

Peer Support Services

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania (Magellan) Performance Standards

Performance Standards are intended to give guidance for contracted services as part of the PA HealthChoices program, with a goal to promote the utilization and progress toward providing best practices performances, to increase the quality of services and to improve outcomes for members.

Current Version Information

Substantive changes in most recent update:

1. Information regarding online web tool for collecting the data required for the HealthChoices mandated reporting of POMS
2. Expectations related to providing and documenting transportation services to members

Use of Performance Standards

Disclaimer: The Peer Support Services (PSS) Performance Standards issued by Magellan have been designed to function as a reference for Certified Peer Specialists (CPSs), Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) Supervisors, provider agencies, and other stakeholders in order to support their commitment to optimal service delivery. The PSS Performance Standards provide an overview of best practice considerations and outcomes measurements. The development of this document was led by CPSs to create a dialogue around quality of care in PSS. Please note that this document is designed to be a helpful guide to the provision of Peer Support Services but does not replace or supersede the Pennsylvania Department of Human Services Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS) requirements that govern the provision of Peer Support Services. It is Magellan's expectation that providers apply these Performance Standards when developing internal quality and compliance monitoring activities. Magellan will use this document as a guide when conducting quality and compliance reviews. PSS providers and agencies are responsible for reviewing and implementing the processes outlined in the most recent PSS Medical Assistance (MA) Bulletin, the corresponding Provider Handbook for Peer Support Services and related Frequently Asked Questions document issued by OMHSAS. The PSS Performance Standards refer specifically to the provision of community-based, Medicaid reimbursable Peer Support Services but may additionally be a helpful reference for peer support that is embedded in other programming, such as in Assertive Community Treatment Teams (ACT).

Please routinely visit the link below to stay up to date on compliance email blasts:

<https://www.magellanofpa.com/for-providers/>

Level of Care Description

PSS provides opportunities for individuals living with a mental health diagnosis or co-occurring disorder to partner with a CPS and receive support in the process of achieving their wellness and recovery goals. CPSs are individuals living in recovery and willing to share their own knowledge and experience to facilitate resiliency, promote positive personal change, and support the development of new skills. Peer support is built on the foundational knowledge that recovery is not only possible, but probable. The peer understanding of recovery and resiliency is inherently hopeful, trauma-informed, and strengths-based. PSS are person-centered, flexible, and designed with the understanding that those

being served are experts in their own lives. In a member's recovery journey, peers center the importance of self-direction, self-advocacy, natural supports, and community integration.

Scope of Services

PSS are available to Magellan members over the age of 18 who are living with a mental health diagnosis or co-occurring disorder. To be eligible for adult Peer Support Services, individuals must have been diagnosed with a Serious Mental Illness (SMI). SMI is federally defined as a condition experienced by persons 18 years of age and older who, at any time during the past year, had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder that met the diagnostic criteria within the current DSM and that has resulted in functional impairment and which substantially interferes with or limits one or more major life activities. Adults who would have met functional impairment criteria during the referenced year without the benefit of treatment or other support services are considered to have serious mental illness. Substance use disorders, developmental disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders are not included. Additionally, PSS are available for youth and young adults over the age of 14 living with a mental health diagnosis or who have been diagnosed with a Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED). SED is defined as a condition experienced by a person under 18 years of age who currently or at any time during the past year had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified within the current Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM); and that resulted in functional impairment which substantially interferes with or limits the child's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities. Substance use disorders, developmental disorders, and neurodevelopmental disorders are not included.

PSS are typically offered individually but may also include participation in peer run support groups. Most PSS occur in a community-based setting, but there may be occasions where it is appropriate to engage with a CPS in a residential or inpatient setting. The frequency and duration of PSS is determined by the needs and goals of the member in collaboration with their PSS provider.

