



Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council

Legislative Office Building Room 3000, Hartford CT 06106
(860) 240-0346 Info Line (860) 240-8329 FAX (860) 240-5306

www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC

Co-Chairs: Rep. Mike Demicco, Pat Rehmer & Beresford Wilson

Meeting Summary: January 10, 2018

1E LOB

Next Meeting is February 14, 2018 @ 2 PM in 1E LOB

Attendees: Representative Mike Demicco (Co-Chair), Pat Rehmer (Co-Chair), Paul Acker, Alyse Chin (DMHAS), Terri DiPietro, Dr. Frank Fortunati, Jr., Dr. Steven Girelli, William Halsey (DSS), Dr. Charles Herrick, Jill Holmes-Brown, Susan Kelley, Mickey Kramer (OCA), Judith Meyers, Dr. Sabooh Mubbashar, Maureen O'Neill-Davis, Kelly Phenix, Charlene Russell-Tucker (SDE), Dr. Stephney Springer (DCF), Representative Jonathan Steinberg, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Lori Szczygiel (Beacon), Cindy Theran (Jud), Meryl Tom (DPH), Dr. Jeff Vanderploeg, Susan Walkama, Rod Winstead (DSS), Valerie Wyzykowski (OHA), and Dr. Ben Zigun

BHP OC Administration

Co-Chair Pat Rehmer convened the meeting at 2:03 PM, and introductions were made. Next, Pat introduced a new part of the Council meeting by announcing that at the beginning of every Council meeting under Administration; there will be allotted five (5) minutes for public comment from the audience. Depending on the number of people wishing to speak, time will be limited for each individual comment. Pat asked audience members if they had any comments and hearing none, she went on with the agenda items and asked Council Members for a motion to accept the December 2018 summary. Co-Chair Representative Mike Demicco made the motion and was seconded by Judith Meyers. All voted to accept the December summary as written with no nays or abstentions.

Pat then raised the next agenda item on the new Administrative Organization (ASO) recently contracted to oversee **Non-Medical Emergency Transportation (NEMT)** for Medicaid. As of January 1, 2018, Veyo, Transit Inc. of Glendale, Arizona took over NEMT services from outgoing ASO, Logisticare. Plans were put into place with a new call center telephone number distributed in early December for appointments for rides made after the first of the year. In the twelve days since Veyo took charge of NEMT, many consumers, providers, and hospitals have had multiple transportation issues, some of which could have been life threatening.

Janine Sullivan-Wiley was the first to speak. She said that there was no good news from the beginning of the first of the year. A patient who needed dialysis was not picked up and then needed to be hospitalized. Terri DiPietro from Middlesex Hospital asked if the new contract

included financial penalties for not getting patients picked up. She said that people are getting so agitated and so upset because they have not been picked up from the hospital that another day of hospitalization was needed. Pat Rehmer was told by staff at Rushford that patients would have no appointments for rides until the end of the week because their paperwork was not yet transferred. Janine continued that many clients have had a least a 90-minute wait on hold when they have called for a ride. She suggested that appointments for rides should be available to be made on-line too. Both Pat and Terri stated that families are not being transported for family sessions and that family needs rides for hospital visits to see children and that children cannot be transported alone. Representative Jonathan Steinberg said that there needs to be support for Veyo with an opportunity to prove themselves and that transition is always difficult. He asked to give the company a short period of time to get the job done and it will be a manifestly better job but still have oversight. Kelly Phenix said that the prior company that had the contract had an oversight committee but it has been disbanded. It was called the Quality Assurance Committee of NEMT. It was composed of patients, healthcare providers, and transportation providers and it met monthly. Rod Winstead (DSS) said that it was never an oversight body but a part of the Logisticare contract. He has proposed that the joint BHPOC/MAPOC Coordination of Care/Quality Access Committee be the oversight committee for NEMT services. Kelly and Janine both said that committee cannot alone have oversight for NEMT services. Bill Halsey (DSS) commented on the issues raised and stated that the department is acutely aware of cases on an individual basis. DSS is not satisfied with the performance to date but there is a period of time for the transition and it is quickly coming to an end. He continued by saying that multi-loading of patients for appointments cannot be done if siblings and parents are transported in the same vehicle. It is not an efficient delivery of NEMT services but in the best interest of the child is to transport family in that treatment of the child. Then the department will need to reach out to CMS and have another dialog on this concern. He continued saying that an *escalation process* has been put into place for clients who have chemotherapy and dialysis appointments. Pat said that mental health is a chronic disease too and addiction could be a life threatening issue and asked if behavioral health appointments could be considered too for the escalation process.

