

Meeting Summary for Behavioral Health Partnership Oversight Council (BHPOC) Zoom Meeting

Jan 08, 2025 01:53 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) ID: 933 7642 7330

Quick recap

The meeting focused on the progress and future plans of the integrated care for kids project, "Embrace New Haven," which is supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The discussion also covered the importance of community-based work, care coordination, and place-based work, as well as the development and implementation of a health journey program for children in Connecticut. Lastly, the meeting touched on the need for systemic changes to fund intensive care coordination, the approval of a certified community behavioral health clinic planning grant, and the release of one-time ARPA-funded provider payments.

Next steps

Executive Committee to finalize and send letter to Committees of Cognizance regarding need to increase behavioral health rates to recommended level in rate study

Council members to advocate for Medicaid rate increases with their respective organizations and legislators

Rob Haswell (DMHAS) to follow up with chairs to identify data points for reporting on psychiatric inpatient unit wait lists

Rob to look into when DMHAS will release their ARPA funds

Child and Adolescent Quality Access and Policy Committee to work on getting DPH to present utilization data for non-Medicaid members at an upcoming meeting

DSS to provide more information on next steps for CCBHC planning grant at next Operations Committee meeting

Executive Committee to consider altering the agenda to accommodate Tammy's Venenga's schedule constraints

Co-Chair Terry DiPietro to bring a copy of the open appointments to the next CFAC meeting to discuss filling vacant positions

State agency partners to meet and work out next steps for the CCBHC planning grant

Terri and Steve Girelli to review the process for filling legislative appointed seats

All attendees to prepare for the March 12th meeting, where state partners will discuss implications of the Governor's budget proposal

Yvonne Jones to update the agenda for the upcoming Wednesday meeting to include discussion on legislative appointed seats

All council members to consider potential candidates for open seats on the council

Summary

Integrated Care for Kids Update

There was a full agenda and that Spanish translation services were available, thanks to Carlos Blanco. Terri reminded everyone to mute themselves if they weren't speaking. Alice and her team were set to provide an update on the integrated care for kids, an alternative payment model for intensive care coordination, in partnership with the State of Connecticut and the Center for Medicaid and Medicare Services. The meeting also included a discussion about a letter that was being prepared, with Janine Sullivan-Wiley and Co-Chair Howard Drescher working on it. The conversation ended with Alice preparing to present on the integrated care for kids.

Connecticut Inc. Project Update

Alice provided an update on the Connecticut Inc. Project, "Embrace New Haven," which is supported by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services. The project is one of seven in the country implementing a similar integrated care for kids project. Clifford Beers Community Care Center is a key partner in the project. The project's core values include community-based work, care coordination, and place-based work. The project has expanded to include all New Haven, opening up opportunities for more providers to participate. The project has also developed an electronic health record and a platform for families to fill out a health journey assessment. The project is focused on quality improvement and scaling within New Haven.

Family Support and Community Engagement

In the meeting, Alice discussed the importance of understanding the strengths of families and the community in providing support. She emphasized the need for local community-driven systems and the role of care management in addressing the needs of families. Marisella Serrano shared her work with a family, focusing on gaining trust and addressing the challenges faced by the family, including the risk of expulsion of their 14-year-old son, Jose, from school. Alice also highlighted the need for economic stability and the use of flex funds to address immediate problems. Manuel discussed the importance of anti-racist and trauma-informed practices in their work, emphasizing the value of lived experiences and community engagement. He also highlighted the ease of receiving health journeys through their web-based system.

Health Journey Program for Children

Alice and her team discussed the development and implementation of a health journey program for children in Connecticut. The program, funded by Medicaid and the Connecticut Health Foundation, aims to provide comprehensive care to children and their families. The team has worked closely with community-based organizations to develop a workforce and training modules for intensive care coordinators. They have also established partnerships with DCF and the Connecticut Hospital Association to provide additional resources and support. The program has shown promising results, with families reporting improvements in their children's mental health and well-being. The team is now focusing on expanding the program to other regions in Connecticut and exploring sustainability funding options. The discussion also highlighted the importance of community-based activities and services in supporting children's mental health and well-being.

Building Relationships and Advocating for Change

The transcript discusses the importance of building relationships with families to understand the underlying needs and provide appropriate support. Maricella has been working with a member named Jose and his grandmother to address behavioral issues and connect them with resources. Yolanda emphasizes the need to help the family develop financial support and find activities that align with Jose's interests. Alice highlights the need for systemic changes to fund this type of intensive care coordination. The group also discusses sending a letter advocating for increased Medicaid reimbursement rates for outpatient behavioral health services to ensure access to high-quality care. The letter outlines the detrimental impacts of low reimbursement rates, including provider closures, staffing shortages, longer wait times, and poorer health outcomes. The council votes to approve finalizing and sending the letter.

DSS, ASAM, and ARPA Updates

Fatmata William announces that DSS has received approval for a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) planning grant and will provide more details by the January 31st deadline. She also mentions that the second phase of a rate study has been completed.

and will be presented at an upcoming meeting. Rob from DMAS provides an update on the final phase of ASAM certification monitoring for hospital outpatient facilities and federally qualified health centers as part of the 1115 demonstration. Stephney states that DCF will be releasing one-time ARPA-funded provider payments in the next couple of weeks. Heather reports that the Operations Committee is pleased about the CCBHC planning grant and received an update on the 1115 waiver implementation, including discussions around bed capacity, authorization processes, and improved program quality from the rate increases. The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Committee reviewed recommendations, with a focus on increasing rates to match a six-state study to ensure equal access to quality care reflecting the community.