Service Description

To offer HealthChoices reimbursable peer support, providers must be licensed by OMHSAS to provide Peer Support Services, as well as enrolled in the Medical Assistance program as a provider of PSS. Additionally, a provider must be contracted with Magellan. Peer support may be a distinct department within a provider agency that offers other services, or it may be offered by an agency that provides only PSS. Peer support programs may additionally have areas of specialization, such as Youth and Young Adults, Older Adults, co-occurring Mental Health and Intellectual Disabilities, and/or Forensic Peer Support. All peer support programs should be administered according to their OMHSAS-approved service descriptions.

CPSs must have graduated from an OMHSAS approved peer support training course and been credentialed by the Pennsylvania Certification Board (PCB) in order to be eligible to offer Medicaid

reimbursable PSS in Pennsylvania. The PCB requires re-credentialing every two years for CPSs. To be eligible for re-credentialing, CPSs must complete 36 hours of training, of which 24 hours must be specific to peer support and/or recovery practices, and 3 hours must be in ethics. It is important to note that the OMHSAS Bulletin for Medicaid reimbursable peer support requires that peers complete 18 hours of continuing education each year.

Supervisors of CPSs must have taken the OMHSAS approved Peer Support Supervisors training by one of the approved vendors within six months of their start date. Face to face supervision, for a minimum time of one hour, is required weekly for CPSs. Group supervision is strongly recommended as an adjunct to individual supervision.

Peer Support supervision should account not only for the functional work responsibilities of the CPSs role, but also for the emotional labor associated with routinely discussing personal recovery with peers. This should include the implementation of trauma informed supervision practices that address the possibility of vicarious trauma and/or re-traumatization. Supervision should allow for the development of self-care strategies within the framework of transparently set boundaries between the peer and peer supervisor. Peer Support Supervisors are encouraged to enhance the OMHSAS approved training by familiarizing themselves with the supervision practices outlined by Shery Mead in “Intentional Peer Support (IPS) Co-Reflection Guide.” Co-reflection as defined within IPS allows for mutual and purposeful supervisory engagements that promote shared growth. It is an OMHSAS requirement that CPSs have the opportunity for professional development and networking opportunities with other peers. Participation in workgroups and community peer meetings can meet this expectation. The Recovery Support Navigation (RSN) Team at Magellan can provide information to providers on these opportunities.

Service Exclusions

PSS may often serve as an adjunct to clinical treatment, and therefore, can overlap with both substance use and mental health community-based services including clinical outpatient services, case management, partial hospitalization and Intensive Outpatient (IOP). Peer Support can also be provided in Acute Inpatient Facilities (AIP) on the date of admission and within 30 days of discharge, including the day of discharge.

Peer support cannot be offered in conjunction with programming or services that include embedded PSS, such as Assertive Community Treatment (ACT) as this would be considered duplicative.

An individual may not receive both Recovery Support Services (RRS) and PSS at the same time as both are forms of Peer Support Services. The primary diagnosis of the individual would determine which peer service would best suit the needs of the individual at a given point in time. Members with a substance use disorder or a co-occurring disorder with a primary diagnosis of a substance use disorder are eligible for RRS. Peer support may not be appropriate for individuals with a Developmental Disorder Diagnosis. However, for those individuals with a primary Developmental Diagnosis such as

Autism and a secondary mental health diagnosis, Magellan has an exceptions process in place to determine eligibility.

Referral Process

PSS must be recommended as a medically necessary service by a licensed practitioner of the healing arts (LPHA). For PSS services, a LPHA is defined as a Physician, Licensed Psychologist, Certified Registered Nurse Practitioner, Physician's Assistant, Licensed Professional Counselor, Licensed Marriage and Family Counselor, or Licensed Clinical Social Worker. Before an individual may receive PSS, there must be a written recommendation, including a mental health diagnosis and identified functional impairment of the individual from an LPHA acting within the scope of professional practice. Magellan policy dictates that the recommendation from the LPHA will no longer be valid 1 year after the date of signature and an updated prescription would be necessary to initiate services.

