Medicaid Long Term Services and Supports Rebalancing Initiatives Steering Committee

Friday, July 12, 2024
10:30 AM – 12:30 PM
Virtual Meeting
Meeting Summary

Members Present: Mary Ann Langton, Bonnie Meyers, Elaine Kolb, Melissa Morton, Laura Snow Robinson, Cathy Ludlum, Susan Raimondo, Michele Jordan, Maggie Ewald, Mairead Painter, Tom Fiorentino, Kevin Brophy, Tom Wade, Karyl Lee Hall, Erin Leavitt-Smith, Krista Ostaszewski, Natalie Shurtleff

Members Excused:

Members Absent: Amy Dumont, Jennifer Switalski, Tom Fiorentino

Members of the Public: Greg Bennett, Melissa Augeri, Vanessa O'Neal-Campbell, Hye-Yeon Ryu Kim, Heather Ferguson-Hull, Guerda Sainval, Tasha Erskine, Mike Peccerilli, Maria Figueroa, Daniel Beem, Julie Otterpilot, Colleen Hudson, Sylvia Crespo, Christine Weston, Chrissy Reynolds, Andrea Barrett, Christine Cianciolo, Stacey Larrabee, Dane Lustila, Deb Migneault, Julie Robison, Hope Mitchell-Williams, Pooja Modi, Tracy Wodatch, Cynthia Scott, Claire Volain, Jay Katz, Matt Barrett, Randell Wilson, Melva Cooper, Amanda Mangiafico, Paul Ford, Sheldon Toubman, Brenda Texidor, Mike Starkowski, Christoper Washington, Toni Ortega, Sylvia Vigil-Steinetz, Kathy Flaherty, Angie Pearson, Mag Morelli, Theresa Brown, Ellis Dillon, Julia Fishman, Cole Cooper, Lorena Emanuel, Saraid Garcia, Cindy Majersky, Michael Werner, Stacie Ellis, Abdaleh Mohamoud, Nadine Morse, Martha Porter, Christine Bailey, Cynthia Carter, Ken Przybysz, Melissa Lang

1. The meeting was called to order by Mairead Painter, Co-Chair at 10:30.

2. Mairead made a motion to approve the June minutes. Melissa moved to accept. Erin seconded. Kevin, Karyl Lee, and Natalie abstained. Elaine has a correction which is the newest member Tom Wade lives in Milford and not at Independent NW as the minutes say. Minutes approved with correction.

   Natalie Shurtleff is the committee's newest member from AARP. Welcome Natalie!

3. MFP Report Out – Christine

   - Christine shared that Lauren Carabetta who was the manager for MFP has taken another position within the Department. Her replacement is in the works. There is no report out for this meeting. Christine will provide numbers.
   - The Dept is doing the quarterly meeting with the contracted access agencies.
     - The state police will present for the care managers during the retreat to support situational awareness and home safety.
     - The Adult Day Center Association will also be attending to talk to case managers about their underutilized program. This is an option for people 18 and older who are transitioning and may want that option.
     - Also being offered is a health and wellness spotlight for HCs, TCs and Case managers.
     - The retreat is next week.

4. On-going Business

   FI transition - Christine

- MaryAnn shared that a group of people with disabilities have been meeting with Holly and working on some of the hiccups. For example, the enrollment process is taking seven weeks. She is hoping that by August, it will be better.
- Christine mentioned that one of the biggest complaints was the onboarding process. It was taking a long time to go through the criminal background checks. Cathy and MaryAnn said in a separate meeting that GTI switched companies which greatly changes the turnaround time. Christine is trying to verify this with GTI.
- Another complaint was the delay in setting up the provider credentialing system that went live 2.5 weeks ago. A significant amount of work was done to have them confidently credential waiver providers.
- GTI also manages payroll, onboarding, and fiscal intermediary responsibilities of the self-directed staff in the state, especially those under the collective bargaining agreement.
- There were also a few rate changes for the self-directed PCA's that GTI is trying to work rapidly to make sure there is no problems there.
- MaryAnn mentioned that the new hire orientation has been directing people what they can and cannot do while on the job.
    - OPM will raise this issue in a meeting on July 17th with the union. They will also start monitoring the new hire orientations.

<u>COPE update/refresher</u> – Hye Yeon

- The American Rescue Act invests in Care of Older People with dementia in their Environment (COPE). Program works with informal caregivers to expand environmental adaptation and the use of assistive technology.
- Supports are targeted to unpaid caregivers to help manage dementia-related behavioral and psychological symptoms and caregiver distress.
- Occupational therapists and registered nurses trained in the Cobalt approaches will serve as a coach or consultant to the family, delivering 13 visits over three to six months.
- Confident caregiver is a program under COPE designed for persons living at home with a disability other than dementia and experiencing deteriorating quality of life.
- COPE and Confident caregiver services is only offered once in a calendar year.

