



## **HealthChoices Advisory Committee Meeting NorthEast Zone**

Thursday, April 9, 2020

10:00 AM – 12:30 PM

Albright Memorial Library  
500 Vine Street  
Scranton, PA 18509

### **Meeting Agenda**

#### **10:00am Welcome & Introductions – Cinthia Acencio**

- Good morning, thank you for joining us today. We do appreciate your flexibility during this time, we do ask you when you're not speaking or asking questions to please mute your phone.

#### **10:05 am October 2019 Meeting Minutes - Tabled**

#### **10:10 am Enrollment Assistance Program Report – Teresa McDonnell**

- **Updates**
  - In light of the current situation with COVID-19, we at Pennsylvania Enrollment Services are working remotely and we are operational.
    - Currently we have five mailboxes set up to collect and return voicemail through 6pm Monday through Friday so all callers who call in through 6pm do get a return call that day.
    - We are also encouraging callers to use our website. It's very functional. They can process enrollments, plan transfers, they can leave us questions on the web complaint tab and we are responding to them.
    - We do have a skeleton crew at the office. So we are continuing to receive mail process mail enrollments and plan transfers as they are received.
    - We are also working our outbound call list to assist new eligible consumers with making their enrollment selections and our PCP selections.
    - In the new eligible packets, consumers receive we have inserted a notice informing and encouraging consumers to enroll online and making them aware that there could be a potential delay in processing their form, if they are sending in the mail. But as of right now, we have had no issues and everything is getting processed timely.
- **Data Review** – Refer to Report
  - This report looks a little different than what we typically present at the Advisory Committee Meetings. It is the same data that you've received previously, what we did is we took all of the data and decided to do an annual view of the information. Why we changed the format is because the last two years at previous April meetings we've had questions come up and even feedback from some of you in regards to



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some of you reporting a decrease in new eligible or we're seeing a decrease in members. I thought that it would might be a good time to take all of those data reports that you've received for the last few years and put that up on the screen to look at it year over year. Here's the data for the NorthEast. \*Refer to the Report.

- **2020 Webinar Series**
  - For this year's webinar series, we hosted
    - Tuesday, February 11, 2020 Property Tax Rent Rebate Program -- Alicia Gonse from the Department of Revenue.
      - Attendance: 93
      - Great feedback, attendees included representative payees, case workers, case managers, managed care organization staff, community based organization staff, consumers and families.
      - Materials from the webinar posted on our website enrollnow.net
    - Tuesday, March 24, 2020 Pennsylvania Enrollment Services, The Enrollment Process – Issac Miller, Outreach Coordinator from PA-Enrollment Assistance Program.
      - Attendance: 126
      - Closed webinar, held for staff from the HealthChoices physical health managed care organizations and behavioral health managed care organizations.
  - Upcoming Webinars:
    - Thursday, May 14, 2020 10:00am – 11:00am Vaping & Tobacco Use; Presenter: Ryan Coffman –American Lung Association/Philadelphia Department of Health
    - Wednesday, June 17, 2020 10:00am – 11:00am Tobacco Free Recovery in Behavioral HealthCare; Presenter: Ryan Coffman – American Lung Association/Philadelphia Department of Health

10:25 am DHS

- **BMCO Report – Nan Mavor**
  - Greeting- transition to remote work by the enrollment broker seamless,
  - Introduction- We have several updates based on questions and comments Ms. Mcdonnell received and of course some updates on the current COVID-19 pandemic. In response to questions about the:
  - **Pediatric Shift Care Nursing Home Health Workshop**

On January 8, 2020, DHS hosted the 3rd Quarterly Workshop. Approximately 80 stakeholders participated in the Workshop including Managed Care Organizations, Home Health Associations, DHS staff, and Behavior Health partners. This Workshop also included parent/family representatives and emphasized the importance of the family perspective to the work of this collaborative effort.

    - Speaking on behalf of OMAP, Deputy Secretary Sally Kozak's Executive Assistant, Gwen Zander reported that the Deputy Secretary's vision involves the development of regional hubs that can serve as locations that bring



together a child's entire care team and serve as a place for collaboration, knowledge sharing, and support.

- Special Assistant to Secretary Miller, Nancy Thaler discussed the current DHS initiative of assisting families of children with complex medical needs to transition their child to community care while highlighting the role of care coordination within the process.
- Individual work groups met to discuss outcomes that included the following: Drafting best practice guidelines, development of a portal for improved communications across stakeholders, standardized pediatric shift care materials (e.g. family welcome kits), recommendations for legislative changes, partnerships for workforce development, resource guides for families and caregivers, ideal state process-flow diagrams, and recommendations for HealthChoices Agreement language.
- A guest presentation from Alexandra Koloskus and Michelle Miller from the Health Care Policy & Financing Department of Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) provided a learning opportunity intended to spur discussion with a first-hand account of how another state is addressing delivery of pediatric shift care.
- At this time, we are cancelling the workshop that was scheduled for April 29, and we are cancelling all workgroup meetings and calls through the month of May. Our work is not over. We will reconvene in June, and we will do our very best to pick up where we left off. The Office of Medical Assistance Programs remains deeply committed to this initiative, but we know that we must give everyone the time that they need to address immediate patient needs. We hope that during the coming months we will be able to identify and pilot some innovative solutions based on flexibilities afforded by the federal government. We will learn from these lessons and give thought to how we can implement them systematically when we come together again this summer.
- March 27, 2020

- **Gov. Wolf: State Receives Waiver to Facilitate Greater Flexibility in Medicaid, CHIP Programs During COVID-19 Mitigation Efforts**
- Governor Tom Wolf announced that Pennsylvania, through the Department of Human Services, received approval from the federal Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to temporarily grant flexibility of requirements for providers of Medicaid and Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) to ensure availability and access to health care and public assistance programs for people who need them in light of COVID-19 mitigation efforts.
- Gov. Wolf said. "We are grateful that the federal government quickly granted us flexibility to ensure human services programs are able to make critical adjustments necessary to fighting this public health crisis."
- When the President declares a disaster or emergency under the Stafford or National Emergencies Act, this authority permits changes to Medicare, Medicaid, and the Children's Health Insurance Program to ensure the needs of people covered by these programs are met during an emergency.



