



***Behavioral Health Partnership
Oversight Council
Coordination of Care Committee
Council on Medical Assistance Oversight
Quality & Access***

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The Committee will work with the Departments of Social Services, Children and Families, and Mental Health and Addiction Services, and the administrative services organizations that administer medical, behavioral health, dental and non-emergency transportation, to identify and monitor key issues that may impact whether individuals and families in the HUSKY Health program and receive person-centered coordinated services. The Committee and its partners, along with parent and community input, will seek to ensure that participants in the HUSKY Health program and receive behavioral health care that is coordinated with their medical (primary and specialty care), dental, pharmacy, and transportation services.

Co-Chairs: Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Sabra Mayo and Kelly Phenix
MAPOC & BHPOC Staff: David Kaplan

**Wednesday, January 27, 2021
1:00 PM – 3:00 PM
Via Zoom (hosted by Beacon Health Options)**

Present on call:

Co-Chairs: Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Kelly Phenix and Sabra Mayo

Other participants: Jo Allen ((Beacon), Lois Berkowitz (DCG), Joshua Flores, Ellen Gemski (YNHH), Jacky Gibbs (Veyo), Brenetta Henry, Bill Halsey (DSS), Irvin Jennings (Family and Children's Aid), Yvonne Jones (Beacon), Miriam Kluger (CT State Auditors), Casey Larkin (Veyo), Rebecca Lyon, Ellen Mathis, Quiana Mayo, Sabra Mayo, Linda Pierce (CHN), Olivia Puckett (CT State Auditors), Akriti Rai (Veyo), Trevor Howard Ramsey, Robert Reed (YNHH), Bonnie Roswig (Center for Children's Advocacy), Kristie Scott (Perception Programs), Erika Sharillo (Beacon), Benita Toussaint, Mark Vanacore (DMHAS), Rod Winstead (DSS), and Keri Lloyd (DSS)

1. Introductions and Announcements

Co-Chair Janine Sullivan-Wiley convened the meeting at 1:03 PM as a Zoom meeting, advising that the meeting was being recorded. All were asked to introduce themselves.

Co-Chair Kelly Phenix asked Co-Chairs Janine Sullivan-Wiley and Sabra Mayo if they would be able to make a presentation about this committee to the CFAC group. The date was clarified as March 11th. Janine was able to do this; Sabra will check her availability.

2. Update on CFAC:

This report was moved up in the agenda as Brenetta Henry had to leave the meeting early. A series of presentations are being made at the CFAC meetings to inform the members about the workings of the Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council and its committees. There was already an overview of the BHP-OC; in February will be one about the Youth Child/Adolescent Quality, Access and Policy Committee; in March will be the Coordination of Care/Quality Access Committee.

The iCAN conference planning is underway. It will be all virtual. The title is “A Brighter Future- Enhancing the Vision of True Partnership....Breaking Through Racial Injustices.”

3. Update on NEMT and Tele-medicine during the COVID Pandemic - Bill Halsey (DSS), Jacky Gibs and Akriti Rai (Veyo)



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EMT-Update.pptx

Bill Halsey (DSS) began the presentation going through the first PowerPoint, “Non-emergency Medical Transportation Update - Department of Social Services - January 27, 2021”, with Jacky Gibs of Veyo then picking it up. At the conclusion, the following questions, answers and comments were made:

- Brenetta Henry noted that while the report indicates that, per the auditors, Veyo is now in “compliance,” she continues to hear complaints from members, and wanted to know where the data is from that indicates these improvements. Bill responded with how the data is collected.
- DSS has backed off on sanctions during the public health emergency.
- DSS is following a surge strategy.
- The auditors urged that DSS never transition any NEMT vendor in mid-winter. DSS has agreed that this is a good approach. Thus the new procurement process is for DSS to issue the RFP in the spring of 2021 and initiate the new contract on April 1, 2022.
- The presentation noted that the original Veyo contract started on January 1, 2018 and ended on December 31, 2020. They received approval from OPM to amend the contract due to the public health emergency with a 30-day extension effective from February 1, 2021 through March 31, 2022. The amendments include that the Call Center staffing must be 50% in CT; clarification of financial terms and added flexibility due to pandemic (e.g. multi-load, masks, specialized needs).
- Brenetta strongly advocated for having both public hearings and consumer representation on the decision-making committee for the new contract. Bill noted that DSS is trying to use all available information in the development of the new contract but noted the challenge of involving the public without upsetting the integrity of the process. Bonnie commented that last time there was a process for what the RFP should include.
- Regarding issues with the complaint process, Bill noted that Jacky will walk people through the complaint process, which must be used to solve the problems. Brenetta suggested having a professional to walk people through the complaint process. Bonnie emphasized the importance of advising everyone of any changes made in the process; Bill agreed.

