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MAGELLAN EXPLORER

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

MESSAGE TO PROVIDERS

In this edition of Magellan's QI newsletter, we're sharing about Magellan's priorities for calendar year 2026. This quarterly publication is intended to help providers in Magellan's Network stay current on key quality initiatives, priorities from the Office of Mental Health and Substance Use Services (OMHSAS), and resources to support strong outcomes and quality care.

We intend to offer materials that address all services throughout the delivery system. This may be resources for outpatient or community based services all the way through the most intense service offerings, such as residential care or inpatient hospitalization. The QI team will periodically share trends identified through Treatment Records Reviews or patient safety investigations, as well as lessons learned that may be borrowed and applied to various treatment settings. Please don't be shy to share feedback about this publication, critical or complimentary. We want to make sure this is an offering that is valuable and useful!



Warm regards,

Maria Brachelli-Pigeon, LMFT, CPHQ,
Director, Quality Improvement

DISCHARGE PLANNING INFORMED BY MAGELLAN'S ASC PROCESS

Magellan's Assess-Shape-Collaborate (ASC) process for identifying opportunities for improvement among providers consistently reveals that the most cited area is "Inadequate discharge planning" from 24-hour care.

Magellan has high expectations around discharge planning with our members, to best ensure favorable member outcomes, including attending all necessary follow-up care, and minimizing the need for readmission to 24-hour care.



Magellan began to follow guidance from Project RED about eight years ago, first applying additional expectations for psychiatric inpatient discharges and later adapting Project RED components to 24-hour substance use disorder discharges.

Continue reading on page 2.

DISCHARGE PLANNING INFORMED BY MAGELLAN'S ASC PROCESS

Project RED (Re-Engineered discharge) was a research group at Boston University that designed and tested evidence-based practices in the process for discharge planning from medical hospitalizations. Many of the components of RED were found to be directly applicable, or adaptable, to discharges from behavioral health settings.

Magellan's RED-informed components of discharge planning include:



Language preference/needs must be discussed in discharge planning and identified needs addressed. This might mean ensuring all the discharge planning is available in the member's preferred language, that follow-up providers can deliver services in that language or that they have language assistance services.



Set up all necessary medical follow-up appointments, including primary care, specialists, lab work, etc. If any medical issues were identified or discussed during the member's stay, the Care Manager will certainly ask about the plans to manage these issues after discharge.



Ensure that member is educated about their diagnosed conditions. This includes educating about any diagnosed mental illness or substance use disorder, and the recommendations for treatment and support services. It should also include education about any newly diagnosed medical issues.



Arrange for all discharge medications for behavioral health and physical health, ensuring the member understands how to take them, and ensuring they are able to obtain them. This should include taking care of any prior authorizations, identifying how the member will get to the pharmacy, and any special arrangements for medication-assisted treatment (MAT) for a substance use disorder.



Ensure member has full input into, and understanding of discharge plan. This includes collaborating with the member on preferences for follow-up care, teaching them about the written discharge plan, and assessing the member's understanding of the plan. Enlist collaboration with the member's family and loved-ones, as the member permits.



Develop an individualized crisis plan and/or relapse prevention plan. This goes well beyond simply providing a crisis phone number and information about 988. The plan should include the member's input about triggers for mental health symptoms or substance relapse, early and later warning signs that things are getting worse, coping skills that work for the individual, and supportive people or resources that the member can access.



Set up all necessary behavioral health follow-up appointments (including mental health services, substance use disorder services, and other behavioral health support services). Make referrals for case management or peer support services if appropriate. If the member has co-occurring disorders, ensure that follow up providers are in place for the mental health and substance use issues (even better would be integrated services with a dually-licensed provider).



Assess for any transportation barriers, and plan how the person will get to appointments. This may include making a referral to the Medical Assistance Transportation Program in the member's county.



Assess for any health-related social needs that can impact the person's recovery and ability to engage in follow-up care, and address any major needs/barriers that are identified.



Identify and address any cultural barriers to continued recovery and attending follow-up care.