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- The waiver also allows Pennsylvania flexibility to pay providers for health care services to ensure they are able to adequately respond to and adjust care in light of a public health emergency.
- The waiver allows DHS the temporary flexibility under Medicaid and, in some instances, CHIP, to:
  - Suspend Medicaid fee-for-service prior authorization requirements and extend pre-existing authorizations through the end of the public health emergency;
  - Suspend Pre-Admission Screening and Annual Resident Review (PASRR) Level I and II assessments for 30 days;
  - Extend the timeframes for beneficiaries to file an appeal;
  - Temporarily waive provider enrollment and screening requirements, including:
    - Payment of an application fee;
    - Criminal background checks and fingerprinting;
    - Site visits; and
    - State licensure, if the provider is licensed in good standing in another state.
  - Provide payment to out-of-state providers for services rendered to Pennsylvania Medicaid recipients in another state; and
  - Provide payment for facility services rendered in alternative settings.
    - The approval letter issued by CMS did not address each request that Pennsylvania included in its waiver application, the full 1135 waiver request submitted by Pennsylvania may be found [pa.gov](http://pa.gov), “Responding to COVID-19.”
- On **March 20, 2020**, a media release from the **Department of Human Services Provides Guidance Related to Employment and Training Programs and Work Requirements in Light of Governor Wolf’s mitigation guidance regarding COVID-19**
  - Secretary Miller states, “The health and safety of our clients is our number one priority, so to that end we are encouraging people who feel ill, including people who are in our employment and training programs, to stay home.”
  - We will work with you to determine how to meet your E&T requirements and needs.”
  - “No one should fear losing their benefits due to circumstances beyond their control, and we are working with our E&T providers to excuse program participants during this period.”
  - No sanctions associated with COVID-19 should take place. If a program is closed, participants will remain enrolled in the program until it reopens. E&T providers have been instructed to be flexible and offer, to the extent possible, remote additives to keep individuals actively engaged.
  - **The department is also requesting that individuals should not physically bring anything verifying their employment hours to their local county assistance offices (CAOs), continue be closed to the public.**



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- **MyCOMPASS PA, the mobile app for benefits issued by the CAO, can be used by participants to send in verifications.**
- **Additionally, forms can be faxed/emailed/mailed directly to providers or CAO.**

MEDIA CONTACT: Erin James, 717-425-7606

- Information for Providers and Participants can be access from this media release on the DHS.gov website.
- For Providers, here are a few more details from the Guidance-Employment and Training link.
- E&T participants in Pennsylvania may be impacted by COVID-19. This includes not only individuals who have reported symptoms or have tested presumptively positive for the virus, but also individuals who are caring for a family member or have been impacted by an activity and/or supportive service (such as education, childcare, transportation, employment, etc.) that has been canceled or suspended due to COVID-19.
  - If a participant has been exposed or potentially exposed to COVID-19 (or any communicable illness), the participant is responsible to contact the CAO or E&T program and make them aware of the situation and inform them if the illness is anticipated to last beyond the excused absence time. If COVID-19 related verification is provided to the E&T contractor, that information must also be shared with CAO staff so they may scan it into imaging. Once the E&T contractor has been made aware of exposure to COVID-19, they must contact the Bureau of Employment Programs (BEP) and make them aware. E&T contractor staff must also notify the CAO of potential exposure immediately. Providers must contact the PA Department of Health at 1-877-PA-HEALTH (1-877-724-3258) if they become aware of parties that have tested presumptively positive.
- <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/providers/Providers/Documents/Coronavirus%202020/COVID19%20Provider%20Letter%20031620.pdf>
- Another concern brought to light by the COVID19 is **FOOD SECURITY**. Governor Wolf released a statement reminding Pennsylvanians of food assistance resources available and what actions he is taking to ensure access to food does not stop in spite of the COVID-19 mitigation efforts.
- DHS is continuing to process applications and benefit renewals for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- Emergency SNAP applications can be expedited and issued in five days. Pennsylvanians can apply for SNAP online at [www.compass.state.pa.us](http://www.compass.state.pa.us).
- DHS will continue to process application and renewal benefits, so people should continue to send in paperwork as usual.



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- But, for anyone currently on SNAP who misses a deadline, who is not able to submit the paperwork or complete an interview or provide verifications for any reason during this emergency, DHS will ensure their SNAP benefit continues.
- DHS submitted a waiver request to the federal Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to ensure this continuity in benefits.
- AN additional release also clarified that a waiver for college students has also been requested, allowing them to receive SNAP during this time and allowing families to add them to the HH if they are living back at home.
  
- Through their website, **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture** has provided resources for Pennsylvanians to **access emergency food assistance** during COVID-19 mitigation, including locations of food banks and food pantries that are assisting individuals and families during this time.
  
- Stay at Home orders do not prohibit food banks and their volunteers from offering food services, nor do they prohibit school districts from offering food services to children during the statewide school closure. Schools and school districts may continue to bring in essential employees involved in the preparation and distribution of meals for children.
  
- On the DHS resources website, **Businesses** who have resources to help feed and shelter Pennsylvanians in need **are encouraged to fill out the survey** to assist the task force as they look to direct resources. Any Pennsylvanian who is suddenly in need of food should complete their survey so the task force can better understand where resources should be directed.
  
- <https://www.dhs.pa.gov/about/Ending-Hunger/Pages/default.aspx>
  - MEDIA CONTACT: Erin James, DHS – 717-425-7606;  
Shannon Powers, Agriculture – 717-783-2628
  
- **WE received a statement from WIC:**  
WIC is open! Participants should be calling into the clinics before their appointments to get instructions on how their appointments are going to be handled. For new applicants, they can call their local WIC office, call 1-800-WIC-WINS or get started online at PAWIC.COM.
  