OMHSAS defines a Functional Impairment for PSS as difficulties that substantially interfere with or limit one or more of the following:

- A person from achieving or maintaining one or more developmentally appropriate social, behavioral, cognitive, communicative, or adaptive skills
- Role functioning in one or more major life activities including basic daily living skills
- Instrumental living skills (maintaining household, managing money, getting around in the community, taking prescribed medication)
- Functioning in social, family, and vocational/ educational contexts

Admission Process

Anyone, including the individual, can make a referral to Peer Support Services. As Peer Support Services are voluntary, the intake process will include a consent to participate in services. After intake, an individual engaged in Peer Support Services must complete, in collaboration with their CPS, a strengths-based assessment and an Individual Service Plan (ISP) within 30 days.

The strengths-based assessment should provide the foundation for the development of the ISP, and so should be completed prior to the ISP. PSS providers can determine the structure of the strengths-based assessment process, but should include information on:

- The individual's skills, strengths, resources, and needs, including in the living, educational, working, and social domains.
- Cultural considerations and preferences
- Identified and needed supports (both natural and formal)

Upon completion, the strengths-based assessment must be signed by both the CPS and the member, indicating joint understanding of the elements of the assessment.

Service Plan

As mentioned above, an Individual Service Plan (ISP) will be developed by the individual with support from the CPS within 30 days of consent and will be reviewed at a minimum of every 6 months thereafter. The ISP will also be updated upon any major changes in goals or events in the individual's life. As with the strengths-based assessment, the ISP will be signed by both the individual and the CPS. Dual signatures indicate joint understanding of the individualized goal and action steps pertinent to the individual's recovery. A mental health practitioner (MHP) is also required to review and approve the ISP. Goals should be self-directed, strengths-based, outcome oriented, and measurable.

ISPs will also identify interventions directed at achieving the individualized goals and objectives, as well as specifying the CPS's role in supporting the individual and the frequency by which the services will be delivered.

With the consent of the member, the Certified Peer Specialist works with family members, service and treatment providers, other programs, and natural supports, to assist in the achievement of these goals.

Expectations of Service Delivery

The Values of Peer Support

Peer Support Services are inherently individualized, flexible, and creative based on the strengths and needs of the member, and Magellan believes that the adoption of the best practices outlined below provides invaluable structure in the development of optimal peer programming.

Magellan Healthcare endorses the National Practice Guidelines for Peer Supporters published by the International Association of Peer Supporters (iNAPS) in 2013 as a framework for providing ethical and effective peer services. The National Practice Guidelines link 12 core values of peer support, as identified by peer supporters across the United States, to actionable steps providers and CPSs should take to ensure the provision of high-quality programming. The 12 core values are:

1. Peer support is voluntary
2. Peer supporters are hopeful
3. Peer supports are open minded
4. Peer supporters are empathetic
5. Peer supports are respectful
6. Peer supporters facilitate change
7. Peer supporters are honest and direct
8. Peer support is mutual and reciprocal
9. Peer support is equally shared power
10. Peer support is strengths-focused
11. Peer support is transparent
12. Peer support is person-driven

The full National Practice Guidelines document, including the associated recommendations for each of the core values, can be reviewed at:

<https://na4ps.files.wordpress.com/2012/09/nationalguidelines1.pdf>

Considerations for Service Provision

To ensure that the provision of PSS is tangibly and measurably improving the lives of members, Magellan strongly recommends a goal-driven and outcomes-oriented approach. This begins with the development of an ISP that is driven by the member's own goals and supported by the CPS to ensure it meets the tenets of the SMART methodology. SMART is an acronym that stands for: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-Bound. Utilizing SMART goals allows the member and CPS to create a focused framework and build expectations of their time together, including process and appropriate activities. Setting expectations is an important element of providing a trauma informed service, ensuring understanding and trust in the peer relationship. Peer support goals and associated action steps should incorporate wellness and recovery elements, including strategies for supporting the development of coping mechanisms and community integration efforts. An essential element of PSS goal planning is the transfer of skills so that individuals can implement strategies and skills they have obtained following discharge from the program.

Documentation

The documentation in an individual's record allows behavioral health professionals to evaluate and plan for treatment, monitor progress over time, and facilitate communication and continuity of care among healthcare professionals involved in the individual's care. It ensures accurate and timely claims review and payment, promotes appropriate utilization review and quality of care evaluations, and can be used for research and education.