- Co-Chair Kelly Phenix had questions about several things, with clarifications as follows:
 - o Bill clarified some of the audit findings where DSS did not agree with them.
 - o Regarding ages for traveling alone: Age 16 and above can travel alone; 12-15 can travel alone if DSS has the appropriate parent/guardian form; under 12 there must be an escort.
 - o NEMT cannot transport a child from school to home even if they have a telehealth clinical appointment at home.
 - o Reasons why a driver might be removed include a suspended license.
 - o Veyo cannot be used for picking up prescriptions. Linda Pierce noted that this restriction long predates Veyo.
- Bonnie Roswig asked about contract and administrative fees. In 2019 there was an increase based on call center volume which was dramatically more than the numbers in the original bid.

Bill's presentation was followed by one from Veyo.

Veyo: NEMT Updates: Jacky Gib of Veyo



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Jacky Gib began their 25-page PowerPoint presentation, noting that she was happy to be at this meeting. She was joined for certain sections by Akriti Rai, also of Veyo. Some of the points raised during her presentation included:

- They meet with DSS every week.
- Veyo is working with DSS to finalize the annual reconciliation, with an approximately \$15M surplus to be returned, largely due to the reduction in trips because of the pandemic.
- Veyo has completed 36 of the 43 audit recommendations that pertained to Veyo and is working on the other seven.
- DSS is provided with quarterly reports about their on-time performance.
- She clarified that people asked for ID are simply asked to give their name.
- Akriti Rai noted that all their provider corrective actions were put on hold since the pandemic, except for on-time which they resumed in June. They also added an incentive program.
- Co-Chair Janine raised a concern about Veyo using the same number to file a complaint as to get services which could make some people fear retaliation and suggested an impartial third party would seem more likely to get accurate data. This was also an audit recommendation. Linda later added that on the medical side they can take a track and trend only complaint so the provider can't see who made the complaint so there is no question of retribution. It was again suggested that there be a designated person to help people make complaints.
- Janine also noted that the on-time performance is about 91%; that represents a lot of missed or late trips, and their contract standard is for 95%. Other ASOs often exceed their standards.
- Jacky resumed the presentation describing their technology innovations including text messages to clients. In response to questions Linda Pierce clarified that this would not pose any problems to clients with state-issued trac phones. They have unlimited texts, but not call minutes or data so this should help consumers.
- There is a special COVID fleet that can transport people who are COVID positive, but this is not yet available in all parts of the state.

- Co-Chair Sabra Mayo asked and it was clarified that the new Visa transit cards are automatically loaded when trips are booked and can *only* be used for trips booked into the system. Veyo requires 48 hours to add trips. In case of an emergency, Veyo should be able to make an accommodation if called by the provider.
Linda asked about using those cards for mileage reimbursement; Bill said they have begun discussions about that within DSS. They will see how the pilot goes.

4. Continued Discussion: Telemedicine during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Impact and Accessing Services

Bill Halsey (DSS) reported that telemedicine continues to go well for audio only as well as audio+visual. However, the audio only mode is highly dependent on the health emergency designation. DSS has brought the positive benefits of the audio only to CMS. Telehealth is likely to expand.

Representative Steinberg expressed the appreciation of the legislators for keeping them informed about the benefits of tele-medicine. Three committees are expected to raise bills regarding the use of telehealth in Connecticut and invited all who are involved to testify on them. In Public Health it is still a concept bill. He expected there to be informational forums in the Public Health Committee, possibly February 8th or 10th. Janine volunteered to gather the commentary from this committee and get that to Rep. Steinberg.

NOTE: Due to the importance of the discussion about NEMT and the presence of Veyo and the auditors at the meeting, it was agreed to continue the discussion and defer other items to the March meeting.

5. Continued discussion about Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Healthcare: Deferred to the March meeting.

6. Update on the Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council meetings: Deferred to the March meeting.

7. Guest: Brad Richards, MD, new Chief Medical Officer for DSS: Dr. Richards was unable to make this meeting. Deferred to the March meeting.

8. Old Business/Announcements: none

All were thanked for their presence and participation, including the state auditor staff.

The Meeting was adjourned at 3:02 PM upon a motion by Sabra, seconded by Kelly.

Next Meeting: 1:00 PM, **Wednesday**, March 24, 2021 via Zoom