

Meeting Summary for BHPOC Zoom Meeting

May 14, 2025 01:57 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada) ID: 912 4829 4128

Quick recap

The meeting focused on reviewing and approving updated Level of Care Guidelines for Autism Spectrum Services, discussing potential cuts to Medicaid services, and the ongoing debate about Medicaid policy changes. The team also discussed the potential impact of federal budget cuts on healthcare services, particularly for the expansion population, and the need for vigilance in advocating for vulnerable populations. Lastly, the meeting covered updates on various initiatives, including the behavioral health access and gaps presentation, changes to substance use residential rates, and the upcoming 10th anniversary of the artist collective.

Next steps

David Kaplan to explore options for holding in-person Council meetings a couple times a year.
Co-Chair Terri DiPietro to reach out to Dr. Stephney Springer about arranging a presentation on urgent care centers for the June or August Council meeting.

David to post the outpatient utilization, access, and gap presentation on the website.

Heather to continue advocating for support of the outpatient behavioral health system.

David to review and edit AI-generated meeting transcripts before posting.

Miss Neva to provide more information on the Artist Collective's 10th year celebration on September 25th.

CFAC to distribute its first volume newsletter to Husky Health members.

Council members to look out for communication from David Kaplan about upcoming community meetings on mental health and recovery journeys.

Council members to register for the Husky Health Program Benefits and Services community meetings.

Summary

Autism Services Level of Care Guidelines

In the meeting, Co-Terri DiPietro welcomed everyone and introduced the new members, Reverend Robin Anderson and Deena Tampi. The main agenda was to review and approve the updated Level of Care Guidelines for Autism Services. Heather Gates presented the changes, which included updates to the behavior assessment, treatment plan development, and program book. The group intervention service was also discussed. After Heather's presentation, Janine Sullivan-Wiley expressed her appreciation for the committee's work on the guidelines. Heather then made a motion to approve the guidelines, which was passed by the council members. The conversation ended with an update from Bill Halsey on potential cuts to Medicaid services in the state.

Medicaid Scenarios and State Budget Impact

In the meeting, Bill Halsey (DSS) presented various scenarios related to Medicaid, including reducing the federal match for the expansion population, removing the federal match minimum, and reducing the provider tax. He also discussed the potential impact of these changes on the state budget and the number of members affected. The conversation ended with a discussion on the potential effects of work requirements on Medicaid recipients.

Medicaid Policy Changes and Fiscal Impact

Bill discussed the ongoing debate about Medicaid policy changes, including work requirements, more frequent eligibility checks, and potential cost-sharing for the expansion

population. He mentioned that the proposal to reduce the state's match from 90% to 80% for non-citizen healthcare is still in play. Bill also noted that the expansion population Federal match reduction, lowering the floor, and per capita or block granting Medicaid appear to be off the table. The team is currently working to understand the fiscal impact of these changes on the state and Medicaid, before formulating a plan.

Federal Budget Cuts Impact Healthcare Services

The team discussed the potential impact of federal budget cuts on healthcare services, particularly for the expansion population. They expressed concerns about the administrative load and the potential for reduced direct care spending. The team also discussed the potential effects of these cuts on the behavioral health system and the need for vigilance in advocating for the needs of vulnerable populations. They acknowledged the efforts of the federal and state delegations to track these changes and expressed hope for a more positive outcome.

RFPs and Medical Recovery House

In the meeting, Terri expressed gratitude to Bill for his contributions and to Fatmata Williams for her work. Rob Haswell (DMHAS) announced two new RFPs for a medical recovery house and a harm reduction center in Bridgeport. He also mentioned the final phase of provisional certification for the 1115 demonstration. Janine inquired about the medical recovery house, and Rob confirmed it would be open to people from across the state. Janine also asked about the impact of budget cuts on these initiatives, to which Rob responded that there was currently funding available. Terri suggested the potential for a psychiatric medical recovery house. Dr. Stephney Springer from the Department of Children and Families (DCF) mentioned that the preliminary data for the urgent care centers was very positive, and they were considering a presentation for the Council.

Behavioral Health Access and Gaps

Kelly Phenix reported on the behavioral health access and gaps presentation from Carelon, which included input from four providers. The discussion highlighted challenges in the northeast and northwest regions, including the loss of a major behavioral health provider and transportation issues. The meeting also touched on the administrative burden on providers due to regulation and documentation. Heather discussed the changes to substance use residential rates, which will be effective from July 1, and the introduction of a new level of care for adolescent substance use. She also expressed concerns about the neglect of the outpatient system and the need for more support.

Meeting Summary: Care Coordinators and AI

In the meeting, Terri expressed gratitude to Heather for her report and mentioned that Alice Forrester couldn't attend due to a scheduling conflict. David clarified that the Committee on DEI in BH had a meeting about care coordinators and more details would be determined. Terri also addressed concerns about using AI for transcription of minutes, stating that they are reviewed before being posted and David takes supplemental notes to fix any issues. Neva Caldwell updated the team about the upcoming 10th anniversary of the iCAN Conference at the Artist Collective and the debut of the CFAC Newsletter. Reverend Anderson, newly appointed by Senator Matt Lesser, introduced herself to the council. The next meeting was scheduled for June 11, 2025 at 2 PM via Zoom.