<u>CAPABLE update/refresher</u> – Hye Yeon

- Community Aging in Place-Advancing Better Living for Elders (CAPABLE) is a team of a nurse, occupational therapist, and a handy worker.
    - Includes 10 visits with OT, RN, and handy person (home mods)
    - 4 to 5 months long with limited budget for repair and minor home mods and use of AT.
    - Includes ramp, grab bar, widening of doorways, use of lifeline.
- Only home health agencies who have been licensed by the Dept. of Public Health can be the billing provider.
- DSS was able to get a rate increase of 15% for COP Confident caregivers and Capable.
- Several agencies have reached out to inquire about the provider process but haven't started the enrollment process yet. DSS is hoping to get more providers before the July Launch date.
- Typical ARP projects ended in March, but this was embedded in all the 1915C waivers. OPM is currently sustaining the program and it's been extended through June. These programs will be used ongoing and won't be cut after the funding.
- Julie mentioned to encourage providers, provider organizations and home health agencies to find out more about enrolling in these programs. There is free training and support.

- Providers are concerned about the cost of the program. The increase that the state came up with may not be enough to cover this. There is another concern about the lack of workforce.

5. New Business

Settings Rule overview – RCH's

- Changes were made related to the CMS home and community-based settings rule and the opportunity for individuals to live in these settings if they met the settings rule and receive waiver services. In the MFP rules, there isn't the same opportunity.
- There are 91 registered RCHs and 57 of them are in full compliance. 19 of them have declined to participate.
- There are 129 individuals that are receiving HCBS services in RCHs right now.
- CMS is not requiring RCHs to comply with HCBS settings rule. CMS questioning the RCHs that are inside a nursing home though. HCBS settings rule is for choice, control, and the rights of the individual.
- DSS will get public comment from family members, staff and the people that live in these RCHs and submit for CMS sign off and approval.
- Karyl Lee has had problems with RCHs because they are relatively remote and walking to the community is a problem. RCHs don't offer buses for people.
    - Mairead responded that as new RCHs open, they are looking at having them on bus lines.
    - Melva mentioned that the state does offer medical transportation and the same company does offer some non-medical transportation as well. She will get more information on that.
- MFP has a more restrictive definition of qualified housing. Christine wrote to CMS about this and is waiting for their response.
- A question was asked if a person went to an RCH and then decided they wanted to go into an apartment instead, can they still get support with the RAP and housing vouchers.
    - RJ is going to take that back and get an answer for the next meeting.
- A listing of both RCH's that are compliant and not compliant will be sent to everyone in the meeting.

Status of Waiver waitlists

- Susan asked about the status of various waitlists for the waiver programs.
- PCA wait list is three years out. Will be significant move on this because DSS is coming up with a more efficient way to manage the referrals. There will be several people onboarded onto the PCA waiver between now and Fall.
- Acquired Brain Injury has a long waitlist.
- CHCP has no waitlist.
- Katie Beckett is four years out. Legislature has done a study to see what it would cost to clear the waitlist and cover them under Medicaid.
- Mental Health Waiver has no waitlist.
- Bonnie asked how the ABI waivers can be increased.
    - Christine answered that the ABI waiver is significantly higher than nearly all the other programs in HCBS. Advocacy, through data, speaking to OPM and evaluating the waitlist to see if individuals are being served in Medicaid might help. There is no magic way.

ARPA – Adult Daycare bill PACE Study - Angie

- PACE stands for Program of All-inclusive Care for the Elderly.
- It is a model of care made up of 11 healthcare professionals: PCP, nurses, social workers, physical and occupational therapists, nutritionists, and other specialists.

- Services include socialization, transportation, home services such as PC's, meal delivery and emergency lifeline button.
- Enhances quality of life for older adults ages 55 and over who meet nursing home level of care and can live safely in the community.
- At the end of the month, there will be a presentation by Bold Age, a PACE provider who administers 14 PACE programs in eight different states.
- Work group is funding a study with market analysis and readiness assessment to determine if the PACE program is right for CT. The attachment, in the steering committee meeting invite, offers more information.

Long Term Services and Supports Plan

- Melissa informed members that the next iteration of the States three-year long-term services and supports plan is under development. It is due this January 1st.
- The main charge of the statutorily established Long Term Care Planning Committee, comprised of 10 different state agencies, is to develop a 3-year plan with objectives and recommendations to improve CTs long term services and supports system.
- This plan was developed in the late 90s and in 2007 the main goal was to rebalance the system and track goals.
- 75% of people who received long term supports receive them in the community.
- Plan is broken down into sections:
    - Quality of life and service
    - Infrastructure of long-term services and supports.
    - Transportation
    - Financial assistance
    - Workforce development
- Melissa is looking for input on the recommendations and will be sending a feedback form and recommendations for people to review and respond. This can be emailed or mailed back to her by August 31st.
- Melissa will also be holding focus groups and doing in person and virtual meetings to obtain feedback from people who use the system. Let her know if you are interested.
- Eligibility will be included in the plan.
- Elaine would like to eliminate all waiting lists.

Wheelchair Repair Law

MaryAnn mentioned the flyer for the Wheelchair Repair Law. She asked if it could be sent out to the people that attend the meeting.

6. Steering Committee conversation
    - In the last meeting, people discussed having a small group to talk about ideas around the purpose and outcomes of the committee as well as membership diversity. Tom joined the group which is nice. Need people with lived experience, transition coordinators and specialized case managers.
    - MaryAnn, Elaine, and Cathy would all like to be a part of this group.

7. Public Comment
   None

8. Meeting adjourned at 12:10 p.m.

Next meeting: **VIRTUAL September 6, 2024**