

Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services Advisory Board

MINUTES	SEPTEMBER 27, 2021	7:00 P.M.	724 PHILLIPS STREET STROUDSBURG, PA 18360
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A meeting of the Carbon-Monroe-Pike Mental Health and Developmental Services Advisory Board was convened on this date at 7:00 p.m. in the MH & DS Administrative Conference Room at 724 Phillips Street, Suite 202, Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania and via GoToMeeting/conference call.

MEETING CALLED BY	Dr. Samuel Dolgopol, Chair & Tina L. Clymer, Administrator
CHAIR	Dr. Samuel Dolgopol
RECORDING SECRETARY	Beth Bingaman-Lutz and Heather Ficzeko
PRESENTERS	Jeff Hartzell, HealthChoices Coordinator
BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT	Ms. Amy Kirkwood Albert, Ms. Susan Barradale, Dr. Laurene Clossey, Dr. Samuel Dolgopol, Ms. Dorothy Eberts, Commissioner John Moyer, Commissioner Chris Lukasevich, , Ms. Jeannemarie Passaro, Mr. Eugene Pelletreau, and Ms. Elizabeth Torkildsen
BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT	Ms. Nellie Gordon, Ms. Suzanne McCool, and Commissioner Guccini
STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT	Kathleen Peterson, Jeff Hartzell

AGENDA TOPICS

PRESENTATION	HealthChoices Update	Jeff Hartzell HealthChoices Coordinator CMP HealthChoices
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HealthChoices has been providing Alternative Payment Arrangements (APA) to some providers throughout the pandemic to preserve the provider network and assist them in staying open and providing much needed services. These APAs are being extended until 12/31/2021 due to the new COVID variant. Overall, providers are doing a good job of delivering services. The APAs and potential losses being made are becoming less each month as the providers are starting to see a return to regular business. Mr. Hartzell is encouraged that no CMP provider has had to close their doors. The next challenge will be the network preparations and building the network to absorb the pent-up demand when things return to a more normal operation. There is a workforce deficit in behavior health and finding people to work in this field. HealthChoices is working with Community Care and the Commonwealth to look for ways to assist providers with their workforce development. They are looking at potential revenue from medical savings that might be realized at the end of this fiscal year to be used directly for interventions in the local community. They are developing a process and contract with providers to have incentive funds to enhance salaries and/or benefits, for sign-on bonuses, longevity bonuses, etc. They are also looking at how to improve access for providers as well to help them recruit people. They are also planning a learning collaborative across the state that providers can participate in to strategize to work through their workforce crisis.

Community providers deliver ambulatory services received a 12 percent increase this year for outpatient mental health and outpatient drug and alcohol services with the goal of increasing their revenue and, ultimately, increasing staff salaries. Along with this, the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) standards for health services are determined and delivered so that they are personalized to the individual. This is very specific, evidence-based outcome criteria, so an additional 10 percent was included to the drug and alcohol providers. Residential providers negotiate their rates on an annual basis, so those providers have more current rates. Community Care, as part of their ongoing contract requirements, are delivering evidence-based training to providers that might help staff stay or be attracted to a provider if they are using evidence-based practice. E.g. Parent-Child Interactional Therapy.

In some of the Intensive Behavioral Health Services (IBHS), which replaced Wrap-Around Services, we are

the leading county in the state to have those services back up and delivering services. We are paying a higher percentage for these services than any other county. With schools being open and a majority of children being back in the classroom that it is helping deliver these services. Matrix, a new provider in all three of our counties, is doing a great job with their specialty of serving children on the autism spectrum. They have a great business model, keep their overhead costs very low, and pass on the reimbursement to practitioners, which draws more practitioners to them.

With the lifting of the inability to discharge people from the Medicaid roles, we saw a slight increase in the membership. Medical Assistance termination is based on income and/or disability, and part of this workforce crisis is people who are not working may continue to qualify for benefits. If more people move into the state from New York or New Jersey, the membership may continue to climb.

