

Thursday, September 8, 2022, 10:30-11:30am  
Virtual Meeting (Zoom)

*Meeting Chair: Lorraine Delmonaco*

*Meeting Co-Chair: Nicole Ragab*

*Meeting Scribe: Nicole Ragab*

## 1. Call to Order

Nicole Ragab, Community Outreach Program Manager, called the meeting to order at 10:32am.

## 2. Welcome and Introductions

Nicole welcomed the group to the third quarter Participant Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting for the Northwest zone and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Nicole completed the virtual meeting level setting, including a reminder not to share Personal Health Information (PHI) during the meetings. Nicole reminded the members that they can contact her with any personal service-related questions, and she will help to connect them to their Service Coordinator.

## 3. New Business/Updates: Quality

Allison Krause, Quality Coordinator, provided Quality Department updates including a reminder to complete regularly scheduled fall check-ups and vaccinations, an explanation of Monkeypox, and updated information related to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline. See details below:

### Preventive Screening Reminders:

- The flu and COVID are very prevalent and require vaccinations to prevent the spread of the viruses. Please remember schedule your appointment for your vaccinations early in the season to reduce your risk of getting the flu and COVID.

### Monkeypox Facts:

- Monkeypox is a rare disease caused by infection with the monkeypox virus.
- Monkeypox symptoms are like smallpox symptoms, but milder, and monkeypox is rarely fatal.
- Monkeypox can spread to anyone through close, personal, often skin-to-skin contact.
- A person with monkeypox can spread it to others from the time symptoms start until the rash has fully healed and a fresh layer of skin has formed. The illness typically lasts 2–4 weeks.
- Typically, people with monkeypox get a rash that may be located on or near the genitals or other areas like the hands, feet, chest, face, or mouth.
- Anyone experiencing symptoms they believe to be Monkeypox should contact their healthcare provider.

### National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

- The “988” Suicide and Crisis Lifeline is the three-digit, nationwide phone number that connects you to compassionate, accessible care and support for anyone experiencing suicidal crisis or mental health-related distress.



- The 988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, previously known as the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, is a national network of more than 200 crisis centers that helps thousands of people overcome crisis situations every day.
- The centers are supported by local and state resources as well as the Department of Health and Human Services' Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

Resources:

<https://www.amerhealthcaritaschc.com>

<https://www.cdc.gov/poxvirus/monkeypox/index.html>

<https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/988>

PAC Member commented that the “988” Suicide Prevention Lifeline does not work with a landline phone. Allison explained that she would look into that concern and would work to escalate the issue, but also offered that the previous 1-800-273-TALK (8255) number will continue to work indefinitely.

PAC Member asked whether Monkeypox is on the rise in Pennsylvania and whether it should be of concern to our Participants. Allison explained that Monkeypox remains a topic of concern for the Center for Disease Control (CDC), but the purpose of today's discussion is to bring awareness.

**Action Items: Allison Krause and Quality team followed up internally on “988” landline concern, and Jennifer Ford-Bey, Collaborative Services Manager offered the [“988 Suicide and Crisis Lifeline Fact Sheet”](#) as an additional resource.**

#### 4. New Business/Updates: PA CareerLink® & Employment Services

Emmett Sanders (they, them, theirs), Community Outreach Coordinator for the Montgomery County PA CareerLink, provided an update on the services and program offerings available through each of the Pennsylvania CareerLink® locations. CareerLink is Pennsylvania's One-Stop Workforce Development System serves job seekers, employers, and community agencies.

CareerLink Services include:

- Resume writing and uploading
- Applying for and documenting job searches
- Workshops and events
- Access to a variety of career tools

CareerLink provides:

- Personalized career counseling and planning
- Structured, supported job matching services
- Employment and training services

Statewide Career Link partners include:

- Maturity Works
- Occupational & Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR)
- The PA Department of Human Services & PA Department of Welfare



Resources:

<https://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov>

PAC Member asked whether direct care workers (DCWs) can register their availability to work on the CareerLink website, to advertise to Participants in need of care? PAC Member stated that consumers need a less expensive way to find good home care attendants. Emmett explained that to facilitate that, the agencies themselves would need to connect with the CareerLink directly.

**Action Items: N/A**

## 5. New Business/Updates: Transitions in Care & Nutrition

Cindy Celi, Mid Atlantic Territory Manager for Mom's Meals, provided a presentation on the importance of planning for nutritional needs and support when transitioning between healthcare settings, including hospital, skilled nursing, and nursing home discharges. The consequences of poor nutrition include decreased ADL function, reduced recovery from illness, increased risk of mortality, and increased cost to healthcare. Studies consistently show that good nutrition lowers hospital readmission rates, and screening for food insecurity can take less than 60 seconds, yet only 29.6% of physician practices and 39.8% of hospitals reported screening for food insecurity.

September also spotlights hunger and malnutrition across the United States. Food insecurity and malnutrition can both cause and negatively impact chronic conditions. Malnutrition can also be a result of chronic conditions.

Resources:

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap>

USDA National Hunger Hotline: 1-866-348-6479 (TTY: 711)

Nicole Ragab made a connection between Cindy's presentation and the Quality department's frequent reminders for Participant to inform the Service Coordinators (SCs) when they are admitted and discharged from facilities. This is an important reminder to make sure the Participants and SCs are having discussions about nutritional needs following a stay in the hospital or a short/long-term care facility.

PAC Member asked how nutritional needs can be met by the home-delivered meal benefit for people with very specific dietary needs. For instance, for people who need their food thinned and have specific allergies and food preferences. Cindy explained that in the case of very specific food needs and dietary restrictions, Mom's Meals would set up a consultation between the Participant and a registered dietician to make sure they are able to meet the needs of the Participant through the program.

PAC Member asked how people who cannot get out of their homes, either for transportation or health-related reasons, can get access to food banks and food pantries. Cindy explained that since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, many food pantries and food banks have addressed this issue and now offer delivery to members of their communities who cannot come out to get their food.

**Action Items: N/A**



## 6. Open Forum

Nicole encouraged any meeting attendees with specific questions related to the presented topics or any concerns they may have, to bring them up at this time.

PAC Member explained that they are experiencing difficulty with scheduling transportation, because the Non-Medial Transportation vendor, MTM, is requiring a three-day advance request for any ride services. Member asked whether MTM or CTS (Medicare transportation benefit) will also transport people for medical appointments? Lorraine Delmonaco explained that, in cases of need, MTM will transport Participants to medical appointments, but Participants should first utilize their access to the Medical Assistance Transportation Program (MATP) service first.

**Action Items: PAC team researched the complaint that MTM is requiring a 3-day advance request for non-medical transportation services. Javier Muniz, the Director of Non-Emergent Transportation Services confirmed that per AmeriHealth Caritas' agreement with MTM, we require 2 business days for advanced notice to schedule non-medical trips. In confirming this with MTM, their protocol noted 3 business days. Contract amendment 1 for the ACPA HCBS agreement noted the change from 3 business days to 2 business days. MTM is updating the protocol so that all call representatives are aligned.**

## 7. Next Meeting

Nicole announced that the fourth quarter PAC meeting for the Northwest zone will be held on Wednesday, December 7, 2022, at 10:30am.

## 8. Meeting Adjourned

Nicole adjourned the meeting at 11:45 am after all inquiries from the member were addressed.