

Thursday, December 4, 2025, 11:00 am
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)
Location (in-person): 20 W Broad Street, Hazelton, PA 18201
Location (virtual): [zoom info](#)

Chair: Fiorella Salas Toledo
Co-Chair: Tracy Brekke
Scribe: Kathleen Shiomos

1. Call to Order

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

2. Welcome, Introductions, and Updates

Fiorella introduced the Community Outreach team as well as Tracy Brekke, 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 a satellite meeting that was taking place at Edenbrook North Skilled Nursing Facility (Williamsport, PA).

Allison Hindman, Community Relations Representative, completed the level setting for the meeting. Fiorella reviewed the meeting agenda.

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

3. Health Education & Outreach Activities

Fiorella, Community Relations Representative, reviewed the health education and outreach updates for the Northeast, 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
- Participant Communications
- Participant Handbook

Resources:



- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/community/wellness-center-hazleton.aspx>
- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaspa.com/community/mobile-wellness-center.aspx>
- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaschc.com/participants/eng/health-wellness/newsletter.aspx>
- <https://www.amerihealthcaritaschc.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: Quality- Flu Shot and Screening Reminders

Marci Kramer, Director of Quality Management, discussed benefits of Flu Shots and Breast Cancer screenings

- Flu Shot
 - It is recommended for everyone over the age of 6 months to receive the vaccine.
 - You can receive your flu shot or nasal flu vaccine from your doctor or at a participating pharmacy.
 - Speak with your doctor to make sure it is right for your situation.
- Breast Cancer
 - Centers for Disease Control recommend if you are between the ages of 40-49 talk to doctor about when you should receive screening. If you are between the ages of 50-74 you should have a screening mammogram every two years.
 - Women with disabilities - Let scheduling know you have specific needs. Talk to your doctor about your concerns.
- Resources
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/right-to-know/php/campaign/index.html>
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/flu/vaccines/index.html>

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: Fiorella will send the information via email and mail as needed.

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

5. CHC Programs and Updates: Winter Blues- Signs and Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder

Jennifer Ford-Bey, Manager of Collaborative Services presented information on Winter Blues – Signs and Symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

- Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD) is a type of depression that comes and goes with the seasons and symptoms that last 4-5 months.
 - Symptoms include depression in a recurrent seasonal pattern, oversleeping, overeating, irritability, guilt, loss of pleasure in hobbies, fatigue, social withdrawal, etc.
 - Winter SAD should not be confused with Holiday Blues. Holiday Blues focuses stresses during a certain time of year or date which causes feelings of sadness or anxiety meanwhile SAD symptoms last longer.



- Symptoms of winter or summer pattern SAD include episodes occurring during specified season for at least two consecutive years, depressive episodes are more frequent than at other times of the year.
- Treatment includes light therapy, Psychotherapy, Antidepressant medication and vitamin D.
- Talk to your healthcare provider about the benefits and risks of treatment options.
- Resources
 - www.nami.org
 - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/topics/depression>
 - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/tips-for-talking-with-your-health-care-provider>
 - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/publications/seasonal-affective-disorder>
 - <https://www.nimh.nih.gov/health/trials>
 - <https://www.warmline.org/>

Feedback: A PAC member asked if there is anything a person can do to combat Seasonal Affective Disorder?

Jennifer answered if someone has symptoms of Seasonal Affective Disorder, they should see a professional for diagnosis and treatment. Following a healthy diet and exercise can help. It is important to have open communication with your provider about how you are feeling. If you notice changes in how your participants, members, family members etc. are acting, suggest they speak with their provider to see if they are experiencing any of the symptoms to find the right treatment.

A PAC member, Michelle Gorton from United Neighborhood Center noted in the chat that the Local Area Agencies on Aging provides a Health IDEAS program that integrates depression awareness and management in the home. It provides support and resources as well as a mental health referral if appropriate. United Neighborhood Center offers this program for Lackawanna County. Michelle will send the program flyer to Fiorella. Fiorella will follow up to provide this information.

Next Steps: Fiorella will provide the AmeriHealth Caritas Pennsylvania Community HealthChoices flyer about Seasonal Affective Disorders alongside the Health IDEAS program to those in the room and will be sent to the virtual group as well.

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

6. CHC Programs and Updates: Health Equity 2024 Program Evaluation

Nguyen Nguyen, Manager of Community Outreach, presented information regarding 2024 Health Equity program.

- Health Equity (HE) means that everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.
- The Health Equity and Culturally and Linguistically Appropriate Services (CLAS) program ACPA CHC established a planned approach to promote culturally responsive care and services to improve Health Care Disparities, Community Involvement, Provider of Network Cultural Responsiveness and Assessment of Language Services.
- 2024 Goals included:



- Improve CBP HEDIS rates for Black/African American Populations – which was partially met.
- Improve Hemoglobin A1c Control for Patients with Diabetes – which was partially met.
- Improve Participant self-reported Race Ethnicity and Language (REL) data - goal was met.
- Create a Service Coordination (SC) CBP Health Equity Council for African American/Black Participants – which was partially met.
- Implement process for SCs to perform quarterly CBP care gap outreach – which was partially met.
- HEDIS Performance Measure by Race, Ethnicity and Language (REL)
 - AmeriHealth Caritas (AC) CHC looks at certain health conditions and health care activities over the year to make sure AC CHC is delivering the best care to our participants. This is done through a certain set of HEDIS measurements that look at this information by REL to measure the health of the community. AC CHC uses this information to identify opportunities for improvement.

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).*

7. Resources from our Community Partners- “Love Letters: for Cancer Screening

Tim Brucker and Jessica Di Stefano from Genentech presented information on the Love Letters for cancer campaign.