ACTION ITEMS

Minutes	Motion by Eugene Pelletreau, seconded by Dr. Laurene Clossey, and carried unanimously to accept the minutes of the July 26, 2021 meeting.
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Agency Reports	Ms. Clymer welcomed Heather Ficzkco as the new Human Resources Administrative Assistant taking over the Advisory Board Meeting responsibilities as Beth Bingaman-Lutz moves to the Early Intervention Department. Ms. Clymer reviewed the Mental Health and Developmental Services' reports. She added that the agency is experiencing a lot of open positions, creating more stress for the existing employees. Staff performance is impressive across the agency due to their diligence and hard work to keep up with demands. No motion required.
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Financial Report for HealthChoices	Motion by Eugene Pelletreau, seconded by Dorothy Eberts, and carried unanimously to accept the unaudited financial statement as of August 31, 2021.
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Financial Report for MH, DS, and EI	Motion by Eugene Pelletreau, seconded by Elizabeth Torkildsen, and carried unanimously to accept the unaudited financial statement as of August 31, 2021.
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OLD BUSINESS

County Human Service Plan	Ms. Clymer reported that the state confirmed that the plan was received, but have not received any further notice. She anticipates possibly hearing an update in October.
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State Budget Status	No allocation letters have been received. Our state partners are also experiencing a staff crisis, which is possibly a reason for the delay. There has been no increase in base dollars in over 15 years and we are more than 25 percent below where we should be. These funds pay providers for people who do not have medical insurance. Base dollars are paid at the same rate as HealthChoices to eliminate any kind of inequity in people being served or chosen to be accepted by a provider. MH/DS is determining whether or not the HealthChoices increased rates can be met. Ms. Clymer asked the board members to advocate for an increase in base funds if they have an opportunity to speak to any legislators. Legislators saw a surplus in funding and question why more funds are being requested. However, that was an anomaly due to the pandemic where providers could not deliver services temporarily and; therefore, did not spend down the funds. These base funds are also essential to pay for things that Medicaid does not cover such as mental health residential; individuals with intellectual disability or early intervention issues who are not waiver eligible, do not have Medical Assistance; or need those
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	social determinants of health that cannot be covered otherwise.
Status of Grants	Four Mental Health Department grants were awarded to the agency: Assisted Outpatient Treatment (AOT); Express Care Program (walk-in crisis clinic) in Carbon County in partnership with St. Luke's Hospital and New Perspectives; expanding Mobile Crisis Services by adding the Center for Community Resources; and changing an existing residential program to provide services internally versus using community resources. There are two additional grants the agency has received: PA ECR (crisis resources) will increase mental health and substance use case management for the homeless population; and a grant for Monroe County because of the closure of White Haven and SCI retreat.
C-M-P MH/DS Advisory Board Dinner 2021	<p>Nominations were made and the board voted. After the ballots were tallied, Ms. Clymer announced the following awardees: Andrea Bajek from Community Vocational Services; Emma Furiosi who is a supervisor at MH/DS; Cheryl Berry from Fitzmaurice Community Services; and Angela Chromiak from Access Services.</p> <p>Motion by Commissioner Lukasevich, seconded by Eugene Pelletreau, and carried unanimously to award all four of these nominees.</p> <p>Ms. Clymer reported on the interest in attending the dinner in person. Sixteen people, board and staff members, have responded that they would attend in person. The awardees and a guest would also be invited to attend in person, which would result in approximately 30 people present at the dinner. Ms. Clymer asked to confirm that everyone would like to continue with the dinner to be held in person.</p> <p>Motion by Eugene Pelletreau, seconded by Commissioner Lukasevich, and carried unanimously to hold a live dinner with attendees in person.</p>
NEW BUSINESS	
Election of Board Officers 2021 Calendar	<p>The following 2022 Board positions were presented:</p> <p>Chair: Dr. Samuel Dolgopol Finance: Commissioner John Moyer Vice Chair: Mr. Eugene Pelletreau Secretary: Dr. Laurene Clossey</p> <p>All officers agreed to serve another term. Motion by Eugene Pelletreau, and seconded by Dr. Clossey to accept nominations and appoint officers by acclamation.</p>
OTHER	
Next Meeting	Tuesday, October 19, 2021
VISITORS	None
ADJOURNMENT	Motion by Elizabeth Torkildsen, seconded by Dr. Clossey, and carried unanimously to adjourn the meeting at 7:47 p.m.
APPROVED BY	<i>Tina L. Clymer, MS, LPC</i> 