- **Other Resources** that provide access information to food and Shelter sources include
  - PA211-
    - Available 24/7/365
    - Available by phone, text, email or web in most regions
    - Free and confidential connections to health and community services
    - Call for yourself, a client or a friend
    - Text a zip code to 898-211
    - Who are the 211 providers in other areas?



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- SouthWest – United Way of Allegheny
  - NorthWest – United Way of Erie
  - Central – CONTACT Helpline
  - East – United Way of Lancaster
  - SouthEast – United Way of Philadelphia and Greater New Jersey
  - NorthEast – Family Service Association of Northeast Pennsylvania
- 
- The Food Security information that was received from the Managed Care Organizations will be provided in the minutes of this meeting.
  - For information about SNAP:  
<http://www.dhs.pa.gov/citizens/supplementalnutritionassistance> program
  - Gov. Wolf: Support & Referral Helpline Created for Pennsylvanians in Need of **Behavioral Health Resources and Referrals During COVID-19 Public Health Crisis**
  - **Harrisburg, PA** - The Department of Human Services (DHS) announced the launch of the Support & Referral Helpline available 24/7 to counsel Pennsylvanians struggling with anxiety and other challenging emotions due to the COVID-19 emergency. Individuals can also be referred to community-based resources that can further help to meet individual needs.
  - The toll-free, round-the-clock support line was officially operational Thursday, April 2. The number to call is 1-855-284-2494. For TTY, dial 724-631-5600.
  - Staff are trained to use the principles of trauma-informed care to listen, assess needs, triage calls, and provide appropriate referral to community resources to children, teens, adults and special populations.
  - Staff will collaborate with individuals, families, police, emergency medical teams, hospitals, schools, and human service providers on the local level to provide quality care to their community members.
  - Many other resources also remain available to Pennsylvanians in need of support, including:
    - National Suicide Prevention Lifeline: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
    - Línea Nacional de Prevención del Suicidio: 1-888-628-9454
    - Crisis Text Line: Text “PA” to 741-741
    - Safe2Say: 1-844-723-2729 or [www.safe2saypa.org](http://www.safe2saypa.org)
    - Veteran Crisis Line: 1-800-273-TALK (8255)
    - Disaster Distress Helpline: 1-800-985-5990
    - Get Help Now Hotline (for substance use disorders): 1-800-662-4357
    - Visit the PA Department of Health’s website for the most up-to-date information regarding COVID-19.
  - MEDIA CONTACT: Erin James - [ra-pwdhspressoffice@pa.gov](mailto:ra-pwdhspressoffice@pa.gov)
  - **LOCAL, STATE, AND FEDERAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS**



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- Pennsylvania Department of State Health Services (DSHS)  
1-877-PA-Health (1-877-724-3258) or [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov);
- Centers for Disease Control (CDC) Emergency Response 800-232-4636
  
- Visit **COMPASS** or download the **MyCOMPASS phone** app to apply for benefits for programs, such as:
  - Medical Assistance (Medicaid)
  - Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
  - Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF)
  - Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)
  - Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
  - Child Care Works Program
  - Long-Term Care Services
  
- **Report Abuse or Neglect**  
People who are mandated reporters under the Child Protective Services Law (CPSL) should report abuse online at [www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis](http://www.compass.state.pa.us/cwis), but ChildLine is also available to anyone wishing to report, 24/7 at 1-800-932-0313.
  
- **Clearances and Licensing**  
DHS encourages individuals to submit clearance applications online whenever possible. Mandated reporters are encouraged to use the self-service portal on the **Keep Kids Safe website**, to avoid long hotline wait times.  
  
You can find forms and information on the DHS Clearances & Licensing webpage.
  
- **Pandemic References**
  - Pennsylvania Health Department [www.health.pa.gov](http://www.health.pa.gov)
  - United States Department of Health and Human Services  
[www.pandemicflu.gov/](http://www.pandemicflu.gov/)
  - Centers for Disease Control [www.cdc.gov/](http://www.cdc.gov/)
  - The World Health Organization [www.who.org/](http://www.who.org/)
  
- **OMHSAS Report - Dave Gabello**
  - Hi this is Dave Gabello from the Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS). I will just start off by giving kudos to all the providers that BMCO's, primary contractors, to county MH/ID offices for really pulling together during these tough times and continuing mental health, behavioral health services for our state. I think we're doing a fantastic job of communicating and continuing the services that are very important to our state and our individuals. With that said, I just want to get into the points that I have today.
  - We do have a new OMHSAS Deputy Secretary. Her name is Kristen Houser. She started on March 23, 2020 Val Vicari, our prior Deputy Secretary will be resuming her position within Torrance State Hospital but she will still be available to Ms.



Houser for support, guidance and assistance during next few weeks. I'm not exactly sure for how long but for a period of time during the transition.