Rod Winstead (DSS) issued the following statement:

- Veyo is currently on Day 10 of the statewide NEMT contract
- Both the Department and Veyo are aware of issues such as long telephone wait times, late pick-ups, no pick-ups and no return rides and others
- Veyo is addressing these issues by reaching out to members and facilities, increasing the number of call center staff, increasing the number of transportation providers available, improving their system of verifying “standing orders”, creation of a facility prompt on their phone line and exploring a separate facility telephone number, procedure for escalating life sustaining transportation requests such as dialysis and chemo
- The Department is in regular contact with Veyo throughout the day every day and looking at all processes to get to the root causes
- The Department expects to see significant weekly improvement from Veyo

Janine asked if DSS could supply a complaint number and on-line address to register complaints for non-compliance for rides. Rod later supplied that info: The email for the quality assurance team is: ctqa@veyo.com<<mailto:ctqa@veyo.com>

The telephone number is: 1-855-478-7350

The Website address is: CT.RIDEWITHVEYO.COM

Co-Chair Pat Rehmer next brought up the agenda item of an introduction to a conversation at the Statewide Data Integration Team meeting with Beacon Health Options Medicaid datasets. She said that this would be further discussed at the February 2018 meeting.

Action Items

None

Connecticut Behavioral Health Partnership Agency Reports:

Department of Social Services-Bill Halsey

State Budget Update

Representative Jonathan Steinberg reported that the Legislature recently met in Special Session to mitigate the cuts in expenditure for the Medicare Savings Program (MSP) which many seniors and Medicaid recipients in the state depend upon for their supplemental medical expenses. He said the process was only delayed. The State is expecting revenue of \$900 million through state income taxes but only a small percentage of about 10% to 15% can be applied to this year's budget for MSP relief. The rest will go into the "Rainy Day Fund" or for next year's budget. It is only short-term relief for about 100,000 people who still face removal from the program. Legislators still need to resolve this issue during the upcoming Session. (Editor's Note: As of January 17, 2018, the Governor vetoed the bill and the program will still encounter cuts as of March 1, 2018, however, the Legislature has called itself back for Special session on January 31, 2018 to override the Governor's veto.)

Without Congressional renewal, Bill Halsey announced that the HUSKY B (Children's Health Insurance Program –CHIP) program can only be extended through the end of February 28, 2018.

Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services –Alyse Chin

Alyse Chin reported that DMHAS had a reduction of \$20.1 million. The 5% cut to providers totaled \$13.1 million. Providers submitted 5% reduction plans that were reviewed, approved, and have been implemented. Target cuts totaled \$5.2 million, which includes senior services rebid. Regional Action Councils (RACs) and Regional Mental Health Boards are funded through 2/28/2018. Annual funding for the newly to be established Regional Behavioral Health Action Organizations will be \$1,153,020. Award letters have gone out to the 5 successful RFP applicants with the right to negotiate a contract with DMHAS. The projected go-live date for these RBHAO is now March 1, 2018.

Janine Sullivan-Wiley stated that eighteen (18) organizations have been down sized to five (5) but the instructional responsibilities are still intact with very little money being provided for funding. She, however, supported integration of BH services and Substance Abuse disorders being treated together in an effective manner and hailed it as a wonderful opportunity.

Department of Children and Families – Dr. Stephney Springer

DCF is maintaining the current set of services. However as the Juvenile Justice transfer process is underway it is unclear what impact this transfer will have on behavioral health services that have been made available to not only JJ involved youth but youth who would otherwise be at risk for JJ involvement which include some funding for the MDFT network, MST-TAY, JOTLAB, ACRA and FFT. We hope to have information in the upcoming weeks as the conversations with Judicial continue.

Judicial Branch – Cynthia Theran

Cynthia Theran said that she would have a report for next month's meeting.

Committee Reports:

Coordination of Care: - Rep. Jonathan Steinberg, Co-Chair, Janine Sullivan-Wiley, Co-Chair, Kelly Phenix, Co-Chair, Benita Toussaint, Co-Chair

Janine Sullivan-Wiley reported the next meeting will be January 24, 2018 at 1:00 PM in 1D LOB. The main agenda item will be NEMT and the transfer of ASO services to Veyo but the March meeting is slated for a formal report of NEMT services.

Child/Adolescent Quality, Access & Policy: – Steve Girelli and Jeff Vanderploeg, Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Jeff Vanderploeg reported that there was no December meeting. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, January 17, 2018, 2:00 PM at Beacon Health Options with a presentation on Emerging Adults. (Editor's Note: The meeting was canceled due to inclement weather- the presentation was postponed until the February 21, 2018 meeting.)