In addition, the following are important to follow and align with the minimum Medical Assistance documentation requirements:

- The record must be legible throughout.
- The record must identify the individual on each page.
- Entries must be signed and dated by the peer support provider.
- Alterations of the record must be signed and dated.
- The record must contain the diagnosis from the Licensed Practitioner of the Healing Arts at time of referral.
- The Individual Service Plan must be entered in the record.
- The record must indicate the progress towards goal at each session, change in support and response to interventions.
- The disposition of the case must be entered in the record.
- The record must contain documentation of the medical necessity of a rendered, ordered, or prescribed service.

- The progress notes for all services, at a minimum, must include:
 - The specific services rendered;
 - The date the service was provided;
 - The name(s) of the individual(s) who rendered the services;
 - The place where the services were rendered;
 - The relationship of the services to the individual service plan – specifically, any goals, objectives and interventions.
 - Progress at each session, changes in support and response to support;
 - The actual time in clock hours that services were rendered.

It is critical that progress towards the goal identified in the ISP be documented in a progress note. For peer support, collaborative documentation is considered best practice. Collaborative documentation refers to the CPS and the member writing the progress note together and facilitates a collective understanding of what was accomplished. Like all elements of PSS, collaborative documentation is voluntary, and the member must consent to participate. It is also not appropriate for all members and in every session. Please refer to the Department of Human Services' Collaborative Documentation Guidelines (<https://www.paproviders.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/Collaborative-Documentation-Attachment-B-2.20.20.pdf>). Regardless of whether or not a progress note is written collaboratively, PSS documentation should include:

- The activities of the PSS appointment and the ways those activities support the ISP.
 - If a PSS appointment deviates from the ISP, it is important to document the reason why that may be the case (such as an unexpected crisis situation).
- Relevant details of discussion, including goal related and wellness conversation.
- Continuity of care, such as planning information that includes concrete next steps.
- The role of the CPS in supporting the member, and reference to the strategic sharing of the CPS's recovery story.
- Documentation of referrals, resources, partnerships, and collaboration with other supports, including natural supports.
- Evidence of discharge planning should be present in the narrative.
- Enough detail to justify the units of time spent in the PSS process.
- Clear documentation and rationale of services provided during transit with an individual including:
 - Services provided in transit must include the specific interventions that relate back to the specific goal in the member's ISP.
 - Peer support should only be provided during transit if it is safe and appropriate.
 - The CPS should only transport a member when it is necessary and appropriate. The CPS should be mindful not to create dependence. Other methods of transportation should be explored and utilized whenever possible. If an individual needs assistance with acquiring a specific skill such as riding the bus to roster independence, it would be appropriate to include this as a time-limited goal on the ISP.
 - Providers must document how much time is spent in transit with a member while providing an intervention from the ISP, in addition to other non-billable time in transit. If services provided during transit are not billable, the time spent in transit should be

clearly deducted from the overall time billed and this distinction should be clearly documented.

- Providers should have policies and procedures in place that clearly outline their expectations and guidelines for staff around the general transportation of individuals as well as rendering services while in transit.

As a result of Magellan’s ongoing auditing practices and the continued expansion of fraud, waste, and abuse oversight responsibilities, we identified the need for consistent and comprehensive requirements in the attainment of signature verification for service encounters (i.e. Encounter Forms). Encounter Forms offer an extra check and balance for an agency to ensure that services delivered in the community are done so as documented. As such, this mechanism for oversight and control is best enforced by obtaining pertinent information which can verify the provision of services.

