Lehigh & Northampton Counties Member Advisory Work Group

September 30th, 2026 Meeting Minutes

Discussion (Minutes):

- The Member Advisory Workgroup Meeting (MAWG) was held on Wednesday September 30th at the New Bethany Drop In Center in Bethlehem. New Bethany is a community-based organization. Services provided include food support, hygiene support, wellness programming, transitional housing, permanent affordable housing, and financial case management to individuals and families who are working toward self-sufficiency.
- There were a total of thirty-nine attendees and twenty of those were Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania (Magellan) members. Other attendees included Magellan representatives, Lehigh and Northampton HealthChoices Representatives, Bethlehem City and Lehigh University Police, and Bethlehem Health Bureau Representatives (Community Connections program).
- Tom Walker, Senior Account Executive, Magellan, welcomed all the attendees and provided an overview and background regarding both Magellan and the purpose for MAWG meetings.
- Tom also provided an overview of the agenda for the meeting and the topics to be covered. Tom also explained to Magellan members the stipend process.
- Janet Verga, Recovery Support Coordinator, Magellan, engaged the group in an Icebreaker activity.
- Tom guided the participants to their packet of materials and reviewed each of the materials found within their packets including Magellan handbooks, the Magellan of PA website, Magellan newsletters, and other information and resources related to Magellan.
- Tom engaged the participants in a review and discussion related to PA Navigate. Tom and the group discussed the various benefits and resources offered through PA Navigate including examples such as job/employment support, SNAP benefits info, transportation info, and childcare information. Tom helped participants to make the connection between PA Navigate and the local community, specifically Lehigh and Northampton County providers and resources.
- One member participant shared feedback related to experiences with PA Navigate and Tom encouraged members to utilize the resources when needed. Tom also provided information

about Magellan's member services team and encouraged members to contact Magellan when needed.

- Member feedback: Several members offered feedback related to experiences with Magellan and Magellan providers. There was some confusion between the difference with Magellan and mental health support and other Physical Health MCO's and the services and support they provide. Tom and Magellan representative Jim Marchetto provided some clarification related to mental health and Behavioral Health Managed Care Organizations. They also offered information related to how to contact the various Physical Health MCO's and where to find the contact information in the Magellan materials. One member in attendance offered feedback related to utilization of Magellan member services and reported that the experience was positive. Another member shared an experience of having experienced a long wait time for a psychiatrist, however also shared that she works with her primary care physician to manage her medications and is satisfied with that arrangement. Magellan's Jim Marchetto, Community Transition Coordinator, offered additional support to this individual following the meeting.
- Another member shared an experience with having to change service providers due to a change of insurance coverage. Magellan team member Sara Collins provided the members and other participants with clarification about these types of situations (TPL vs MA - HealthChoices).
- Tom provided the group with an overview of 211 to review supports and services and other planning by the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. One member shared her experience with 211, and while she reported her interactions with 211 were helpful, she felt the "ball was dropped" during the handoff to local support and services. This individual did share that their interactions with New Bethany and the local CYS were positive.
- Tom provided information related to 988 services.
- Carissa of the Bethlehem Health Bureau Community Connections program provided the meeting participants with an overview and information about Bethlehem Health Bureau support and resources, inclusive of an innovative approach they take to health and wellness promotion; joining with community stakeholders and individuals they serve, before, during, and after a mental health crisis. The teams engage collaboratively with the Bethlehem City Police.
- Officer Rodriguez, a Crisis Intervention Team and Certified Hostage Negotiator with the Bethlehem City Police, provided information to the group about the department's efforts to collaborate with Community Connections. The shared mission offers crisis intervention whenever possible, while promoting the safety of all parties involved with potential crisis situations. Officer Rodriguez shared information about other events that were upcoming, including a Thanksgiving meal for those in Bethlehem who are in need.
- Tom Walker closed the meeting by thanking everyone who participated and attended and encouraging them to join us for the next MAWG meeting.