- OMHSAS as an office, we are working from home. During the pandemic, all annual licensing inspections have been suspended at this time. I just want to be clear all annual licensing inspections are suspended during this disaster emergency. We are continuing to contact providers to support, give guidance and gather information as far as monitoring the status of their services that are provided. We are still continuing provisional license licensing; that is providers on provisional licenses, we will continue to do that licensing, as well as providers operating pending appeal to a licensing decision. OMSAS will continue those types of licensing, but we will also continue to investigate incidents and complaints. That is a priority to continue to investigate the incidents and complaints that we receive
  - We did as an office on Saturday outline in a memorandum, the broad usage of telehealth and the expansion of the use of telehealth. This guidance has been distributed and promulgated, if you will, and providers can, you know, expand the usage of telehealth to continue to serve individuals and to continue the mental health services in the state. This has been received very well and we have many, many providers. If not, I can't give you a percentage, but quite a bit of providers are utilizing the expansion of telehealth to continue services.
  - Our prior presenter did mention this, but I do want to reiterate because I feel it was very important that Department of Human Services announced the launch of a statewide support referral helpline that is staffed by caseworkers, their experienced caseworkers. This service will be available 24/7 to help individuals struggling with anxiety and other challenging emotions during and due to the pandemic. The services will also be available to support, but also refer individuals to services that they may need in the community. So it is a great resource and contact information was presented by Nan during the last presentation, the call in numbers and additional information. I just wanted to reiterate that, I think it's a great resource for the state.
  - We have quite a bit going on. We're continuing operations as I said, we're monitoring and will continue to support the community and providers and continue our licensing functions to the best of our ability. Thank you.
  - No questions were asked.
- **MATP Report – Daphne Simeonoff**
- Hello this is Daphne from MATP. I just wanted to give a brief overview of what's going on in MATP right now. As you know, MATP has in general, been limiting transportation to life sustaining or critical care type trips. That would be dialysis, chemotherapy, methadone, high risk obstetrical and other types of transportation, such as and including pharmacy trips. On Tuesday DHS did issue guidance for the MATP providers about transportation for people who test positive with COVID-19 and we're in the process of getting feedback from the county about that guidance from all the counties. They are going to be screening since MATP is shared ride program. Clearly, with the social distancing rules in place, MATP cannot provide shared ride to someone with COVID-19 and so we're looking at how to best serve

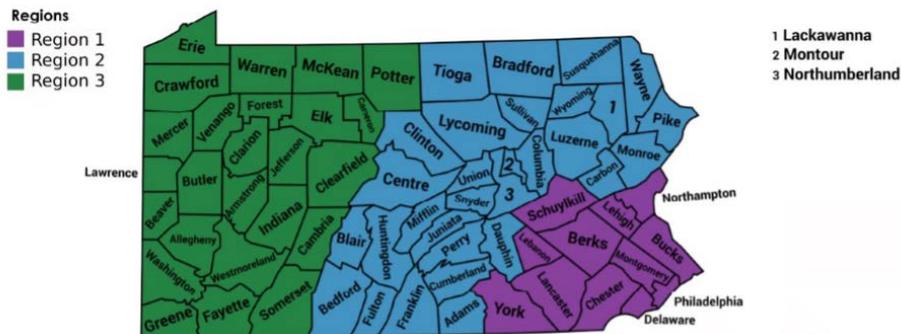


those people to get them to their doctor's appointments. Most of our counties have scaled back a lot because most of the non-life sustaining medical appointments have been canceled. So there's not as high demand for transportation as there was in the past. Basically, we're just trying to do the best we can with the resources at hand.

- I have to commend our MATP providers because they've been doing the best they can in a very, very difficult situation. Our MATP providers are having a very difficult time obtaining masks and gloves and other protective gear. This adds another element of risk to transportation. We've also had a number of providers and van drivers have maintained continuity of care, as well as they can. It's not without hitches, because it is a very difficult thing to coordinate when you have, a basic shared ride program and you know the guidance from the governor's office is not to share space with a number of people in one small space, which is what happens in a in a van. Then on top of it, I don't know if everyone's having this problem, but from what I've heard, there's a pretty widespread shortage of masks and gloves and other protective gear. So it's been a real challenge for our counties.
- You're welcome to call any one of our office staff if you have any questions about transportation. Our office numbers and email addresses are on the DHS website and I will make sure to get that out to all the attendees. Please feel free to call us if you have any concerns.
- No questions were asked

### 10:45 am Regional Report – Julia Hoskins

- SDHP - Regional Housing Coordinator Update
  - How to reach us:
    - Region 1 – [region1@sdhp.org](mailto:region1@sdhp.org)
    - Region 2 – [region2@sdhp.org](mailto:region2@sdhp.org)
    - Region 3 – [region3@sdhp.org](mailto:region3@sdhp.org)