READING NOOK

For more information about Magellan's discharge planning expectations, see our website here: <https://www.magellanofpa.com/for-providers/quality-improvement/discharge-planning/>

For more information about Project RED:

<https://www.bu.edu/fammed/projectred/>

<https://www.ahrq.gov/patient-safety/settings/hospital/red/toolkit/index.html>

<https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC5734517/>



UPCOMING TRAINING

DDAP & OMHSAS

- ➔ OMHSAS is pleased to share information about the live webinar, "Overview of Early Psychosis Identification and Intervention." The webinar is free to attend, with CE's available for \$10.

The webinar will be held on April 30th, 2026, from 1:00 pm -2:00 pm. Instructors will be Monica Calkins, PhD, and Christian Kohler, MD, Co-directors from the UPENN HeadsUp program [HeadsUp | Focused on ending the stigma around psychosis.](#)

Learn more and register here:
<https://drexel.edu/medicine/academics/continuing-education/behavioral-healthcare-education/live-webinars/>

- ➔ The Pennsylvania Department of Drug and Alcohol Programs (DDAP) is offering **Clinical Supervision Training** in a live, virtual format, with two upcoming sessions in April and June. This instructor-led virtual training builds on the foundational coursework and gives participants the opportunity to practice clinical supervision skills, along with tools to support assessment and effective work with supervisees. The training runs five consecutive days from 9:00 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. each day.

Upcoming sessions include:

- Monday, April 6, 2026 – Friday, April 10, 2026
- Monday, June 8, 2026 – Friday, June 12, 2026

Log into [DDAP's Training Management System \(TMS\)](#) to request a virtual seat and review registration and payment instructions for the \$300 training. Payment must be submitted by check or money order, as detailed in TMS. Space is limited, and registrations are processed in the order received.

Completion of the **Clinical Supervision Training Foundations course**, available on demand through TMS, is required before enrolling. Clinical supervisors and lead counselors with less than two years of supervisory experience are required to complete the core curriculum offering in TMS or a **DDAP-approved core curriculum** in clinical supervision.

Direct any questions to ra-datrainig@pa.gov.

- ➔ Recommended for OP, IOP, PHP Substance Use treatment providers: DDAP offered technical assistance for ASAM Ambulatory Level of Care Alignment Review via a recorded webinar that can be accessed here:
[The ASAM Criteria 4th Edition](#)

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Magellan is offering a series of technical assistance sessions for ambulatory level of care substance use providers to gather and discuss difficulties and barriers to achieving ASAM alignment within their organization. Magellan will offer assistance in addressing these barriers to become fully aligned with the ASAM criteria.

- ➔ **ASAM Alignment Orientation**
Date: April 22, 2026
Location: Zoom
Registration is required [here](#)
3:00 pm - 4:15 pm (Please log in by 2:45 pm)
- ➔ **ASAM Ambulatory Levels of care**
Date: June 17, 2026
Location: Zoom (Registration details will be shared in May)
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm (Please log in by 2:45 pm)
- ➔ **ASAM**
Date: August 19, 2026
Location: Zoom (Registration details will be shared in July)
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm (Please log in by 2:45 pm)
- ➔ **ASAM Wrap-up**
Date: October 28, 2026
Location: Zoom (Registration details will be shared in September)
3:00 pm - 4:00 pm (Please log in by 2:45 pm)

Who Should Attend:

Any providers of substance use and co-occurring disorder services at all ambulatory levels of care. This includes clinicians, case managers, support staff, peers, supervisors, and program directors.

 Please contact Anita Kelly at ALKelly@magellanhealth.com for more information.

Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania Earns Fourth Consecutive Full Accreditation from the National Committee for Quality Assurance



MARYLAND HEIGHTS, Mo., March 16, 2026 /PRNewswire/ -- **Magellan Health, Inc.** today announced that Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc. (Magellan), a Medicaid Managed Behavioral Health Organization (MBHO), has earned Full MBHO Accreditation for a three-year term from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) marking the fourth consecutive time Magellan has received this honor.

