to six months) to transition toward greater independence. Approximately six members received bridge subsidies in 2025.

Respite services have served 12 members. Utilization of group-based respite remains low. As a result, the number of groups will be reduced for the remainder of 2025 and scaled back further in 2026. Lehigh County plans to engage families through feedback mechanisms or focus groups to better understand when group respite would be most beneficial and better utilized.

The Social Determinants of Health program continues to evolve, with increased focus on educational and vocational opportunities. Recent discussions included tuition reimbursement concepts and support for vocational pathways such as CDL training, driver's licensing, and cosmetology programs. The program emphasizes promoting independence and connecting members to existing community resources, which has contributed to lower-than-anticipated budget drawdown.

Lehigh County reported on Pinebrook Family Answers Hi-Fi Wraparound, which continues to serve families not involved with Children and Youth. The program remains active, with ongoing referrals and monitoring as part of the County's reinvestment strategy.

Lehigh County shared that planning discussions are underway regarding the future development of a Mental Health Court, with details to be determined. This initiative is in early exploratory stages and will be brought back for discussion as planning progresses.

A need was identified for panel members to serve on grievance hearings, and stakeholders were encouraged to consider participation or recommend qualified individuals.

Finally, Lehigh County issued a call for ideas for future reinvestment plans, inviting providers and stakeholders to submit concepts addressing service gaps, emerging needs, or innovative approaches to care.

Lehigh County anticipates upcoming ASAM community-based level of care fidelity audits in 2026 and noted the forthcoming triennial OMHSAS/Mercer review, which includes case reviews and medical necessity evaluations.

VIII. Other

No additional items were raised.

IX. Meeting Schedule

Next meeting 1/28/26. We will be polling membership in December/January for meeting preferences - remote or in person.

X. Adjournment

With no further business, the Chair asked for any final provider comments. None were raised.