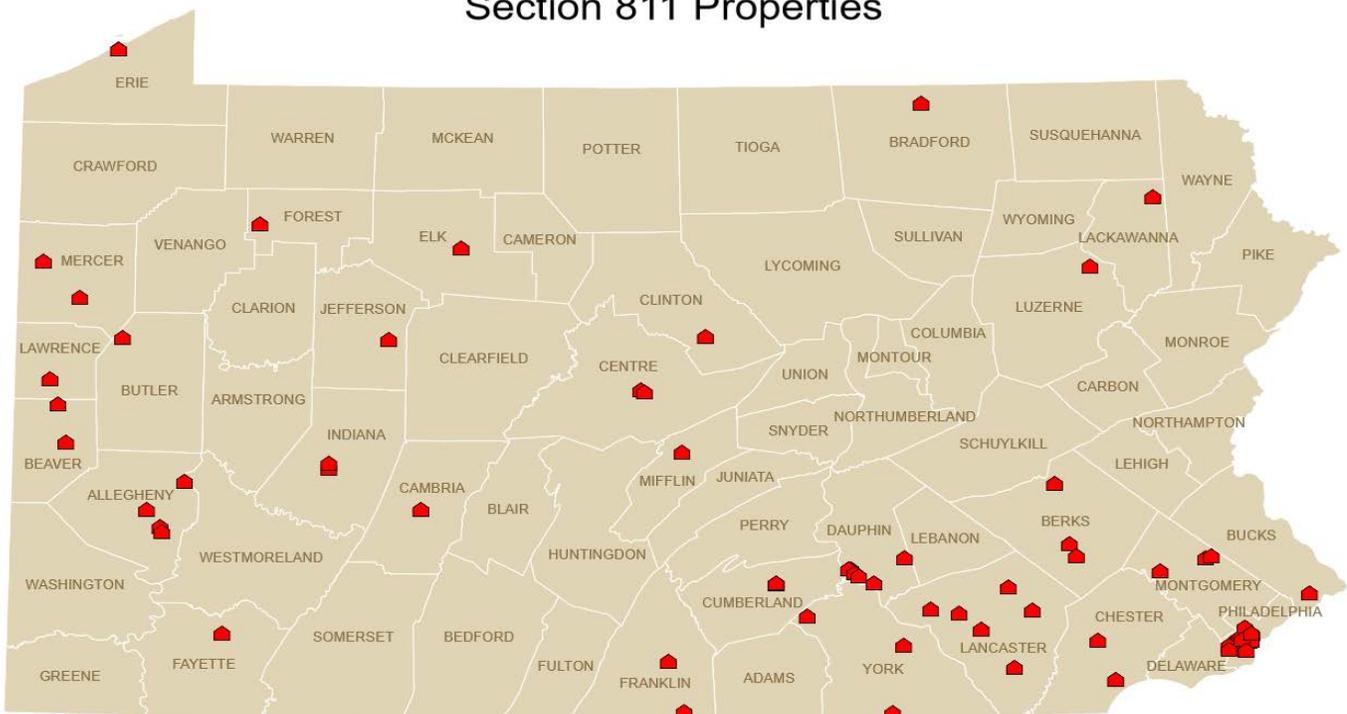


- Trainings and Webinars
  - Training Request - <http://www.sdhp.org/training-session-request/>
  - SDHP webinars link - <http://www.sdhp.org/training-calendar/>



- Impact of Covid - 19 on housing in Pennsylvania
  - All construction is halted during this crisis including on PHFA financed multifamily properties where some of the 811 PRA units were to be located. This may cause some delays in housing eligible 811 PRA applicants in those units
  - Rental processes are slowing down.
  - All eviction in PA are halted until 4/30 by order of the PA Supreme Court. This does not stop tenants from accruing late fees and penalties.
  - The CARES Act halts all evictions due to lay rental payments in any federally financed property. It prohibits landlords from charging late fees and penalties related to non-payment of rent. It prohibits landlords from requiring a non-paying tenant to vacate sooner than 150 days after the CARES Act's effective date or 30 days after a notice to vacate is served whichever is later.
- 811 Project Rental Assistance program – This is a subsidy program that is attached to specific properties. See the map below for locations of those properties. You can find this interactive map along with more thorough program information on [PHFA's website](#) under the Eligible Properties tab.

### Section 811 Properties



- Program eligibility includes



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- Ages 18 – 61 (can continue to reside in 811 funded housing after the age of 61)
- Persons with a disability as defined by HUD including autism, intellectual disabilities, physical disabilities, serious mental illness
- Enrolled or eligible for Medicaid
- Enrolled in or eligible for long term services and supports
- Gross income at or below 30% Area Median Income
- Cannot be a Lifetime Registered Sex Offender or a person convicted of methamphetamine possession or production
- Must be in a priority population
  - Institutionalized
  - At Risk of Institutionalization
  - Living in Congregate Care
- Critical 811 waitlist needs
  - There are very short waitlists in the following counties: Forest, Lackawanna, Fayette, Luzerne, Jefferson, Mercer. If are serving an eligible client or consumer who lives in one of those counties or would not mind living in those counties please contact the 811 Administrators at [811@sdhp.org](mailto:811@sdhp.org) to see if we can assist you in getting the person on the waitlist.
  - Other short waitlist include Mifflin, Franklin, Cumberland counties
  
  - We are looking for providers of disability services to eligible consumers in Bradford, Luzerne, Mifflin, Lackawanna, Centre and Clinton Counties. If you are interested in being an 811 PRA stakeholder, please contact us at [811@sdhp.org](mailto:811@sdhp.org) for more information.
- Questions about 811? [811@sdhp.org](mailto:811@sdhp.org)
- We are looking to expand our knowledge of self-Advocacy/Constituent groups. If you know of any please contact me at [jhoskins@sdhp.org](mailto:jhoskins@sdhp.org) or [Region2@sdhp.org](mailto:Region2@sdhp.org).
- No questions were asked

**11:00 am Presentation: American Lung Association - Caitlin Cluck and Chelsey Hildebrand**

- Tobacco, eCigarettes, and Vaping
  - Refer to the Power Point Presentation

**11:45 am Physical Health/Behavioral Health Manage Care Organization (MCO) – Review & Discussion of their Tobacco Cessation Programs**

- [Aetna Better Health Plan](#)- Patrice Faust
  - Good morning everyone. This is Patrice from Aetna Better Health. To give an update on some of the initiatives that we're working on, we implemented a text campaign in the Erie area and we looked at Erie so that we can escalate the same texting campaign and the other areas. It was a pilot to see the effectiveness of the smoking



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cessation text campaign in that area and to transition that to the other areas in the state.

- We also added educational material involving e-cigarettes and vaping, we provided educational materials for both the member and provider newsletters, which are on our website.
  - We also created a smoking cessation resource for members. This is also accessible on the Aetna Better Health of PA member website. From 2019 we did show an increase in smoking cessation claims from 2018, so some of the 2020 future plans is to launch CVS text campaigns. Aetna Better Health was acquired by CVS. The texting campaign will be implemented in all regions, including the Northeast region.
  - We are also looking at doing some dental provider education on tobacco cessation, in all the regions, including in the northeast. We will also be offering some continuing dental education credits for dental providers. We're anticipating offering that beginning in April or May of 2020, currently that's tentative do to the current crisis. We are also doing education for all case management and community development staff on smoking cessation interventions treatments and counseling.
  - We will be having a PA quit line and providing training with RCM staff and our community development staff as well, along with their additional education on some of the interventions and counseling, and interventions that they can do.
  - In regards to our provider education, just to be a little more specific in that provider education that newsletter article we did we gave some tips for building counseling and tobacco free smoking cessation certification information. That goes along with some of our 2020 plans as well. The tobacco cessation toolkit. We provided a communication to our providers that the toolkit is also available on our website.
  - We also did some employee education at our September town hall meeting. This was for our entire health plan staff, very high level smoking sensation employee education. Some other things that we're working on as a member analysis, is doing a heat map. We're looking at it per region, the frequency of the smoking cessation claims. We're also doing some provider analysis for focused events in certain regions. I know that our community development staff is always thinking of different ways to partner in different regions as well. We are using our tobacco cessation as part of our integrated care plans for the adults that have serious persistent mental illness and have an integrated care plan implemented. Also on our monthly SPMI file. We do have a flag for smoking sensation claims for those SPMI members as well. Those are our current initiatives from the better health. Are No questions were asked.
- AmeriHealth Caritas- Melissa Farenish
    - Hello, my name is Melissa Farenish, I'm a manager for Community Outreach for AmeriHealth Caritas in the NorthEast. As far as tobacco cessation programs which we, have the similar programs with AmeriHealth as well. We've really made a focus in the past year of providing Tobacco cessation education we also have developed some one sheets that we hand out to members. We promote the PA quit now hotline and utilize the American Lung Association for additional resources. We have health education programs in the community that had been approved by DHS. So the