Magellan requires providers of community-based services to obtain a signed Encounter Verification Form for each face-to-face contact that results in a claim being submitted to Magellan. Providers may determine how they comply with and monitor this requirement, however, at a minimum, the following information must be recorded on the Encounter: certification statement (reference MA Bulletin 99-85-05), provider name and MA ID, member name and MA ID, date of service, start and end time of the session (the actual time in clock hours, not the duration; i.e. ‘2:00 PM-4:00 PM’, not ‘2 hours’), the rendering provider’s signature and the member or guardian’s (if under 14) signature. The signed Encounter Forms should be part of the medical record at the time of a Magellan audit or review. If a provider is unable to obtain a signature on the Encounter Form (including refusal), the reason why must be documented, and attempts should be made to obtain a signature the following session.

Support Groups

While most peer support takes place individually, it may be appropriate for individuals to participate in group peer support when they have aligned ISPs. Magellan encourages providers to consider the provision of appropriate support groups as a way of encouraging skill development, community integration, and promoting the importance of natural supports. The curriculum of support groups should be pre-approved by Magellan.

Integration of Wellness and Recovery Modalities

Magellan additionally supports the integration of wellness and recovery modalities in PSS. As an evidence-based practice, WRAP (Wellness and Recovery Action Planning) groups support members in identifying personalized support strategies. WRAP principles can also be implemented in individual meetings. Other examples of appropriate wellness and recovery modalities include Psychiatric Advanced Directives, WHAM (Whole Health Action Management), PSWH&R (Peer Support Whole Health & Resiliency), Shared Decision Making, etc. Utilization of tools and peer support modalities should be documented in progress notes.

Care Coordination

It is an expectation that Certified Peer Specialists work in collaboration with a member's natural supports and professional services, provided that the member agrees to coordination¹ and signs the appropriate release forms. Natural supports, such as friends and family members, can and should be incorporated in support planning and other wellness activities. Collaboration with professional supports is often necessary to ensure that PSS goals and activities are complimentary to the work of other service providers. This may include partnership and information sharing with case management, outpatient providers, crisis services, etc. If a member needs to seek inpatient treatment, CPSs should participate in discharge planning and plan to meet with the member within seven days of discharge. Additionally, peer support should address the integrated health needs of members through partnership with physical health providers such as primary care physicians.

CPSs are invaluable educators in the process of navigating resources, not only providing linkages but also practical support and modeling of self-advocacy strategies. Peer support should include referral supports if a member's needs are not being effectively addressed in their current level of care. If PSS continue to be involved, coordination during the transition process should be documented. If a CPS needs to discharge and refer the member (for instance, if the higher level of care includes embedded peer services) then the CPS should facilitate a "warm hand-off," where a member is introduced to the new level of care and programming with CPS support.

Discharge Planning and Transition

Criteria for discharge should be defined by each provider's Service Description, and a formal discharge plan should be established for all individuals. Successful graduation from peer support upon completion of goals is the anticipated outcome from programming. Upon discharge, a summary must be completed to include:

- a report of participation and services provided
- progress made
- what services/supports the individual is connected with after discharge (or recommendations if declining future support)
- and the reason for discharge

Discharge planning should take place from the onset of services and be reflected in documentation, as a central tenet of peer services is the focus on the transfer of skills and supporting independence.

Discharge is appropriate when a member has met their goals or no longer benefits from PSS services. Discharge would also be appropriate for members who no longer wish to continue in Peer Support Services. Disengagement from the peer support process might also indicate that the service is not appropriate at the current moment and result in discharge as well. Signs of disengagement might

¹ If a member prefers that coordination not occur, this preference should be documented in the progress notes.

include lack of response to peer outreach, last minute cancellations or “no-shows” to appointments, and unwillingness to either work on identified goals or identify new goals.

Outcomes

All PSS are expected to have procedures identified to evaluate outcomes for peer programs. Program outcomes should include member feedback and satisfaction but should not be limited to these measures alone. Some of the indicators that could be considered include:

- Percentage of members who graduate due to successful completion of goals in the ISP
- Increase in community tenure/decrease in hospitalization
- Increased stability in housing
- Vocational and educational activities
- Decreased involvement in the justice system
- Increased community linkages
- Strengthened connection to OP providers and other support services

PSS programs have flexibility in identifying outcomes procedures. Some providers have found that the annual self-assessment can be leveraged into outcomes measurements. Others have developed internal measurement tools or utilized existing tools such as the FACIT (Fidelity Assessment Common Ingredients Tool) developed by SAMSHA for consumer-operated services.

