



Health Equity, Outreach and Consumer Experience Advisory Committee Special Meeting

Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, September 28, 2023
Remote

Members Present: Sean King (Chair); Sheldon Toubman; Giselle Carlotta-McDonald; Leslie Greer; Holly Hackett; Gerard O’Sullivan

Access Health CT (AHCT): James Michel; Susan Rich-Bye; Rebekah McLearn; John Carbone; Tammy Hendricks; Jynelle Maloney; Glenn Jurgen

A. Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Sean King, Acting Healthcare Advocate, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. Roll call for attendance was taken. Mr. King explained to the Committee that he was appointed to serve on this Committee by Access Health CT (AHCT) Board of Directors in light of Theodore Doolittle’s resignation from the Board of Directors and his subsequent removal from the Committee.

B. Public Comment

No public comment was submitted.

C. Review and Approval of Minutes

A motion was requested to approve the May 2, 2023 Health Equity, Outreach and Consumer Experience Advisory Committee Special Meeting Minutes. Motion was made by Leslie Greer and seconded by Sean King. Roll call vote was ordered. **Motion passed unanimously.**

D. Medicaid Unwinding Update

Tammy Hendricks, Director of Health Equity and Outreach, presented the Medicaid Unwinding Update. She provided information on various efforts and statistical data pertaining to the Medicaid Unwinding. Ms. Hendricks noted that the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) is asking states to use all of the tools available to ensure eligible consumers are not terminated from coverage and added that states are required to evaluate their systems to ensure automated redeterminations are compliant.

As of August 31, 2023 for the Unwind population no longer eligible for Medicaid coverage, over 2300 individuals enrolled in the Covered CT Program, while over 5600 enrolled in a

Qualified Health Plan (QHP) without a Covered CT benefit. Close to 135,000 individuals re-enrolled in Medicaid/CHIP and close to 9800 have indicated that they are not requesting or are receiving health insurance coverage elsewhere. Ms. Hendricks added that the call center is ramping up staffing for OE 11 and stated that it handled over 405,000 calls from April 1 through August 31, which is a 36 percent increase from last year. The average wait time for the Medicaid Unwind period has been 1 minute and 59 seconds.

Ms. Hendricks summarized the Health Equity and Outreach efforts that include monthly meetings for consumers, community partners and Certified Application Counselors. She stated that enrollment staff is present at several Navigator locations and community organizations and reviewed the Medicaid Unwinding enrollment fairs and the outreach efforts. The Unwinding marketing campaign will pause the week of October 30 through the week of January 8, 2024 when the OE11 campaign is in market.

Sheldon Toubman joined the meeting at 3:13 p.m.

Mr. King inquired whether AHCT considered partnering with the State Department of Education and school districts to convey messages to families who may be faced with losing their eligibility for HUSKY benefits. Ms. Hendricks stated that the Health Equity and Outreach Team connects with over 2200 community partners throughout the state, among them many school districts. Susan Rich-Bye, Director of Legal and Governmental Affairs, added that in addition to the Health Equity and Outreach Team, the Marketing Department partners with the Department of Social Services to work with school districts.

E. Open Enrollment 11 Readiness Update

Kathryn Hearn, Associate Director of the Enterprise Project Management Office (EPMO), provided the Open Enrollment 11 Readiness Update. Ms. Hearn indicated that it will be the first OE that Infosys will be taking over the maintenance and operations of the Integrated Eligibility and Enrollment System (IES). Ms. Hearn noted that the IES will process dental enrollment renewals for the first time this OE. Ms. Hearn added that the National Change of Address (NCOA) database will be used to reduce returned mail and associated costs for households that have recently moved.

AHCT's Marketing Department is analyzing and incorporating feedback from six consumer focus groups into the overall marketing strategy. The department is developing and updating informative collateral to share with the AHCT Health Equity and Outreach team for distribution to community partners and Connecticut residents. The Exchange's website content, including blog post and toolkits, is also updated. The advertising campaign and media plan development are underway. Ms. Hearn also provided information on the outreach update which includes Virtual Healthy Chats, Community Partner monthly Zoom meetings as well as in-person help from Enrollment Specialists and Brokers at Enrollment Fairs, Libraries and Navigators.

Ms. Hearn summarized the Outreach Update, which, among supporting the Medicaid Unwind efforts, also includes an upcoming Community Conference, Virtual Healthy Chats and OE fairs.

F. Broker Academy Update

Tammy Hendricks, Director of Health Equity and Outreach, presented the Broker Academy Update. She indicated that 21 students passed the state exam and have been matched up with mentors, and seven Broker Agencies are serving as mentors. There is improvement on the retention of students who have become brokers, and it is larger as compared to the first year of the Broker Academy.

Ms. Hendricks discussed other developments, such as preparations for the student graduation and working on webpage updates for the upcoming year. James Michel, Chief Executive Officer, discussed the success of the Broker Academy, pointing out that these brokers are improving their local communities. Also, some of AHCT's employees have become licensed brokers which will save the organization money since AHCT will not have to pay the call center to hire additional brokers.

G. Community Outreach Update

Ms. Hendricks reviewed various efforts and initiatives to promote Medicaid Unwinding undertakings as well as the upcoming OE. Ms. Hendricks emphasized that AHCT held 216 total outreach events, which is a 122.6 percent increase when compared to the prior year; it creates stronger relationships between the Health Equity and Outreach Team and those community partners. Ms. Hendricks mentioned community partner Zoom meetings, Healthy Chats for consumers and the annual Community Conference along with OE fairs at various locations.

H. Future Agenda Items

James Michel, CEO, provided possible future agenda items, which included OE enrollment as well as the presentation of the Leaver Survey. Chair Sean King acknowledged Theodore Doolittle's, Kevin Galvin's and Karen Siegel's service to this Committee. Sheldon Toubman encouraged compiling a report on Covered Connecticut and how people are accessing the benefits.

Mr. Michel noted that AHCT will reach out to the carriers if they can share this information with AHCT. A brief discussion ensued around dental insurance coverage. Mr. Toubman also inquired whether DSS would have the NEMT information. Ms. Rich-Bye noted that DSS also administers this portion of the program. Mr. Michel stated that a DSS representative will be invited to the next meeting of the Committee. Mr. Toubman also touched upon the issue of wheelchair insurance coverage.

I. Adjournment

A motion was requested to adjourn the meeting. Motion was made by Sheldon Toubman and was seconded by Sean King. Roll call vote was ordered. **Motion passed unanimously.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:38 p.m.