Full MBHO Accreditation is granted for a period of three years to plans that have excellent programs for continuous quality improvement and meet NCQA's rigorous standards.

"Receiving the full NCQA accreditation for the fourth time reaffirms our team's dedication to continuously improving quality and raising the standard of care for our members," said Jim Leonard, CEO for Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania.

NCQA MBHO Accreditation is a nationally recognized evaluation that purchasers, regulators, and consumers can use to assess MBHOs. NCQA MBHO Accreditation evaluates how well a health plan manages all parts of its delivery system – physicians, hospitals, other providers and administrative services – in order to continuously improve health care for its members. NCQA reviews include rigorous on-site and off-site evaluations conducted by a team of physicians and managed care experts. A national oversight committee of physicians and behavioral health providers analyzes the team's findings and assigns an accreditation level based on the MBHO's performance compared to NCQA standards. There are approximately 60 standards for quality included in the following categories: quality management and improvement; utilization management; credentialing and re-credentialing; members' rights and responsibilities; and preventive behavioral health care services.

"It's a privilege to work with a team this committed to strong member outcomes, supporting our provider network, and advancing health equity in our communities," said Maria Brachelli-Pigeon, quality improvement director for Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania. "Magellan prioritizes infrastructure that supports continual readiness of high-quality standards, including frequent evaluation of opportunities to strengthen the existing programming and improve the service delivery system and overall customer experience."

[Full Article Here.](#)

The following FBS providers were cited for 100% completion of FBS Access Surveys in 2025:

- Katherine Purner at RHA Salisbury
- Jordan Snyder at Pennel Mental Health Center
- Barbara Kopystecki at St Luke's Penn Foundation
- Wesley Bush and Kathleen Gasparetti at PA Mentor
- Mandy Troxell at Nulton Diagnostic & Treatment Center
- Toinetta Rodriguez at Merakey Montgomery County
- Nikole Davis, Elisha Richardson, and Natalie Melillo at MCC Family Services
- Nicole Logue at Independent Family Services
- Juliana Greenland and Amber Berkoski at Creative Health Services
- Eve Walters at CCTC
- Amanda Tracey at Child & Family Focus
- Stephanie Galleo and Kim Plummer at Central Behavioral Health
- Dale Thomas at ACRP

The following IBHS providers were cited for 100% completion of IBHS Access Surveys in 2025:

- The Operations Team at First Child Learning Services
- Chrissy Auger, Intake & Development Coordinator and Linda Battiste-Nyzio, Clinical Supervisor at CCIU
- Jennifer Drager at Assist Inc
- Vanessa Benigno at ABA Consultants



MAGELLAN IN THE MEDIA

"Behavioral Health Matters"

The show aims to promote positive mental health, increase our understanding of behavioral health topics and services, and reduce stigma. Future episodes post every 4-6 weeks.



Magellan



TOBACCO RECOVERY

If you have questions about tobacco recovery support or treatment resources, we're here to help. Reach out to a Magellan representative by emailing TobaccoSupport@MagellanHealth.com.

To register for Pennsylvania Statewide Tobacco-Free Recovery Initiative trainings, use this link: <https://tobaccofreerecoverypa.com/trainings/>.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Member Advisory Groups

Dates/locations shared at [Member Advisory Groups | Magellan of PA](#)



We appreciate our partners in quality and regard this forum as one way Magellan can highlight exemplary acts of service for our members. You'll see these names again, as all providers and individuals that are honored through the ASC process will be highlighted at the Provider Town Hall. Thank you!

KUDOS OF THE QUARTER!

Magellan maintains a process to recognize individuals throughout our network who go above and beyond for members. Magellan extends a warm thank you to the following individuals for their demonstrated commitment to the HealthChoices community.



Gisella Flores, Social Worker at Brooke Glen coordinated care and linkage with numerous agencies to support a member's successful transition to the community.

