

Meeting Summary for BHP Adult Quality, Access & Policy Committee Zoom Meeting

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Quick recap

The meeting focused on the upcoming presentation, the importance of supporting individuals with addiction, and the initiation and recovery of opioid use disorder. The discussion also covered the changing pathways model, the role of medications in the initial phase of recovery, and the transition from the pilot phase to the sustainability phase of their model. Lastly, the committee proposed a 2025 Adult Quality, Access & Policy Committee schedule, discussed the importance of comprehensive discharge and warm handoffs, and emphasized the need for a more holistic approach to substance use disorder recovery.

Next steps

Co-Chair Sabrina Trocchi to connect with other BHPOC subcommittee chairs to discuss coordinating presentations across committees.

Co-Chair Kelly Phenix to invite legislators to attend the March and May meetings on outpatient behavioral health.

Carelon team to continue providing monthly data to providers on changing pathways outcomes.

Carelon team to continue offering system enhancement meetings to support providers with connect-to-care processes.

Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership to continue expanding the changing pathways model to emergency departments.

Rob Haswell to continue implementing requirements for residential SUD providers to provide or partner for MOUD under the 1115 demonstration.

Committee to consider including data on peer support and church involvement in future changing pathways outcome tracking.

Committee to explore long-term sustainability plans for peer specialist roles in Connecticut Medicaid.

Summary

Addiction Support and Recovery Stories

The meeting included a video and a presentation by Dan Langless. Daniel Langless acknowledged Mary Jo for her recovery story and her significant contribution to the promotion of the life-saving practice known as changing pathways. The meeting also included introductions of new Co-Chair, Kelly Phoenix, and a brief discussion about the importance of supporting individuals with addiction. The conversation ended with Mary Jo sharing her personal experience with addiction and recovery, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and peer support.

Opioid Use Disorder Treatment Strategies

In the meeting, Daniel and Dr. Paulo Correa discussed the initiation and recovery of opioid use disorder. They highlighted the importance of medications like methadone and buprenorphine in managing withdrawal symptoms and promoting recovery. They also discussed the changing pathways model, which offers individuals the option of being initiated on medication for opioid use disorder during inpatient stays. The model has shown to improve recovery outcomes, reduce the risk of overdose, and increase connections to care. The team encouraged questions and offered resources and clinical tools for the treatment of opioid use disorder.

Comprehensive Discharge and Changing Pathways

Daniel discussed the importance of comprehensive discharge and warm handoffs to community providers in the changing pathways model. Mary Jo shared her experiences during the implementation of this model, emphasizing the importance of collaboration and communication among staff. She also highlighted the challenges of the warm handoff process and the need for a multidisciplinary approach. Bernetta raised a question about the involvement of churches in the model, which Daniel acknowledged as an area for improvement. Daniel also discussed the implementation of the changing pathways model in various healthcare settings, including Rushford, Hartford Hospital, and Middlesex Hospital. He emphasized the importance of understanding the collection of data for withdrawal management and inpatient psychiatry.

Medication Adherence in Opioid Recovery

Paulo discussed the role and impact of medications for opioid use disorders in the initial phase of recovery. He presented data on adherence to medication for opioid use disorders among Husky Health members, showing that those who started medication during their inpatient stay were three times more likely to remain adherent after discharge. He also highlighted the importance of adherence, noting that it led to a 48% reduction in subsequent episodes of withdrawal management, a 58% reduction in average visits to emergency departments for behavioral health reasons, a 25% reduction in inpatient days, and a 79% reduction in the rate of overdose. Furthermore, he presented data on readmission rates, showing that those who initiated medication during their inpatient stay had a lower risk of readmission within 7 and 30 days of discharge.

Transition to Sustainability and Expansion

Daniel discussed the transition from the pilot phase to the sustainability phase of their model, emphasizing the continued engagement with providers and the expansion to emergency departments. He also highlighted the importance of peer connections and the role of the peer to use their connections to expedite the referral process. Daniel acknowledged the challenges of working in emergency departments, where things move quickly and there's limited time. He also mentioned the ongoing activities such as system enhancement meetings, data sharing with providers, and staff training. Rob confirmed that all residential SUD providers are in compliance with the 1115 demonstration, which requires them to either provide MOUD or be partnered with a community provider. Sabrina asked about the number of individuals initiating medication-assisted treatment in residential settings, to which Daniel responded that the volume of members initiated over time is collected, but it can fluctuate due to staff turnover and training needs.

Cultural Shift in Substance Use Disorder

Paulo discussed the cultural shift in the approach to substance use disorder recovery, emphasizing the importance of personal communication and mindset change. He highlighted the transformation from traditional inpatient treatment to a more holistic approach incorporating medication-assisted treatment. Kelly and Dr. Ece Tek further discussed the challenges and potential benefits of this new approach, including the need for more data and the potential for relapse. They also touched on the importance of support systems, such as 12-step programs, and the need for a more comprehensive approach to recovery.

Addressing Detox Runs and Support Needs

Ece discussed the feedback received from auditors regarding the detox runs, highlighting that participants were not ready to talk due to their withdrawal symptoms. Kelly agreed with this

feedback. Mary shared her experience of working with individuals over time, asking open-ended questions to understand their needs and providing targeted resources. She emphasized the importance of being available to talk when individuals are ready. Sabrina discussed the potential for changing pathways, particularly in medication-assisted treatment, and the need for long-term sustainability plans for peer support efforts. She also highlighted the importance of involving churches and community health workers in these efforts. The committee agreed to continue pushing for these changes.

2025 Adult Equality Access Policy

Sabrina proposed a 2025 Adult Quality, Access & Policy Committee schedule, which includes six meetings per year. The committee will meet every other month, with two data points presented annually or semi-annually. The first meeting in January will focus on the annual Medicaid membership data, while the March and May meetings will focus on understanding the adult outpatient population and provider network. The July meeting will discuss the Medicaid 1115 Substance Abuse Waiver, and the September meeting will present a utilization report. The November meeting will be open for other issues or concerns. Kelly suggested inviting legislators to the March and May meetings to understand the importance of the rate study. Brenetta Henry suggested that the committee should cut across sectors to get a comprehensive understanding of the issues. Sabrina agreed to connect with other subcommittee chairs to coordinate the presentations more efficiently. The next meeting is scheduled for January 14, 2025.