



Thursday, March 6th, 2025, 11:00 am

Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

Location (in-person): 20 W. Broad St, Hazelton, PA 18201

Location (virtual): [zoom info](#)

*Chair: Fiorella Salas Toledo*

*Co-Chair: Lori Delmonaco*

*Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos*

## 1. Call to Order

Fiorella Salas Toledo, Community Relations Representative for AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania (ACP) Community HealthChoices (CHC) called the first quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Northeast zone to order at 11:03 am.

## 2. Welcome, Introductions, and Updates

Fiorella introduced the Community Outreach team as well as Lori Delmonaco, Manager of Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) for ACP CHC's Northeast Zone.

Meeting attendees introduced themselves either in-person, virtually, or in the Zoom chat. Fiorella also introduced two satellite meetings that were taking place at Edenbrook North Skilled Nursing Facility (Williamsport, Pa) and Shamokin Housing Authority (Shamokin, Pa).

Nicole Ragab, Manager of Community Outreach CHC completed the level setting for the meeting, and Fiorella reviewed the meeting agenda.

## 3. Health Education & Outreach Activities

Fiorella, Community Relations Representative reviewed the health education and outreach updates for the Northeast zone, including:

- Last quarter's Community Outreach team activities
- Partners in the Community
- Upcoming Community Outreach team activities
- Activities in your Community
- Wellness and Opportunity Center information and calendar of events
- Mobile Wellness & Opportunity Center information and calendar of events
- Participant Communications
- Participant Handbook

Nicole spoke about the importance of highlighting what the Community Outreach team has been doing in the community. Nicole stated Fiorella will be providing Property tax/Rent Rebate events to the community in a few weeks. This is a collaboration with the Department of Revenue to bring awareness and the facilitation of completed rebate forms at senior community centers or senior apartment buildings. This program aids participants 65 and older and 18-64 years old with a disability. Nicole highlighted the importance of the Participant Newsletter and mentioned Fiorella will be receiving some printed newsletters in the mail and will



pass it along to Participants. Lastly, Nicole mentioned the Participant Handbook is a great resource for participants to reference and obtain more information on AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania Community HealthChoices benefits.

**Resources:**

- <https://www.amerhealthcaritasp.com/community/wellness-center-hazleton.aspx>
- <https://www.amerhealthcaritasp.com/community/mobile-wellness-center.aspx>
- <https://www.amerhealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/health-wellness/newsletter.aspx>
- <https://www.amerhealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/participant-handbook.aspx>

**Feedback: N/A**

**Next Steps: N/A**

*\*Note: this presentation was translated into Spanish for in-person attendees by Fiorella Salas Toledo (Community Relations Representative).*

#### 4. CHC Programs and Updates - Collaborative Services Overview and 2024 Review

Jennifer, Manager of Collaborative Services, provided an overview of the Collaborative Services department including 2024 accomplishments and 2025 goals. The Collaborative Services department includes the following:

- Behavioral Health
- Employment
- Housing
- Nursing Home Transition

**Feedback:** A PAC member asked if there are conversations about offering behavioral health training to Direct Care Workers? Jennifer responded that this is a topic being discussed. We are working out the logistics of in-person versus virtual settings and how to reach a larger population.

A PAC member asked if there are Behavioral Health counseling and programs for school age children? Jennifer responded that we do not provide services to school age children, but we can connect you with resources.

A PAC member asked what the Nursing Home Transition (NHT) program is. Jennifer Ford-Bey (Manager of Long-Term Support and Services Behavioral Health and Collaborative Services) stated the Nursing Home Transition program aids a participant transitioning back to the community from a nursing facility. Some participants experience barriers when creating a plan when transitioning back to the community. These may include not having active support at home, medical issues, among others. Therefore, a participant moving back into the community may be more difficult. The Nursing Home Transition team works on a plan to effectively transition the person back to the community if that is their wish.



**Next Steps: N/A**

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## 5. CHC Programs and Updates - 2024 Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers & Systems (CAHPS) Survey Results

Sheila, Quality Performance Team Lead provided an overview of the CAHPS Survey and reviewed the 2024 survey results, including planned interventions. The HCBS CAHPS Survey is a telephone only survey developed for measuring experience with the Medicaid HCBS delivered by providers, including Service Coordinators.

