**CRC Advisory Minutes**

3/9/17

**Advisory members’ action steps/follow-up requests:**

Share any/all of below as pertinent to your team. Highlights:

1. Prior to next meeting, please ask teams if they have any feedback, questions, project ideas, or resources to share.
2. Share any updates that are pertinent to your team.

Thanks!

***Style note****- Agenda content in black text; discussion, further information and follow-up requested in* ***purple****.*

**Warm welcome to Evelyn Lauture** – her first meeting; will be representing intake on alternating meetings with Mia Concordia.

**Selected Updates**

* **Website- What’s New:** 
  + LIHEAP (Fuel Assist) new [maximum benefit limits](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/LIHEAPincomeeligibility2017.pdf)
  + [2017 Special Needs Camp](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/SpecificPopulations/2017SummerCamp.pdf) list updated
  + New handout: [Non-Citizens: Know Your Rights](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/SpecificPopulations/SP_Immigrants_Prms_Undoc/Non-Citizens_Know_Your_Rights_Handout.pdf)
  + New [Rest Homes](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/BN_Housing-V2_Services.html#RestHomes) spreadsheet
  + [Single Room Occupancy](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/BN_Housing-V2_General.html#RoomingHouses) (SRO) listings update
    - Diana created new spreadsheet. Old outdated listings have been culled- only include current SROs. Details are outdated, but kept them in case people want to see photos.
* **Housing Speakers**- last month’s staff meeting. [PowerPoint](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/Housing-AffordableHousingBasics-MBHP_2-23-17.pptx) on website. Sent [Q&A notes](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/Housing-Staff_Meeting_Presentation_QandA_2-17.docx) via e-mail, also now on website. [RAFT Fact Sheet](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/Raft_fact_sheet_FY17.pdf) (FY17) also posted.

**Feedback/Resource Sharing**

* **Feedback, questions, project ideas, resource sharing from teams?**
  + **None at this time.** One representative is waiting for a team member to e-mail details of request and will forward.
* **Resource Reminders and Updates**
  + **Follow-Up MassHealth PT-1 Changes –** we’ve been reassured by MassHealth that the new “attestation” that all info is true is targeted to declaring medical necessity (eliminating using PT-1 transportation to services that are not covered by MassHealth such as AA meetings).
    - **Related question-** can PT-1 be used to get pt to psychotherapy provided by a LICSW? Patient is being told no. Ellen will investigate.
  + **Options Counseling-** lesser known/underutilized resource; connect to long-term services in the community to **prevent unnecessary institutionalization**. Options Counselors can help develop a long-term care plan and connect you to options to remain in the community. They are available to meet in-person and by phone or email. To connect with an Options Counselor, contact your regional ADRC agency: <http://www.mass.gov/elders/docs/adrc-member-agencies.pdf> (which are ASAPs and Centers for Independent Living.)

Any experience with this program? Feedback welcome.

Clarified in meeting that this program is for seniors and adults with disabilities. **They don’t provide services, they counsel about available options, try to ensure people don’t fall through the cracks, a SNF diversion program.**

**Programs with similar names:**

* **Community Choices** program, which provides MassHealth eligible elders at imminent risk of nursing home placement with increased home care services such as personal care, home health assistance, and transportation services- here is a link to [**Boston Senior Homecare’s Choices program**](http://bostonseniorhomecare.info/programs/choicesprogram.html). (Offered through the ASAPs.)
* **Senior Care Options (SCO)** program. SCOs are like Elder Service Plans/PACE plans- provide augmented services at home. Must have MassHealth and they must agree to use only providers and services within their senior care organization’s network and must choose a doctor from within the network as their primary care doctor. [More info](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/MassHealth/BN_HCC_MassHealth_Dual%20Eligibles.html#SCO).
  + **The RIDE Uber and Lyft pilot now open to all RIDE users.** 
    - **Sign-up required**; **allow 1-2 weeks to process.** [Sign-Up and for details](http://www.mbta.com/paratransitpilot). Also must sign up for Uber or Lyft. (Must already be signed-up for the Ride.)
    - **Benefits:**
      * **On-demand service.** Don’t need to arrange in advance (can help avoid patients stranded here because appointments were delayed or additional testing needed, etc.)
      * **Individual ride-** not shared ride.
    - **Cost** may be more or less than standard the RIDE service. Customer pays $2 and then any costs above $15 (MBTA pays maximum of $13).
    - **Those without smartphones:**
      * Lyft customers can use a phone-in option.
      * Uber will provide smartphones to a limited number of eligible customers for use on a limited basis to book trips.
    - Patients will need to decide if this option is best for them. For those who can afford it convenience may be worth any additional expense – and includes subsidy that a cab doesn’t.
    - **We have a list of questions in to the Pilot.** Will update when we know more. Questions include any guidance as to how large a radius from Boston will $15 cover in normal conditions.
  + **Mass Legal Answers Online – FREE online Legal Advice for Public Benefits and Other Legal Problems** [**www.masslao.org**](http://www.masslao.org) (Massachusetts Law Reform Institute, with assistance from the Volunteer Lawyers Project). Low income Massachusetts residents create an account on the secure website, then log in and post their legal questions. **Volunteer lawyers answer the questions through the website.**Legal Services agencies are likely to be able to answer questions about public benefits more readily than private bar members. Examples:
* public benefits eligibility and advocacy
* rights in an eviction or bad rental conditions
* defending against debt collection
* advice for a claim against an employer who failed to pay for hours worked
* brief questions about a divorce, child custody or child support