Performance Outcome Management System (POMS) is a tool the Department of Human Services (DHS) established to continuously evaluate the effectiveness of the HealthChoices’ program. POMS allows DHS to identify members with a serious illness or risk of illness; establishes a data baseline for member functioning at registration or entry into the HealthChoices’ system; updates member data as the course of treatment evolves; and finalizes member data at closure of treatment.

HealthChoices’ providers are **mandated** by DHS to collect priority population data and submit POMS data on every HealthChoices’ member receiving mental health services at certain points during treatment. These include the following:

- When you are seeing the member for the first time (initial registration);
- When you are seeing the member for the first time under HealthChoices (the member may have seen you as a fee-for-service patient and subsequently converted to HealthChoices);
- When you are seeing the member for the last time (either termination from your care, if the member is moving to another provider; or closure, if the member is ending all mental health treatment); and
- Whenever there is a change in any POMS element.

Magellan has an online web tool for collecting the data required for the HealthChoices mandated reporting of POMS. Online entry includes user friendly access and search functions allowing for a time

efficient data entry process by providers. Individuals submitting POMS data on behalf of a provider must have a log-in for the Magellan Provider Portal (magellanprovider.com). After successful log-in, users should look for “PA Outcomes Measurement” under “My Practice.”

Complaint Process

Magellan provides a formal mechanism for all members to express a complaint related to care or service, to have any complaints investigated and resolved, and to receive a timely and professional response to their complaint in compliance with the HealthChoices Program Standards and Requirements Appendix H. This Complaint process is managed by Magellan’s Quality Improvement Team. Complaint information is integrated as a key indicator for informing patient safety, credentialing, quality improvement activities, and analyzed for trending and opportunities throughout the network.

When a member files a complaint directly with Magellan, Magellan partners with the provider to address the concern. A member’s decision to file a complaint with Magellan should not compromise their care or services. Providers are expected to adhere to their Facility and Program Participation Agreement with Magellan regarding cooperation with appeal and grievance procedures (Section 2.2.1). The identified provider will receive an acknowledgement letter summarizing the complaint items and requesting documentation to be submitted for the review. The response and documentation should be faxed to 888-656-2380 on or before the deadline listed in the letter. Additional information and follow up activities might be requested.

The information that is collected through Magellan’s investigation is presented to a first level complaint review committee, which makes the first level complaint decision. HealthChoices standards and regulations, contractual standards, and generally accepted standards of care apply those standards to the issue at hand. Magellan is required to make a decision and send a letter to the member explaining the findings and the reasons for the decision within 30 calendar days of receipt of the Complaint.

Magellan uses information gained from member complaints to identify areas where opportunity for improvement may exist. Magellan may request corrective action of a provider in response to supported complaints and identified trends in complaints. If Magellan identifies a supported (substantiated) complaint involving an agency, Magellan staff will collaborate with providers to develop a Complaint Resolution Plan to address the concern. Please review the Provider Communication shared with network providers [here](#) about this important and collaborative process.

Viewing complaints from the member’s perspective is critical. If the member feels the concern sufficiently to raise it, the matter should be taken seriously and treated accordingly. If the member is still active with provider’s services, attempts to resolve the member’s issue or concerns and an internal

review of the concerns should occur. As opportunities for improvement are identified, corrective action(s) should be implemented in accordance with provider's internal policies, procedures, and protocols.

Service providers should also have internal written policies and procedures for filing and resolving complaints within their organization. These policies and procedures must comply with state and federal regulations, as well as applicable accreditation standards. Staff should be trained to listen effectively and manage a member's expectations and employ a proactive approach to customer service. Organizations should always try to resolve the member's concerns immediately and informally whenever possible. Complaints/concerns involving minor issues might not require a formal written response. However, even if the matter is addressed quickly and informally, documentation of the member's complaint/concern and actions taken to resolve it should be documented and recorded.