Adult Quality, Access & Policy: -Heather Gate, Chair

With the absence of Chair Heather Gates, Pat Rehmer reported that the January meeting was canceled and the next meeting is scheduled for February 13, 2018 at 3:00 PM at the CT Community Non-Profit Alliance office, 35 Cold Spring Road, #522, Rocky Hill, CT.

Operations: – Susan Walkama and Terri DiPietro, Co-Chairs

Co-Chair Terri DiPietro said that there was a meeting this month to discuss Level of Care (LOC) Guidelines as developed by the Clinical Care Management Team. The guidelines were reviewed and members of the Operations Committee reviewed the guidelines for Autism Services resulting in no recommended changes for Autism Services. Practices and standards have been in place since inception. An area of concern is that there are still about a hundred identified clients still waiting for services. The Council needs to approve these guidelines and this will be the Action Item for the February meeting. Members are advised and urged to review them before the February meeting date. For the full text and summary of these guidelines- go to the Operations Committee page at: www.cga.ct.gov/ph/BHPOC

Dr. Steve Girelli asked what the trajectory of the waiting list is for Autism Services. Bill Halsey (DSS) said that there are a number of factors that are holding up services related to paperwork and preliminary testing. Lori Szczygiel said that Beacon can provide a presentation on Autism Services for the March BHPOC meeting. Co-Chair Pat Rehmer asked about oversight for at risk adolescents in hospital emergency departments and mentioned a by-pass program. Maureen O'Neill-Davis said of autistic kids who are grown and have special needs, when they go to the EDs, are not getting BH services and this is essentially- Abandonment. It resembles a neglect case but is actually an unmet BH case. Mickey Kramer (OCA) said that the MAPOC Work Group on Developmental Disabilities is having a meeting related to this on February 9, 2018 at 1:00 PM in 1A LOB. Anyone interested is invited to attend. She also suggested that Sarah Eagan, the State Child Advocate could come and talk to the Council or to the Child/Adolescent Quality, Access & Policy Committee on the issue of kids falling through the cracks with high need/high costs.

The next Operation Committee meeting will be on Friday, March 6, 2018 at 2:30 PM in the Hartford Conference Room (third floor) at Beacon Health Options in Rocky Hill, CT.

BHP Consumer Family Advisory Council (CFAC) Update- Kelly Phenix

Kelly Phenix said that CFAC is really a built-in focus group- all members, grandparents, parents and youth are all HUSKY members. She reported that for the December meeting, Bert Plant (Beacon) presented a report on Health Equity initiatives and Maureen Reault (DSS) presented a HUSKY benefits and services overview. On January 11, 2018, there will be a field trip to the LOB to familiarize members with the legislature. They are meeting in 1D from 10:00 AM to 12:00 PM. All are welcome and are encouraged to attend to address the CFAC members. She then brought up the subject of adults who are addicted on long-term pain opiates. She referenced a televised new report that was recently aired. The link is below.

https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.nbcnews.com/health/health-news/walks-not-pills-clinic-gives-hope-patients-chronic-pain-n835091&sa=U&ved=0ahUKEwig4JenquDYAhVG1IMKHSMMLC_QQFggFMAA&client=internal-uds-cse&cx=016208984708783791344:6jwjxpc8ik&usg=AOvVaw2alghJIVsrxDVjt26UxKbV

This deals with a California Pain Management Rehab Pilot Clinic program and long-term prescription opioid use for older people.

New Business/Meeting Announcement/Adjournment

Co-Chair Pat Rehmer asked for any other announcements or new business. Judith Meyers is concerned with the new changes in the Birth to Three program. Bill Halsey suggests that concerns with this program should go to the Office of Early Childhood (OEC). Charlene Russell-Tucker (SDE) reported that due to hurricanes, there are currently 1924 students from Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands now registered in schools in the cities of Hartford, Waterbury, New Britain, Bridgeport, New Haven, and Meriden. All students who are identified with special needs are eligible for support and services. Susan Kelley brought up Early Periodic

Screening Diagnosis Screening and its importance to children's behavioral health evaluation. Bill said that DSS Medical Homes are paying for performance screening. Jill Holmes-Brown said that they do not get paid if they are not screening and so the School Based Health Centers (SBHCs) are already doing screening. Judith also announced the Early Childhood Mental Health Development done by CHDI is approaching ten years of study. She said the Council should think about if it has a role in this and where does this fit into the Council's oversight?

Hearing nothing else, Pat announced the next meeting will be on February 14, 2018 at 2:00 PM in 1E LOB and asked for a motion to adjourn. Co-Chair Representative Mike Demicco made the motion and seconded by Dr. Steve Girelli. Pat then adjourned the meeting at 3:59 PM.

Next Meeting: Wednesday, February 14, 2018 @ 2:00 PM 1E LOB