

Thursday, June 6th, 2024, 11:00am

Virtual Meeting ([ZOOM info](#))

In-Person Location: 20 W Broad St Hazelton, PA 18201 (AmeriHealth Wellness and Opportunity Center)

Meeting Chair: Lori Delmonaco

Co-Chair: Nguyen Nguyen

Meeting Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos

1. Call to Order

Nguyen Nguyen, Community Relations Representative called the meeting to order at 11:07 am.

2. Welcome and Introductions

Nguyen welcomed the group to the second quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Northeast zone. Lori Delmonaco, Northeast Service Coordination Manager, welcomed the group and reviewed the agenda and presenters. Nguyen also welcomed Fiorella Salas Toledo, who will be the new Community Relations Representative for this zone.

Action items: N/A

3. PAC Member Updates/Discussion

This meeting is hybrid, with options for PAC members to join either in-person or virtually. Nguyen facilitated introductions: the in-person group introduced themselves followed by those online.

Action items: N/A

4. Health Education & Outreach Updates

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

- Participant Newsletter June 2024
 - Nguyen updated the group that the Participant Newsletters will not be mailed out anymore, but instead will be available as a digital copy. Physical copies can be made available to any Participant who requests them.
- Activities in Your Community:
 - Hazelton Wellness Center – 20 West Broad Street, Hazelton, PA 18201
 - 06/06- Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting
 - 06/12- Overview of Public Benefits by North Penn Legal
 - 06/13- Juneteenth Book Reading
 - 06/25- Grandparents Meeting by Pathways to Recovery
 - Mobile Wellness Unit Calendar
 - Website: <https://www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/community/mobile-wellness-center.aspx>
 - 06/28- Health Education & Community Garden at Ruth's Place
 - Community Resources



- **Roads to Freedom CIL**, <https://www.facebook.com/RTFCIL>
24 East Third Street Williamsport, PA 17701
- **Anthracite Region CIL**, <https://anthracitecil.org/contact-arci/>
8 West Broad St. Suite 228 Hazleton, PA 18201

Feedback

- *PAC Member had a question about a letter that was sent out multiple members in the in-person group.*
 - Lori was able to look at the letter and explained that it came from our Medicare VIP team. She noted we will discuss the mailer itself at the end of meeting in the open discussion portion and answer specific questions.
- *Participant NP asked, "One of the events on June 28th – what is it?"*
 - Nguyen explained that this is an event that our Mobile Wellness Unit will be attending and provided the Participant with the event info.

Action items: N/A

5. CHC Programs & Updates/Redetermination Reminder

Redetermination Reminder – Nguyen presented the following to the group:

- Make sure address and phone are up to date via online www.dhs.pa.ove/COMPASS, mobile App: myCOMPASS PA, phone at 1-877-395-8930 or in person at the County Assistance Office
- Sign up for alerts – at www.dhs.pa.gov/TEXT or eNotices at www.dhs.pa.gov/COMPASS
- Complete Renewal forms in timely manner at online www.dhs.pa.ove/COMPASS, on paper on in person at the County Assistance Office or via phone at 1-866-550-4355

Action items: N/A

6. CHC Programs & Updates/Quality—HCBS CAHPS Interventions

Marci Kramer, Director of Quality Management for CHC presented on the following interventions:

- **Areas for Improvement:**
 - Staff Are Reliable and Helpful
 - Choosing the Services That Matter to You
 - Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP) Includes All the Things Important to You
 - Planning Your Time and Activities
 - Transportation to Medical Appointments
 - Aware of Housing Rights and How to Get Information for Preventing Eviction/Foreclosure
 - Rating of Dental Care
 - Mental Health Treatment – Ability to Get an Appointment for Counseling or Mental Health Treatment as Soon as You Needed
 - Participants' Knowledge on How to Apply for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Benefits to Help Buy Food
- **Improvement Actions Taken:**
 - Enhance Service Coordinator training.
 - New LTSS Benefits Video and SNAP Benefits Video have been added to the Participant Website.
 - Increase number of Housing Coordinators.
 - Dental Visit reminders. Outreach to those who have not used their Dental visit and provide assistance.
 - Urge Participants to use virtual appointments and waiting lists.
 - BDT contacts Participants who may be eligible for SNAP and help with enrollment.



Feedback

- PAC Member asked, “Will we get all of the things we are seeing today (presentations)? I want to find more activities in my community for me.” *
 - Nguyen encouraged any Participants who are looking for activities in their communities to directly connect with their Community Relations Representative so that we can find activities that tailor to specific interests and needs.

**Please note this question was asked after this presentation but was a reference to the previous presentation on Outreach Activities*

Action items: N/A

7. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/ LTSS Benefits Video

For each PAC meeting in 2024, the CHC Community Outreach Team will be presenting a “HCBS Waiver Spotlight”, which will highlight the 32 LTSS benefits that are available to our Participants.

Lori presented the new LTSS Benefits Video:

- The LTSS Benefits Video was shown to the group. Lori explained it will be a new tool for SCs to use and show to Participants during initial visits/assessments.
- The video can be found on our website in the participant portal by scrolling to the bottom at: <https://www.amerihhealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/benefits/index.aspx>

Action items: N/A

8. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/ Home & Vehicle Modifications, Pest Eradication & Assistive Technology

Nguyen presented on the CHC benefits related to Home/Vehicle Modifications, Pest Eradication & Assistive Technology. These services:

- help Participants have more independence in the home and community as well as protect their health, welfare, and safety
- Shown to be needed as a result of the Comprehensive Needs Assessment and are detailed in the Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP).
- Home Adaptions are:
 - Physical adaptations to the primary private residence of the Participant
 - Includes installation, maintenance, permits, inspections, and warranties
 - Can be for completed for Participants who own or rent (with landlord’s permission) their homes
- Vehicle Modifications are:
 - Changes to a vehicle that help Participants have more independence and promote health, welfare, and safety.
- Pest Eradication are:
 - Services that treat pest in the participant home and help keep home free of pests which include but are not limited to cockroaches, bed bugs and mice.