If the member (or their family members or representatives) feel that their concerns have not been addressed, the matter might require a more formal review involving designated staff within provider's organization. Because these reports might be received by a variety of staff, clear definitions, and clearly defined procedures for submission of verbal or written complaints/grievances are essential. The information must be forwarded promptly to the designated staff or department for investigation and follow up.

Persons receiving services should be provided with information explaining the agency's complaint/grievance policies and procedures. Programs often provide this information upon admission to the service; however, it should also be readily accessible throughout the duration of services. Physicians and staff should have adequate training on helping individuals as needed to report, address, and resolve a complaint or grievance.

Grievance Process

Magellan and the Pennsylvania HealthChoices Program Standards and Requirements defines a grievance as a request by a member, the member's representative or health care provider (with written consent of the member), to have Magellan or a utilization review entity reconsider a decision concerning the medical necessity and appropriateness of a covered service.

Magellan reviews requests from providers for behavioral health services to ensure that approved services are medically necessary and appropriate.

If a level-of-care request is not authorized at the level, frequency or duration as requested, Magellan members are entitled to grieve a medical necessity denial. At the time of a denial, Magellan informs members of this right and how to proceed. Each medical necessity grievance is handled in a timely manner consistent with the clinical urgency of the situation and in compliance with the HealthChoices Program Standards and Requirements Appendix H.

If a level-of-care request is not authorized at the level, frequency or duration requested, it is the expectation that the behavioral health provider will meet with the member, and the member's family if appropriate, to discuss treatment changes and options. This discussion will include, but not be limited to, a review of the services that are authorized, a review and revision of the treatment plan based on authorized services, a referral to additional and/or an alternative provider if indicated, other options available to the member, and a review of member grievance rights and procedures as outlined in the denial letter, should the member choose to grieve the non-authorization decision.

Please see the Provider Handbook and Provider Handbook Supplement for HealthChoices' Program Providers for additional information including provider-initiated grievances and filing a provider complaint.

Quality Management

Quality care for members and their families is important. Magellan is committed to continuous quality improvement and outcomes management through its company-wide Quality Improvement Program that includes assessment, planning, measurement, and re-assessment of key aspects of care and services. Magellan has collaborated with Counties and providers to develop a Quality Improvement Program that strives to improve the delivery of services to HealthChoices' members.

Magellan's Quality Improvement Program's policies and procedures are structured to support compliance with the accreditation requirements of several organizations, including the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) and URAC. Assessment of compliance with these requirements is integrated into our quality improvement activities.

NCQA's accreditation standards for managed behavioral health care organizations (MBHOs) emphasize quality standards and activities in a number of areas. NCQA reviews the quality of care and service we deliver, as well as the direct care provided, particularly in the areas of access and availability to care, utilization management, and continuity of care across behavioral health programs. Magellan has developed a number of performance measurement and quality oversight activities to support these NCQA standards and HealthChoices' requirements.

Per Magellan's contractual agreement, providers must cooperate and participate with all quality improvement procedures and activities. Providers shall permit access to any and all portions of the medical record that resulted from a member's admission or the services provided. Magellan's utilization review program and/or quality improvement program may include on site review of covered services and shall permit Magellan staff on site access.

In support of our Quality Improvement Program, providers are essential quality partners. It is important that providers are familiar with our guidelines and standards and apply them in clinical work with members in order to provide safe, effective, patient-centered, timely, and equitable care in a

culturally sensitive manner. Please refer to the Magellan National Provider Handbook and Provider Handbook Supplement for HealthChoices' Program Providers for additional information and guidelines.