smoking cessation program we developed over a year ago and we've been out doing that one. We've been working with some of the Treatment Centers, such as clean slate. So we've been presenting those programs.

○ Community Care Behavioral Health – Melissa Michael

- Hi, my name is Melissa Michael I work for Community Care Behavioral Health organization. My role here at Community Care is I am the Physical Health and Behavioral Health Integration Team Project Manager and today I'm just going to give you a little bit background on Community Care and then also talk about the tobacco strategic plan overview, which will hopefully tie in nicely to what Caitlin and Chelsea just presented on. I'll be making points about what Community Care is doing to address tobacco use in our most vulnerable population with individuals with either serious mental health issues or substance use disorders. So a little background on Community Care Behavioral Health
- We are the largest Behavioral Health MCO in Pennsylvania. We generally serve over 1.6 million individuals in over 39 counties and we have a statewide network of over 1,800 providers. We were founded in 1996. We are part of the UPMC network and we are generally located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. I'm going to go over especially what Caitlin and Chelsea just talked about, the use of tobacco and e-cigarettes, especially in our youth and again with our most vulnerable population. So what as a managed care organization such as Community Care, what are we doing to address tobacco use in our most vulnerable populations. So next slide.
- We have a team here at Community Care that work diligently and addressing tobacco use and who to reach out to with all of the individuals, including our stakeholders, our providers, our care management team, other physical health and Behavioral Health managed care organizations, and our employees here at Community Care. We coordinate with the Director of Health, quit line, community partners and consumer outreach. So we have all these moving pieces on how Community Care addresses tobacco use. Next slide please.
- So our stakeholder communications here at Community Care we developed a tobacco cessation campaign. We've trained all of our community staff, the Community Care staff members on our tobacco cessation message and how to communicate it with our members and during this pandemic, we are operating at full staff. All of our staff continue to work, all of our customer service representatives and care managers are available. So anytime a member needs to reach out or provider needs to reach out on any questions or concerns regarding care in addition to our tobacco cessation our Community Care staff are fully on board. There have been no delays in any type of communication or treatment. So if you're looking for additional information whether your provider or a member you can reach out to our Community Care staff at any time and they have been trained on our tobacco cessation message.
- We are constantly because it's forever evolving updating our tobacco cessation message to include information on the dangers of both vaping as Caitlyn and Chelsea have both talked about today; both on THC and nicotine. We have developed "I want



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to and I can” brochure sure that's available for not only our members, but all of our stakeholders and providers.

- We here at Community Care have developed smoking cessation toolkits and tip cards, we have these very nice personal bags that we give out to members and then for providers to share with members that include all types of information on how to reduce their smoking. There's a toolkit that's involved. There's a tip card with information as to who to reach out to, what to do in situations where you have a desire to smoke, when you're trying to reduce your smoking. So we've developed those and share those with our members and our providers. We constantly look stakeholder's feedback and we engage and receive stakeholders' feedback on an ongoing basis. Next slide please.
- As far as provider outreach, like I said, we do have over 1,800 providers in our state, where statewide network we developed and disseminate provider alert number 11 which is I'll be able to bring that up at the end of the PowerPoint slide presentation but provider alert 11 that went out is specifically targeting providers who want to become recognized as tobacco cessation counselors and tobacco cessation providers at their agency. This provider alert walks the provider through step by step on how to become a tobacco cessation provider.
- We disseminate newsletter articles on state guidelines for expanding access to tobacco treatment. Currently, we track a number of 370 enrolled providers quarterly. We track the number of prescriptions filled for nicotine replacement treatments quarterly. Next slide please.
- We provide ongoing training to the Behavioral Health Home providers, through a newsletter and ongoing case discussions. For those who may not be familiar with what Behavioral Health Home Plus is I'm just going to talk briefly about what Behavioral Health Home plus is. BHHP standing for Behavioral Health Home Plus, is an intervention developed by Community Care, it's delivered primarily through and for individuals with case management and peer services. But recently, we've expanded our Behavioral Health home Plus intervention to include individuals with serious emotional disorders and residential treatment facilities and then also with our substance use disorder providers. Primarily they're Medicaid, Medicaid assisted treatment providers so Behavioral Health Home Plus enhances the capacity of the Behavioral Health providers and substance use disorder providers to serve as a health home. They do Comprehensive Care Management, they do care coordination and health promotion. There's linkage of service users to community resources and then with our advanced Behavioral Health Home providers. We do a lot of population health strategies which not only targets individuals with tobacco use, but also targets individuals specifically for diabetes and hypertension.
- The Behavioral Health Home plus model provides a person centered system of care. It develops a virtual team for each individual and their family to coordinate physical behavioral support services and it uses wellness coaching specifically to develop a person centered plan with the individual again. It enhances the physical health competencies in the Behavioral Health Home Team and generally, overall, it promotes health, wellness recovery and use of personal medicine and self-management tools. The virtual team for the Behavioral Health home, of course, is the



