



MINUTES

Transitions Stakeholder Advisory Council

Google Hangout Weblink: meet.google.com/emq-kfpb-aex
Google Hangout Call-in: +1 470-268-2030
PIN: 614 405 288#

Thursday, April 1, 2021
2:30 – 4:30 p.m.

COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Clarice Ambler, DRCOG X
 - Meghan Baker, Disability Law Colorado
 - Anne Bartels, Sandata X
 - Amy Dixon, CPWD X
 - Monique Flemings, AHOD Services X
 - Paige Gallaher, Atlantis X
 - Jennifer Giurgila, Jefferson County X
 - Fallon Gillespie, Rocky Mountain Human Services X
 - Ashly Johnson, DRCOG X
 - Jennifer Krulewich, Focus Cares X
 - Tracy Martinez, Touch of Care X
 - Ed Milewski, Jr.
 - Jenn Ochs X
 - Lisa Smith, Team Rubicon X
 - Neal Waite, ADRC Region 3B X
 - Miriam White, SJBAAA X
- Pauline Bonifazi, Michelle Voss, Peggy Garcia, Shannon Buchanan, Janna Hartman, Billy S. Allen, Brad Taylor, Steve Cuffaro, Ian Engle, Monique Flemings
- State Staff: Katy Barnett, Matt Bohanan, Rhyann Lubitz, Janelle Poullier, Courtney Thomason, Anne Watts, Mary Mangelsen

Attendance Link: <https://forms.gle/EDaybu73WZAnPZH7>

1. Welcome and Introductions

2:30 p.m.

- Approval of the March Minutes - Minutes were approved.

Our mission is to improve health care equity, access and outcomes for the people we serve while saving Coloradans money on health care and driving value for Colorado.
hcpf.colorado.gov



- Purpose of Today's Meeting – Katy provided review of today's agenda starting with program updates, Rhyann Lubitz will discuss homebound vaccination efforts for members that can't leave their homes followed by post program support discussion for members to be successful in the community after their 365 days of Transition Services, concluding with council updates and open forum.

2. Program Updates

2:35 p.m.

Katy provided quick update that CMS issued information to the public about reducing the restrictions in nursing facility visitations and Department is working on what that means for Medicaid providers going into facilities. Be on the lookout for a new update.

Ashley with DRCOG asked if Options Counselor's should expect something will change. Katy confirmed guidance so far has been not to go into the facilities but with vaccine distribution being offered to population over 16 starting tomorrow there is the potential to revise guidance. Katy stated the Public Health Emergency is coming to end this month, they anticipate it will be extended through December 31st. The Department is looking at changes to guidelines and will provide an update once available.

Matt provided an update on Case Management Redesign, currently looking at the assessment and support planning process at the tools where all the work lives including the Benefits Utilization System. The Department has been working on this hard for the past few years and focused on doing a soft launch and training beginning in July. The intent is to effectively use side by side comparison and do a soft launch of that tool and work through kinks, especially with the person-centered budget algorithm. The soft launch allows for a closer look to make sure capturing we're everyone within eligibility criteria. Be on the lookout for more information.

Fallon, RMHS, asked a question on case manager training happening after soft launch in July. Matt confirmed they are working with training company and there will be a couple of months before anything goes live. There will be maintenance and a work around you will hear more about. The Department is making sure they are using multiple systems to ensure they are capturing all information needed in the new system.

Ian asked clarification for those that meet eligibility criteria. Matt confirmed when considering Medicaid LTSS, historically used 100.2 eligibility tool and the Department will be replacing that with new assessment. Matt confirmed they are working to ensure that all considerations are intact when they move forward and it will always be individual's choice to transition out of a nursing facility.



Katy wanted everyone to know that the Long Bill, or the state legislature's budgeting bill, is moving through the process to be reviewed which should happen on 4/2/21.

Ian Engle shared that he recently engaged with Ann and Courtney at DOLA, one thing that came up was home modifications as they have no contractors in the area because signing up as certified Medicaid provider is a challenge for contractors. They discussed his agency possibly doing the billing. Ann said to keep in mind that they not only help with vouchers but also help HCPF administrator Home Modification benefit. Stakeholders were encouraged to reach out to Ann and Courtney to have discussions in their regions.

3. Homebound Vaccination Efforts

2:45 p.m.

Rhyann Lubitz, HCPF Quality Section Manager, shared details on COVID-19 vaccination efforts for homebound members. The Department established a process to identify individuals that may be homebound and came up with list of 60,000 members that was provided to Case Management Agencies including Single Entry Points (SEP), Community Center Boards (CCB) and Regional Accountable Entities (RAEs) so they can outreach members to have them assist with scheduling vaccinations, help get them on waiting list, determine if they are hesitant or declining vaccine or if individual prefers to have vaccine in their home. Currently, 12,000 members received outreach, of those over 500 were identified as needing vaccine in their home. Looking at process to develop to larger community, home care agencies, Area Agency on Aging (AAA), advocacy agencies and the general public. Link to [Operational Memo OM 21-031](#) regarding homebound vaccination efforts.