In addition to adhering to state and federal regulations, providers are responsible to:

- Follow policies and procedures outlined in Magellan's Provider Handbook and Provider Handbook Supplement.
- Meet treatment record standards as outlined in the Treatment Record Review Tool found under Audit Tools in the Appendix of Magellan's Provider Handbook.
- Provide treatment records as requested for quality-of-care issues and adhere to clinical practice guidelines and HEDIS®-related measures.
- Participate as requested in treatment plan reviews, site visits and other quality improvement activities.
- Use evidence-based practices.
- Adhere to principles of member safety.
- Attend or log on to provider training and orientation sessions.
- Participate in the completion of a remediation plan if quality of care concern arises.
- Encourage use of member and clinician outcome tools including use of the PHQ-9 and other standardized tools at intake and established treatment intervals, and to review real-time reports together.
- Incorporate the use of secure technology into their practice to make accessing services more convenient for members, e.g., email communication, electronic appointment scheduling, appointment or prescription refill reminders, electronic referrals to other practitioners or programs, and online access to personal health record information.
- Assist in the investigation and timely response of member complaints.
- Assist in the investigation and timely response of adverse incidents.

Magellan supports a wide range of evidence-based and best practices. Magellan requests that contracted providers and practitioners keep inventory and fidelity of evidence-based or best practices that they offer and incorporate into treatment.

Magellan commits to a strong cultural competency program and believes that all people entering the behavioral health care system must receive equitable and effective treatment in a manner that is respectful of individual member preferences, needs and values and sensitive to residual stigma and discrimination. Magellan encourages providers to maintain practices that are deeply rooted in cultural competence as well, focusing on continual training and education to support staff. Cultural Competency and the LGBTQIA+ Tools are available on www.Magellanoftpa.com to help with development of provider cultural competency programs.

There are instances where Members may benefit from oral interpretation, translation services, non-English languages or alternative formats of materials or communication approaches. Providers are encouraged to maintain a process of accessibility and training for staff so that when opportunities present to support Members that may have language assistance needs, the team is prepared to fully

respond to ensure the best possible treatment outcomes. Magellan offers language assistance service educational resources for network providers. These are located on Magellan’s website.

Please note: Reporting requirements for Magellan remain consistent and in line with the PA DHS Bulletin, OMHSAS-15-01. A copy of all reportable incidents must be submitted to Magellan’s Quality Management Department within 24 hours of an incident or upon notification of an incident. The types of incidents that are reported to Magellan include: Death, Attempted Suicide, Significant Medication Error, Need for Emergency Services, Abuse/Childline Report, Neglect, Injury/Illness, Missing Person, Seclusion, Restraint, Other (<https://www.magellanprovider.com/media/29919/adverseincidentreporting.pdf>).

[Appendix A](#) to the Pennsylvania HealthChoices Supplement to the Magellan National Provider Handbook offers an updated Incident Reporting Form, Provider Instructions and Definitions. Magellan also provides an electronic format for incident reporting for submission to ease provider paper burden.

Addendum: Youth and Young Adult Peer Support Services

Program Requirements

In 2016, OMHSAS expanded Peer Support Services to allow for youth and young adults (Y/YA) to receive PSS. All service requirements mirror the expectations for adult members outlined in the Magellan HealthChoices Peer Support Standards with the exception of member eligibility requirements. A youth or young adult age 14 or older with the presence or history of an SMI or Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) may be referred to Y/YA PSS.

Magellan requires that providers must be contracted specifically for Y/YA PSS services separate from approval to offer PSS services to the adult population. Furthermore, service delivery should allow for access during the hours when Y/YA are most likely to be available, including evenings and weekends.

Considerations for Service Provision

Magellan recognizes that youth and young adults are a unique service demographic requiring specialized peer support expertise. Certified Peer Specialists working with Y/YA should center the modelling of recovery skills in an accessible manner that is engaging for this demographic. Proper identification of staff that can provide meaningful connection with Y/YA is not only paramount, but also requires ongoing education and development specific to supporting this demographic. While Magellan recognizes that peer support remains person-first and individualized regardless of the demographic, centering independent living skills and futures planning is particularly salient with this population as Y/YA are taking steps to ensure their future social, civic, and economic success. Magellan also recognizes that the role of family and caregivers, particularly for individuals under the age of 18, may require unique attention. Therefore, Magellan strongly recommends that CPS staff working with youth and young adults take the OMHSAS approved continuing education training “Supporting Youth and Young Adults.”