Clients’ income must be at or below [250% of the federal poverty guidelines](https://www.payingforseniorcare.com/longtermcare/federal-poverty-level.html#title1). They can only ask questions related to non criminal law issues, and can't already have another attorney. The volunteer attorney won't be able to talk with clients by phone, represent them in court or prepare paperwork. **Clients must create the account and ask the question themselves.** (Not able to answer queries from advocates.)

May be particularly helpful alternative to calling legal services for those with limited phone plans, limited time to wait on hold and/or difficulties talking on phone.

* [**Home and Community Based Waivers**](http://healthcare.partners.org/ss/ssframebottom/staffresources/New%20Site/Basic%20Needs/MassHealth/BN_HCC_MassHealth_MainPage.html#HomeCommunityWaiver)**-** now include spousal assets**.** The MassHealth Home and Community Based Waiver program provides frail elders with the long-term care services and supports needed to remain at home.  Some of the services provided under the Waiver are home care aides, personal care services, skilled nursing, housekeeping, laundry, companion services, meal delivery, grocery shopping and transportation.  **Until now, a healthy spouse’s assets were not counted in determining an applicant’s eligibility for the Waiver.  This is no longer the case.** MassHealth is now imposing an asset limit of $120,900 for spouses of elders seeking eligibility for the Home and Community Based Services Waiver (the "Waiver). This **applies to anyone who began Waiver services after January 1, 2014 – some have been/will be removed from program.**Brings this program into line with spousal protections for those applying for MassHealth for LTC/SNF.
  + **Allsup Social Work Month message** 
    - Marketing to staff. How widespread? Do we need to counter-market?
    - **They are one of many companies** that can help people apply for disability, **for a fee**. They report that they help people apply successfully- and it may be worthwhile if true, especially for people with borderline applications. However I can’t find independent corroboration that they are as effective as they say. Individuals will need to make their own decision. Here’s our website description:
      * There are many businesses that will assist with applications and appeals for a fee. Fees are determined by the court system, usually a percentage of the initial award, and generally are only charged if client wins. However, these **fees can be significant - up to 25% of any back-pay (maximum of $6,000). Applicants should carefully weigh the cost/benefit of hiring one of these companies.** For example, it may not be cost-effective for those who have a strong and clear-cut case for proving disability.
    - Seems like only a few SW staff have been approached directly- but may be approaching other non-SW staff. **Ellen is happy to be liaison to any agency that is marketing to staff**- please feel free to send them my way.
  + **Request from Onc team to translate the Accommodations list into Spanish and Chinese** **-** estimate how often would be used and what languages? Need to balance concern with cost- $150 for the brief version of “Programs without Immigration Status Requirements” document. We make changes up to several times a year.
    - **This group rarely gets this type of request.** Consensus that most pertinent content- facility name, phone and $- don’t get translated anyway. One member said that in these case these patients/families need extra assistance anyway so translation can be done individually. Ellen will circle back to requester- and consider if these are clinical trials pts of the trials may have available funding.
  + **Has anyone used the Community Resource Connector or heard of anyone using it? Suggestions?**
    - Had briefly presented about this at Staff Meeting.
    - See it under **Partners Applications > Utilities > Community Resource Connector**. (**Remember at first sign-in page only enter your e-mail, NOT your Partners password.** When you are redirected to Partners login pages OK to enter your Partners login and password.
    - Reviewed briefly during meeting. Looked up Food Pantries and Elder Service. Good results, but some lack of specificity that could be confusing especially to those who may not be very familiar with resources- e.g., Elder Service search yielded elder service agencies (ASAPs), but also Elder Service Plans (PACE) program- must be a member, get care through program, etc.
    - If you get a chance to use it let me know what you think, pros/cons and if you have suggestions to relay.

**Next meeting: Thurs June 8, 12:00 - 1:00, SS Conf room**