Ian shared that it's extremely difficult to assist people that want to transition out of nursing homes when they can't go in there. Ian asked if TCA staff have to be vaccinated in order to get in facilities to be able to do their job? Rhyann stated they will need to get back to Ian with an answer.

4. Post Program Support

3:00 p.m.

- Life Skills Training

Janelle Poullier, from the HCBS benefits section, manages life skills training (LST), peer mentorship and home delivered meals. LST was developed to help members with individualized training to maintain independent in the community and it is available through the following waivers: Elderly Blind and Disabled, Spinal Cord Injury, Community Mental Health Supports and Supported Living



Services. LST is on a separate benefit for Brain Injury. Benefits and goals are for LST trainers to design something specifically for member, provide assessment, training, supervision, problem solving, time management and safety awareness are examples of goals during the 365 days. The peer mentorship program is complementary to LST and is open to all adult waivers for clients that demonstrate a need for peer to mentor training. This is also a 365-day benefit with goal to acquire these skills and abilities within that timeframe to bring someone into the community so they will be successful.

Monique, of AHOD, presented challenges when they are trying to provide services, they are getting denial for not having PAR, they end up receiving PAR 3 months later and then member only gets 6 months of LST instead of 12 months. Janelle said she'll reach out to Monique directly to talk through this issue.

Amy asked what to do for someone that can't achieve skills in 365 days. Janelle said to qualify for this program, they are looking for individual that can learn skills in the 365-day timeframe.

Shannon asked if they need to re-apply to be LST provider for Medicaid. Janelle confirmed those providing services for Transition Coordination are eligible to provide for HCBS Transitions Services and will need to update their Medicaid provider information to include LST.

Fallon said she understands it's 365 days from when a member starts a service, Janelle confirmed it's 365 days from first day of service or day they returned to the community. Fallon said coming from case management experience sometimes the service starts a few days after discharge. Janelle confirmed it's from the date the member received first billable service.

Matt said to keep in mind this is also available to members experiencing life changing transition, individuals experiencing a change in life circumstance or life changing event would also be eligible. He also confirmed it's the first day of service not first day of certification for the 365 days of service.

Janelle shared here email for any additional questions that weren't addressed: janelle.poullier@state.co.us

Shannon Buchanan wrote in chat that counties are using the full 30 days to update Level Of Care (LOC) which causes many problems. Shared situation with county approval that caused 6-week gap in services where individual had major health emergency. Stakeholders confirmed this is an issue for most TCA's.

Monique gave example for member discharged in December and they still haven't received a PAR yet. Taking anywhere from 90 days to 6 months to get



PAR. Katy asked if other TCA's are experiencing this same gap in service. Jenny with Focus Care confirmed yes, they have same issues.

Matt echoed that the Department hears the concerns. That separation of processes creates challenges and doesn't just effect transition services. Suggested that people reach out to those in the Department to see if they can help. All of those services need to be in place to make sure someone can discharge safely. Programmatically, the Department is recognizes that the separation of functional and financial eligibility is a problem and recognize that as an essential piece of future program and future state planning.

Frank echoed what Shannon and Monique shared, the county has been good but in some instances, there are discrepancies in services. One example is the requirement to have Life Alert. Frank found out today that it won't show up in PAR until next day and the company won't install without a PAR. Major safety issue on many different levels. Katy said that's helpful for the Department to know when health and safety is at risk.

Monique gave a shout out to American Medical, they partnered with her agency to provide Lifeline prior to PAR. The representative is Jackie Gebert and website is: www.americanmedical-id.com/

Katy said they will take all this back and work with the team to address issues identified today.

- Housing Voucher Renewal Training

Ann Watts shared they have a network of local agencies that help administer vouchers and some they administer directly particularly in the Denver metro area. About 3-4 months before renewal anniversary date, DOLA sends out a letter to the member, so they have 30 days to review forms and notify of any changes in the rent with at least 30 days' notice. Unfortunately, the funding and resources aren't there to help member fill out paperwork. They can help CM, CCB, CILs train for what they are looking for in paperwork.

Katy asked if anyone would be interested in joining training program with DOLA to better understand process of renewal. Ian, Frank, Monique, Shannon, Paige and Pauline all confirmed interest in training. Ian suggested the landlords get education and awareness training. Monique added voucher administrators should get training.

Katy asked case managers on the line if they would be interested. Fallon said it wouldn't be something they could assist members with directly, but she would personally like to attend.



Ian shared that the information on housing authority's is important, and TCA's should know exactly what housing authorities roles and responsibilities are to help with efficiencies. Courtney confirmed timeline, once they go through OC and TCA process and are referred to DOH, they determine eligibility and once assigned to rural agency, that's when the assigned housing coordinator at rural agency takes over and that agency has to brief the person before they are able to use the voucher. DOLA and DOH schedule and send out to rural housing agency the date and the rural agencies need to coordinate to get the person briefed before using voucher. Ann shared that the process is a little different in the Metro area, DOLA and DOH takes care of doing briefing and much of the work before the individual moves in.