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individual and their family, we have a wellness nurse, a health Navigator. The primary care provider a psychiatrist and Mental Health clinicians and here at Community Care we have the Community Care specialized Care Manager. Anyone is eligible for Behavioral Health Home Services, as long as the facility or agency is participating. Being in a Behavioral Health home and depending on the program, the participant may be a recipient of like I said earlier case management, psych rehab, outpatient, peer specialist services, residential treatment facilities and/or opiate treatment and then even in some of our Community School based Behavioral Health Home teams. So that's just a little bit background on what I'm talking about when I'm saying referring to a BHHP provider. So in addition to supporting our providers that are Behavioral Health Home Plus providers who are using that intervention. We provide specific information targeting the dangers of vaping, both nicotine and THC, and then tobacco use and tobacco cessation. So within the Behavioral Health home we track the number of BHP members with a tobacco cessation smart goal. We assess provider readiness to progress toward fully tobacco free treatment settings, be a provider readiness survey. We develop a plan to support providers in process to become tobacco free and we always are, again, not only with our stakeholders and our members, but we engage providers for their feedback and find out what is working and what may not be working at their facilities and how Community Care Behavioral Health can best support them. Okay, next slide.

- So our care management team works very closely with our providers here at Community Care and then also our members. We have trained all of our Care Managers here at Community Care in the ask advice and refer. We have incorporated tobacco use screening into all levels of care. We disseminate tobacco cessation information at facilities schools. Our Physical Health Managed Care Organizations, provider meetings, Federally Qualified Health Centers and our Behavioral Health home classes provide and include information on the dangers of vaping both nicotine and THC. We provide information on the Department of Health quit line, our PA frequent line at one 800 quit now and then how to contact Community Care for referrals. We also track the number of referrals to the quit line and other tobacco cessation referrals.
- So our Physical and Behavioral Health managed care organization coordination, we developed an abbreviated version of the strategic plan to share with all of our physical health and CEOs on our website. We share presentations with the physical plans and share multiple resources. We post the "Ask Advice Refer" webinar on our website for providers to view and we added a tobacco specific question to all new member's screenings.
- Our employee staff programs, we practice what we preach here at Community Care and throughout all of UPMC, we educate staff on Community Care smoke free culture. We do have a smoke free policy and we do share tobacco initiative via newsletter that is sent out minimally monthly. We have many Lunch and Learn sessions here at Community Care on tobacco cessation, we include tobacco cessation information in our employee newsletter. We have a lot of education around educating staff on dangers of both nicotine and THC. I can't wait to steal some of Caitlin and Chelsea's ideas from the presentation that they just did. There was a lot of helpful visuals and



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talking points in that presentation and I can't wait to share it with our employees here. We track the number of employees enrolled with the employer providers in the tobacco cessation services.

- We also have the coordination of the Department of Health quit line. So again we constantly you utilize the ask advice and refer to increase our care manager referrals to the quit line and other tobacco cessation referrals and we track the number of quit line and other tobacco cessation referrals. So what that means is when we have a member calling into Community Care whether it be with our care managers, our customer service representative team anytime they're looking for any type of referral or treatment through Community Care. All of our staff here, in addition to other questions that they may ask the individual, we do specifically have the screenings for the ask advice refer and that is when a need is identified for any of our members. The care managers, not only just recommend who they need to reach out to, but they do that true care coordination and they reach out to specific tobacco cessation agencies. They break down that barrier for the individual to get that specific care for tobacco cessation in our Behavioral Health Home program. All the agencies and facilities that do Behavioral Health home have a wellness nurse, a registered nurse and team of health navigators that also break down that barrier gap. They do all of their ask advice refer screenings, they accompany individuals that may need tobacco cessation counseling. They provide that counseling. A lot of our psychiatry are now prescribing tobacco reducing medications. It's a lot of hands on with our Behavioral Health home providers and with our care management team here and our customer service team. It's not that they just give a card and say this is what you need to do, they actually assist the member you know with reaching those resources. Our community partners, our community relations staff have identified region specific community partners. They developed a list of region specific tobacco cessation Community resources, our community relations staff identify and participate in community activities initiatives. And again, I can't stress this enough. It's true linkage to members to tobacco cessation activities and initiatives.
- Community Relations staff also distribute tobacco cessation information and resources to members providers, community partners that is specific. They distribute information on the dangers of vaping to members' providers and our community partners. The Community Relations team, here at Community Care like all of our staff also use the ask advice refer to increase quit line and other tobacco cessation referrals. They also track the number of tobacco cessation materials distributed and our resources that I have listed here. I'm you know that you have a copy of the slides and if you don't, we'll make sure that you get a copy of them, but there's the action plan from Pennsylvania states strategy session for tobacco free recovery Provider Alert 11. That provider alert that I had mentioned walks you through the Department of Health, their steps on becoming a tobacco cessation counselor and becoming a tobacco cessation agency. We have guidelines on expanding access tobacco cessation treatment on our website, CCBH.com and then there's also updates on Community Care Behavioral Health website which include it, the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services and Medical Assistance Program



fee for service preferred drug list, especially if individuals are looking for that nicotine replacement medication.

- I just wanted to do to bring up before I open it up for any questions I found this interesting today. I think it ties in nicely with, like I said, with the tobacco and with our current unfortunate pandemic situation. The National Institute of Health, we've always known here at Community Care that trying to address tobacco use survey being used with individuals, especially, like I said, our most vulnerable populations are individuals with serious mental health issues or substance use disorder and then, of course, our youth population with the veil being with a serious emotional disorders, but the National Institute of Health, you know, they had published about talking about the effects of and this pandemic, especially with patients with already compromised lung conditions there. It's more important now than ever that we address, the people that are using tobacco or vaping because they are at a significant higher risk for more severe complications from this and should be taking precautions to prevent exposure to COVID. This is really particularly critical for a higher risk groups, you know, especially our individuals that are smoking or vaping or in our substance use disorder population using opioids. So I hope I did Community Care justice and presenting all of our efforts in our ongoing work and trying to help our most vulnerable population in reducing tobacco and e-cigarette use especially at a time like this.
- I appreciate your time today and I just wanted to ask if anyone has any questions about Community Care or what our strategic plan is in addressing tobacco or any type of our resources or Behavioral Health home, please type your question in the question and answer box or the chat box and I'll be more than happy to answer any of those questions.
- No questions were asked.