Maddie Veliz, Program Director at Horizon House cleared her busy schedule with little notice to participate in training a new clinician on the authorization request process.



Steve Bower, Mental Health Worker at Nulton consistently collaborates well in assisting our members and prioritizing their individualized needs.

Heather Maiden, MA CPRP at St Luke's Penn Foundation was extremely responsive to outreaches and follow up. She replied professionally, in a timely fashion, had clinical information, conceptualization and progress in all reviews. This was greatly appreciated.

Greg Appleton, MA, CAADC at Pyramid Duncansville when filling in for someone else, was able to find additional follow up items in chart to assist with formulating clinical picture. He was professional and efficient, and willing to go the extra mile to get answers to discharge planning questions.

Grace Borneman, Lead Clinician at Horizon House participated in training on Magellan's authorization request process and her first attempt was near perfect!

Jenifer Curcie, UR Specialist at White Deer Run demonstrates a strong commitment to advocating for member needs. Brought a case back to the clinical team to develop an aftercare plan that effectively addresses member's mental health needs.

Anthony Forte, Counselor at Malvern Willow Grove has shown consistent willingness to coordinate with Magellan to discuss member's needs, aftercare and discharge planning, gather history of treatment and collaborate to develop plan that is in best interest of our members.

Susan Hoke on the Crisis Residential team at Robbins Bower did a fabulous job utilizing psych rehab skills with our member in order to prepare him to transition to a residential program in the community where preparing meals for himself is an expectation. She has done a phenomenal job with our members!

Emily Shosh and Case Management Team at Holcomb did an outstanding with helping our members from a homeless encampment obtain clinical, social needs, and legal supports.

The Crisis Residential Team at Elwyn did a great job with coordinating aftercare for one of our members.

Lauren Hostetter and Team at Robbins Bower developed a robust, comprehensive aftercare plan for one of our members.

Lisa Schaffer, Case Manager at St Luke's Quakertown demonstrated excellent collaboration on a case of a member with a high level of needs.

Shawan Kosakowski, Clinical Director at Nulton provided a swift response in setting up a member with a need for specialized treatment.

Maggie Spor, Counselor at RHD showed outstanding understanding of ASAM and was proactive in seeking alternative funding for a member.



What do you like most about Magellan?



"I was able to receive quality treatment through Magellan. It took me a couple of times, but your quality coverage and treatment centers helped me to get clean and sober and love back to my family. I am very happy with life now. Thank you."



"I have been very happy and satisfied with Magellan over the years. I have moved forward on a lot of my mental health issues. I am on a Methadone program, and I have achieved to be clean and sober for 15 years."



"I feel heard and that I'm in the best care. Very grateful. My mental health has been stable. I like my therapist and am grateful for my sessions. I feel very grateful for the benefits Magellan provides for mental health. I have a very good psychiatrist who listens and is on top of my history and medication management. I would not be as healthy today without my psychiatrist and therapy. I feel heard and safe."



"Encanta con los servicios que ofrecen. Son muy buenos. Han ayudado muchísimo a mi hija en su progreso. Su comportamiento está mejorando. Son servicios fundamentales."



"Magellan made it possible for my child to receive life-saving mental health services in a setting that allowed her to continue staying in school."

"Everything I have needed to better my mental health has been provided with no hassle or rejections. I'd say this has been a good experience."



"Receiving quality care that has kept me sober and successful. I have been sober two years, reunited with my family. I am successful in all areas of my life and that's thanks to the services provided by Magellan!"



"Magellan assisted my son through several points of crisis care and through ongoing maintenance care. He received the treatment needed to diagnose and manage conditions. The last few years have been difficult for him and for our family as a whole, but because of the support and services from Magellan, there has been hope and progress!"



"Great customer service always give me answers to all my questions, and helps find providers when needed."



"I have been struggling with mental health and substance abuse issues for over 40 years, and finally I have found something in the last seven years that has worked so well that I am extremely grateful to Magellan services."



"Our experience was excellent. We are extremely grateful because the services helped our special needs child get onto a better path and saved her life."