Frank gave shout out to Ann and Courtney for quick response on vouchers. As far as training is concerned, he would like to open it up to others on his team.

Pauline said thank you to DOH, and shared it's amazing what they do. She also asked if there is a list of housing coordinators they can work with? Courtney confirmed there is a service provider list which is internal list but will draft quick email for housing coordinators they work with but requested that they reach out to DOH/DOLA. Ann said there is a lot to track, the list is updated constantly and best to reach out to them directly.

Monique added that the Independence Center in Colorado Springs sends out list of transition coordinators and who they work with.

Katy said they will put together training opportunity with Ann and Courtney to everyone that has participated in meetings and to the broader community.

- Centers for Independent Living Referrals

Katy opened up discussion on CILs system for referrals. How to leverage partners to connect them to find additional support and resources. These are your CIL partners to refer members to after they graduate from the program after 365 days of Transition Services.

Paige with Atlantis shared they don't have a referral process, but shared info on Intake Coordinator to help walk through process and assigned Independent Living coordinator to help establish goals.

For referrals to Atlantis for consumers: contact 303-733-9324 or email mollie@atlantiscommunity.org (or anyone at Atlantis) to schedule an intake. You can also find a lot of information on their website www.atlantiscommunity.org

Ian, CIL NW Colorado, said same as Paige to call main number or send email with the County the member is located in and they connect person with corresponding Independent Living Coordinator. Main thing with referral system is



they want to be introduced to the actual person. He shared how important it is to connect individuals with community supports to prevent isolation. As long as someone wants to work on goals for living independently in the community, a CIL will work with them to help them explore options and always engaging the person at the level they are able to do so. Confirmed they are built around peer support and membership model and that is a core service they provide.

Amy, CFPD, shared it's the same process for them. Call CFPD and they assign independent living advisor. Shared some of their consumers aren't able to work on long term goals. Paige suggested taking conversation offline.

Peggy Garcia, shared connection for CIL intakes with Independent Living in NE Colorado is to call 970-352-8682.

Katy confirmed CILs aren't funded by Medicaid program and working through topics that are priorities, they want to identify resources and community partners like CILs to engage and help members live independently in community. Interested in continuing conversation with Ann and her team on getting training set up.

- Post-Discharge Check-In

Katy paused to move onto Council updates. She added to keep in mind as we move forward on work we do with this council we can come back to ensure we are addressing all concerns.

5. Council Updates

3:45 p.m.

- EDU Committee Update

Clarice shared Education committee had another meeting with good takeaways. Paige shared the subcommittee met and defined what to focus on first which included the creation or formalization of Google Group for community to share resources with each other to do outreach down the line. Also, the possibility doing an audit of trainings for the program as a committee and as a council. Meeting again as subcommittee on May 26, 2021 at 11am. Would love to see more members as training will only be better with more people that join. Reach out to Clarice, Paige or Katy if you'd like to join. Fallon and Shannon asked to add them to the list. Clarice's email is cambler@drcog.org

Clarice shared update from Jennifer Ochs on Advocacy Course. The first piece in the course discussed when talking about someone that uses a wheelchair, say person who uses a wheelchair not wheelchair bound and making sure to ask members what their preferences are. Jenn felt this was an excellent training and a good reminder for the council. Ian echoed Jenn's thoughts about making sure



to use person-centered language but also identity first language. Frank shared a [disability terminology chart](#) with the group.

6. Open Forum

4:20 p.m.

Monique, El Paso County shared that none of the voucher payment standards meet rents in their area by \$200-\$300 and they can't move anyone with those substantial differences. Ann confirmed it's not her team that sets those payments and knows it's tough. The biggest challenge in El Paso County in particular is that HUD is setting standard by zip code instead of whole region because it's inconsistent from zip code to zip code. It's a complicated issue that can't be solved today. At a place where most clients are wheelchair dependent, they get wheelchair accessible unit but once the member moves the team realizes the apartment is really not accessible, ie carpets. Ann said finding accessible unit will be easier in newer units which are also more expensive. Ann would like more data on areas where rents are higher. Katy thanked Monique for conversation and said they want to keep it going.

Frank with Mesa county shared that housing authority units are making adjustments and they are sending feedback to federal level. Ann said the housing authority sets payments higher than DOH which makes it more difficult. Ian shared in chat that he would be interested in any opportunity for the payment standard conversation, including with HUD.

Katy reminded everyone the next meeting will be May 6th, please email her if you don't get the calendar invite.

7. Adjourn

4:30 p.m.

Reasonable accommodations will be provided upon request for persons with disabilities. Auxiliary aids and services for individuals with disabilities and language services for individuals whose first language is not English may be provided upon request. Please notify John Barry at John.R.Barry@state.co.us or the 504/ADA Coordinator at hcpf504ada@state.co.us at least one week prior to the meeting to make arrangements.