- Genentech is partnering with ACS, Optum, and Stand Up to Cancer to launch a culturally and socially sensitive screening campaign to help change the trajectory of cancer rates for Black and Latina women.
- Love Letters is a community cancer screening campaign directed towards Black and Latina women to address health disparities, inequities and increase screening.
 - It uses letters from Black and Latina real people to loved ones lost to cancer or survivors.
 - Latina and Black artists created original portraits in memory and in honor of the women the letter is addressing.
 - These real stories create a culturally relevant connection, which breaks through barriers that may prevent screenings.
 - “Love Letters” educational resources are designed to be placed in community settings to encourage women to learn more about getting screened.
- Resources
 - Love Letters Campaign video - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RA5YEZ7luxU>
 - <https://www.cancerscreenweek.org/resources.html#additional-screening-resources>
 - <https://www.cancerscreenweek.org/resources.html>

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: Fiorella will send this information to the group.

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



8. Open Forum

Fiorella encouraged any meeting attendees with specific questions related to the topics presented or any concerns they may have to bring them up at this time.

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

Feedback: N/A

Next Steps: N/A

9. Next Meeting

The first quarter PAC meeting of 2026 for the Northeast zone will be held on March 5, 2026. 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.

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

10. Meeting Adjourned

Fiorella adjourned the meeting at 1:00 pm after all inquiries were answered.

**Internal Attendance (In-person= P, Virtual = V)**

| Method of Participation | Internal Staff | Title |
|-------------------------|------------------|---|
| P | Nguyen N. | Manager, Community Outreach |
| V | Ally H. | Community Relations Rep |
| P | Fiorella S. T. | Community Relations Rep |
| V | Yolanda S. | Community Relations Rep |
| V | Tracy B. | Co-chair/Manager SC |
| P | Michelle B. | Supervisor SC |
| P | Alyson B. | Supervisor SC |
| P | Alicia C. | Supervisor SC |
| V | Mary B. | Supervisor SC |
| V | Jessica C. | Housing Coordinator |
| V | Jocelyn S. | Director Service Coordinator LTSS |
| V | Lea S. | Housing Coordinator |
| V | Marci K. | Director Quality Management |
| V | Melanie W. | Behavioral Health Coordinator |
| V | Samara Fritzsche | Workforce Initiative Program Manager |
| V | Shirleyanne W. | Coordinator Quality Improvement |
| V | Yvette T. | Regulatory Affairs Analyst |
| V | Jennifer F.B. | Manager LTSS Behavioral Health/Collaborative Services |
| V | Kathleen Shiomos | Executive Assistant II |
| P | Ashley Garner | Service Coordinator |

**External Attendance (In-person= P, Virtual = V, Member not present= M)**

| Method of Participation | Name | Title |
|-------------------------|------|---|
| P | PR | LTSS Participant |
| P | LL | Family Member |
| P | LN | Caregiver |
| P | FT | NFI Participant |
| P | JA | NFI Participant |
| P | OV | LTSS Participant |
| P | CN | LTSS Provider- PAS-Age in Place |
| P | TB | LTSS Provider- Genentech |
| P | JDS | LTSS Provider- Genentech |
| V | VW | LTSS Participant |
| V | MW | Family Caregiver |
| V | CS | CBO- BFSA |
| V | KL | CBO-MyCIL |
| V | CC | LTSS Provider- HDM- Mom's Meals |
| V | MG | CBO-UNC |
| V | SPR | Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- The Wright Center |
| V | SB | LTSS Provider- PERS- VRI Cares |
| P | GB | NF Participant |
| P | DA | NF Participant |
| P | KD | NF Participant |
| P | CK | NF Participant |
| P | ES | NF Participant |
| P | FG | NF Participant |
| P | SL | NF Participant |
| V | AC | CBO- RTFCIL |
| V | KH | CBO- CRI |
| V | DK | Behavioral Health- Lycoming- Clinton Joinder Programs |
| V | CB | CBO- Lehigh Valley CIL |
| V | KK | LTSS Provider-PAS- Comfort Keepers |



| | | |
|---|-----|---|
| V | S | LTSS Provider- PAS- Global Health and Home Care |
| V | JM | Behavioral Health- Lycoming- Clinton Joinder Programs |
| V | JD | CBO- UDS Foundation |
| V | MB | Physical Health Provider- AR Health |
| V | CJ | Behavioral Health- Clarion Psychiatric Center |
| V | DS | CBO- Alzheimer's Association |
| V | CB | Hospice Provider- Commonwealth Hospice of Berwick |
| V | KS | Lackawanna AAA- SHARE program |
| V | NF | Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- The Wright Center |
| V | BE | Dental, Primary Care and Behavioral Health- The Wright Center |
| V | JH | LTSS Participant |
| P | BN | LTSS Participant |
| P | AMN | Family member |
| P | ET | LTSS Participant |
| P | MT | Caregiver |
| P | JT | LTSS Participant |
| P | NA | LTSS Participant |
| P | JGP | LTSS Participant |
| P | DJM | LTSS Participant |
| P | LGJ | Caregiver |
| P | AG | Caregiver |
| P | MMC | LTSS Participant |
| P | LF | NFI Participant |



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|---|-----|----------------------------------|
| P | MG | NFI Participant |
| P | AR | NFI Participant |
| P | NV | LTSS Participant |
| P | VM | NFI Participant |
| P | MMM | LTSS Participant |
| P | AV | LTSS Participant |
| P | TM | NFI Participant |
| P | KS | NFI Participant |
| P | BL | NFI Participant |
| P | MG | NFI Participant |
| P | NP | NFI Participant |
| P | MC | LTSS Participant |
| P | SB | LTSS Provider- PAS- Help at Home |