**Feedback: N/A**

**Next Steps: N/A**

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## 6. Resources from our Community Partners - Air Quality and Your Health

Michelle from the Pennsylvania Department of Health Division of Environmental Health Epidemiology presented information on the effects of air quality on your health which included information on outdoor versus indoor air quality, the health effects of air pollution, who is most at risk, the main sources of air pollution in Pennsylvania, and what people can do to stay safe from air pollution.

**Resources:**

- <https://www.airnow.gov/>
- <https://www.epa.gov/sciencematters/do-it-yourself-air-cleaners-making-cleaner-air-more-accessible>
- [American Lung Association: Clean Air - https://www.lung.org/clean-air](https://www.lung.org/clean-air)
- [EPA: AirNow & Air Quality Index \(AQI\)](#)
- [EPA: Guide to Indoor Air Quality](#)
- [PA DOH: Air Quality Factsheet](#)
- [PA DOH: Air Quality Index Training](#)
- [PA DOH: Air Quality Resources for Schools](#)

**Feedback:**

A PAC Member asked if plants help with the air quality in the home. Michelle responded that yes, they help but they do not filter out pollutants.

**Next Steps: N/A**



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## 7. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight - Chore Services

Jennifer, Manager of Collaborative Services provided an overview of the newest Home and Community Based Services (HCBS) waiver service, chore services. Chore Services include heavy household chores which are needed to maintain the use of the home or provide a clean and safe environment. The services may be approved only when an unclean or cluttered living space impedes service delivery or increases the chances of injury from hazards. For individuals with hoarding disorders, these services are intended to be utilized with behavioral health services. The Participant must be actively engaged in behavioral health services or have been referred for a behavioral health consultation before Chore Services can be provided.

### **Feedback:**

*A PAC member asked What type of organization provides chore services? Is it through a specific type of organization/provider, like a handy person company or can a homecare agency provide this? How can companies partner with AmeriHealth to become a provider?*

Jennifer stated the Provider Network Team is working on the provider network for Chore services and they would be the appropriate group to speak with regarding becoming a provider. We will follow up and connect you with the team.

**Next Steps:** Fiorella will provide information about how to join the Provider Network to Provider PAC members.

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## 8. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight - “Your Long-Term Services and Supports (LTSS) Benefits” Webpage Review

Nicole reviewed the “Your Benefits” portion of the ACPCHC website. The “View your Long-Term Services and Supports” portion of the website has been added to provide additional information to those interested in learning about Long-Term Services and Supports, including Home and Community-Based Services.

### **Resources**

- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/benefits/ltss.aspx>

### **Feedback:**

*A PAC member asked if the link is available to everyone. Nicole mentioned all the information discussed today is available to the public. There is also a link to the participant portal that only participants have access to, and the participant needs to be enrolled.*



A PAC member asked *If a participant logs into the portal, are they able to view their service plan?* Nicole mentioned we will find out and will follow up to provide an answer to the group.

**Next Steps:** Fiorella will follow up on providing an answer to the group regarding participant portal and service plan review.

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## 9. HCBS Waiver Services Spotlight - Participant Directed Services Video

Lauren, DCW Workforce Program Manager reviewed ACP CHC plans to develop a participant-directed services video that will be shown to Participants as an educational tool. The video is currently in the development stage, but the plan is paying particular attention to the length of the video and making sure the video is available in multiple languages and with closed captioning. Lauren asked for feedback and recommendations on accessibility, format, and scope of the video.

**Feedback:** N/A

**Next Steps:** N/A

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## 10. Open Forum

Fiorella 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.

Nicole extended a thank you to everyone who has participated in today's meeting and encouraged attendees to join the next meeting.

**Feedback:** N/A

**Next Steps:** N/A

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## 11. Next Meeting

The second quarter PAC meeting for the Northeast zone will be held on June 5th, 2025. Fiorella will follow up with mail, phone calls and email reminders.



Today's attendees will receive a post-PAC follow-up email with the resources from today's meeting as well as a feedback survey. Attendees are encouraged to complete the survey and return it to the Community Outreach team.

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## 12. Meeting Adjourned

Nicole adjourned the meeting at 12:20 pm after all inquiries from the Participants were addressed.