Northeast Participant Advisory Committee (PAC)

- Assistive Technology is:
 - an item, piece of equipment or product that helps in/with communication, self-help, self-direction, life-supports, and adaptive capabilities

Action items: N/A

9. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/Behavioral Therapy, Counseling, and Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy

Jennifer Ford-Bey, Manager of Behavioral Health/Collaborative Services and Dominique Oputa, Service Coordination Manager presented on the following:

- Behavior Therapy
 - Help improve Participants level of function, independence, and ability to be part of the community.
 - Includes functional behavioral assessment, behavioral support plan and training for Participants, family, and direct service providers.
- Counseling
 - Non-medical counseling services to help with individual or social conflicts and family issues.
 - Help to build and keep positive support networks, improve personal relationships, and Improve communication with family members or others
 - You must use available Behavioral Health Managed Care Organization (BH-MCOs) services before you can get these services through the CHC waiver.
 - <https://www.pa.gov/en/agencies/dhs/resources/medicaid/bhc/bhc-mcos.html>
- Cognitive Rehabilitation Therapy (CRT)
 - Goal Oriented therapy that includes consultation, ongoing counseling, coaching, and cueing training of family members/staff and help to carry out the CRT plan.

Action items: N/A

10. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight/Home Delivered Meals & Nutrition Counseling

Lori presented on the following:

- Home Delivered Meals
 - Participants in the CHC program who cannot prepare meals for themselves can get up to two meals per day – hot, cold, frozen, or shelf-stable.
 - Providers can accommodate Participant’s dietary needs and preferences.
 - Contact your SC to find out what is available in your area.
- Nutrition Counseling
 - Participants, through their doctor’s approval, have access to nutrition counseling provided by registered dietician or certified Nutrition Specialist.
 - This benefit support Participants in creating a diet and meal plan that meet their health needs and address nutrition needs.

Feedback

- *PAC Member asked regarding home modifications, “Do you need to own the home? Are the adaptations open to everyone?”*
 - Nguyen, and Home Modification Specialist Supervisor, John Greenwood explained that Participants do not need to own the home, but they do need permission from the



- homeowner to make the adaptations. Adaptations are based on the Comprehensive Needs Assessment, doctor, plan, and assessment by contractor if they can be done.
- Lori encouraged Participants to have a conversation with their SC if they think any of these services could be beneficial for themselves.
- *PAC Member expressed that they need a psychologist and was having a tough time finding someone.*
 - Jennifer noted that she will have her BH team outreach directly to help schedule and appointment. Nguyen will send Jennifer the contact information.

Action items: Nguyen sent Jennifer the contact information immediately after the meeting.

11. Open Forum

- Multiple Participants in the in-person group had received a mailer and wanted clarification on what it was.
 - Lori explained that this flyer is regarding a Medicare Advantage Plan; if you chose our AmeriHealth VIP Plan and participant in our AmeriHealth Medicaid Plan you will have your Medicare and Medicaid Plans aligned and coordinated under one company. Anyone who is Medicare and Medicaid eligible can select to join the AmeriHealth Caritas VIP Advantage Plan – it takes the place of the traditional Medicare Plan – red, white, and blue card. Why would someone want to do this? If you are in a Medicare Advantage Plan – extra benefits, things you do not receive under traditional Medicare. If you chose this Medicare, Medicaid and LTSS are under one insurance umbrella, this can simplify things working under one insurance umbrella.
 - The extra benefits under VIP plan include a \$200 per month allowance for everyday pharmacy, Over the Counter (OTC) items like band-aids, aspirin, toothbrushes, etc.
 - Participant BN shared that he is in this program and that the card does not work at Weiss, it works in Wal-Mart, CVS, Rite Aid, Walgreens.
 - Lori Noted this does have an annual enrollment period, but you can enroll outside of this period in specific circumstances. If you have more questions, we can connect you with the VIP team or you can contact **AmeriHealth VIP 1-855-241-3648 (TTY 711)**.
- A Provider asked, “Will you have updates about the transportation program?”
 - Nguyen explained that transportation will be a LTSS benefit that we will spotlight in our upcoming PAC meetings. It should be noted that we are seeing statewide issues with transportation across different CHC programs. We are waiting for the second Transportation Summit with OLTL, but in the meantime the Service Coordinators can help with issues.

The 2024 PAC meetings will be held in person and zoom. Resources that we share or are requested during the PAC meetings will be sent to the group after the meeting. They will also be on the AmeriHealth Caritas Community HealthChoices website under the Community tab. It is currently undergoing some updates but there are many resources on the site. <https://www.amerhealthcaritaschc.com/community/index.aspx>

Nguyen encouraged any meeting attendees with specific questions related to the presented topics or any concerns they may have, to bring them up at this time. The post PAC survey will be sent out along with the meeting materials.

Action items: N/A



12. Next Meeting

Nguyen announced that the 2024 second quarter PAC meeting for the Northeast zone will be held on September 5, 2024. The meeting again will be hosted in-person and virtually. We will follow up with mail, phone calls and email.

Action items: N/A

13. Meeting Adjourned

Nguyen adjourned the virtual meeting at 1:00 pm. In the in-person session, PAC members were served and catered, hot lunch, and went into different breakout sessions to address specific Participant needs. Lori helped a PAC Member answer questions regarding getting a second vehicle modification. SC staff helped a PAC Member discuss behavioral health options and next steps.

Action items: N/A