## **12:15pm MCO Initiatives, Updates & Upcoming Events**

- [Aetna Better Health Plan](#)
  - Hi this is Adria from Aetna Better Health, I just wanted to mention that even though most of our events that we had in place for the beginning of the year have been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. We are still in contact with the organizers for May and June, hopefully, to be able to participate in events later on in the year. But most importantly we're outreaching to the organizations and the nonprofit community partners that we have in order to assist them with any needs that they might have due to the COVID-19 so providing sponsorships or any assistance that we can provide, information or guidance we are still are reaching to our community partners to provide that assistance and then hopefully by the summertime will be out there with CORA, and have outreach and support in place.
  - In regards to COVID-19, please visit:  
[https://www.aetnabetterhealth.com/pennsylvania/assets/pdf/provider/COVID%20Member%20Letter\\_FINAL.pdf](https://www.aetnabetterhealth.com/pennsylvania/assets/pdf/provider/COVID%20Member%20Letter_FINAL.pdf)



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- AmeriHealth Caritas
  - We're not obviously participating in or doing any events at least through the end of April, and we will continue to monitor that situation as the pandemic unfolds. We are, of course, still looking hoping to do. We have a number of summer events that we signed up for and we have baby showers and some community gardens that we're hoping to do in the summer, as long as things are and we get the green light to go back into the community so we're just not out in the community right now as everybody else is, we're working remotely because of the pandemic but hoping that we will get the chance to complete some of these event over the summer. The sponsorships, we do as well and we are still taking and submitting requests to do events. Submitting are requests to the state to do the events for summer and beyond. So we're still taking the event and sponsorship requests, contact anyone in the company for that. That's pretty much all that I have. Thank you.
  - AmeriHealth Caritas PA/AmeriHealth Caritas NorthEast (ACP/ACNE) has cancelled all events scheduled to participate in through April 18, 2020. Sometime during the week of April 6<sup>th</sup>, ACP/ACNE will evaluate events from April 18<sup>th</sup>forward. ACP/ACNE are still looking at conducting community baby showers and community gardens the second half of the year depending on where the country is with the pandemic.
  
- Geisinger
  - Fresh Food Farmacy and Food Distribution: Geisinger has partnered with the Central Pennsylvania Food Bank, Harrisburg, and Weinberg Northeast Food Bank, Pittston, to distribute emergency food boxes to health plan members, patients and those in need in the community.
  - These boxes are being delivered from Geisinger's Fresh Food Farmacy locations and include shelf stable supplies, recipes, educational information and other resources. Geisinger is targeting food insecure health plan members, however, any patient or community member in need is eligible.
  - To ensure the safety of the community and prevent potential exposure to COVID-19, staff will be doing curbside or front porch deliveries.
  - Geisinger is also utilizing an online community resource network that was recently launched, and providing copies of community resources, to assist with other needs.
  
- Community Care Behavioral Health
  - H, this is Jeff Romey, I just wanted to briefly state, as you can see on the agenda, some of my meetings are listed there which I really appreciate that. For those of you who don't know me, again I am Jeff Romey from Community Care Behavior Health and I'm the Community Relations Coordinator for the Carbon, Monroe, Pike contract and the Northeast contract which consists of Lackawanna, Luzerne, Susquehanna and Wyoming counties. Unfortunately, with our pandemic I had to cancel all of our meetings in Carbon, Monroe, and Pike.
  - The agenda for April, all meetings are cancelled. We left voicemails for the members they call into Community Care our provider line, it's listed that they are cancelled. I



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also reached out to many of the members that were registered to let them know they were cancelled.

- The meetings for May that are listed, I don't have an update as to if they will be cancelled. I will have to wait from senior management for that information. If they are cancelled I we will be updating our website. It'll be indicated on our website. In addition our provider line voicemail will be updated to state that they are canceled. I will also do outreach to our area providers to let them know I'm as well.
- **Adult Member/Family Advisory Meeting**
  - **Luzerne County:**
    - August 13, 2020 4PM- 5:30PM at Northeast Counseling Services Drop In Center 24-26 East Broad Street, Nanticoke, PA 18634
    - November 10, 2020 3:30PM- 5PM at Community Counseling Services 110 S. Pennsylvania Ave Wilkes-Barre PA 18701
  - **Lackawanna County:**
    - May 14, 2020 1:30PM- 3PM at Friendship House 1300 Old Plank Road, Mayfield, PA 18433
    - July 21, 23:30PM- 2PM at Advocacy Alliance Recovery Center 825 Jefferson Ave Scranton PA 18504
  - **Carbon/Monroe/Pike Counties: CANCELLED, will not be rescheduled**
    - April 21, 2020 10am-11:30 am at the Church of Saint Luke 818 Main Street Stroudsburg, PA 18360
    - April 29, 2020 1 PM- 2:30PM at Pike County Public Library Dingman's Branch 100 Bond Court Milford PA 18337

**12:20 pm Community Based Organization Updates & Upcoming Events**

- Due to COVID-19, community based events have been cancelled or postponed.

**12:25 pm Consumer & Family Feedback/Open Discussion**

- No updates shared by the Committee nor the Audience in regards to Consumer and Family Feedback.

**12:30 pm Adjourn**

- A survey link will be sent to you after the meeting from survey monkey, please take some time to complete the survey, your feedback is very important to us.

**Committee Meeting minutes and presentations available at [www.enrollnow.net](http://www.enrollnow.net)**

**Next Meeting:** HealthChoices Advisory Committee Meeting NorthEast Zone  
July 2020  
Date, Time, Location: Thursday, July 9, 2020



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10:00am – 12:30pm

12:30pm – 1:00pm (Lunch & Networking)

Luzerne Community College

1333 South Prospect Street

Nanticoke, PA 18634