Personal Care Attendant Quality

Home Care Workforce Council

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# Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council

Council Meeting

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|  | June 11, 2024 | 2:00-3:30 PM | Zoom Meeting |

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| coUNCIL members in attendance | Justin Graceffa, Chris Hoeh, Kiame Mahaniah, Kristen McCosh, Tamara Huntley, Dianna Hu, Tom Hooper, Cindy Purcell |
| Council members not in attendance |  |
| Council staff attending | Jocelyn Gordon |
|  chair | Kiame Mahaniah |
| Note taker | Leanne Burke |

General Session: Kiame noted quorum and called the meeting to order at 2:00 PM.

1. **Council Organizational Matters**
2. Review and approval of the Council meeting minutes from April 2024 meeting
3. Review and Approval of Revised Council Vision Statement

Jocelyn asked for a motion to vote Justin motioned, Tom seconded all in favor the motion passes.

1. **PCA Program Updates**
2. MassHealth Update

EVV Update including available data on Wave 1 and 2

Gerri stated that the numbers are as of 6/20/24 it includes consumers who are also being set up for EVV but are still likely a few weeks away from the actual EVV start date. The number of PCA consumers and surrogates who are using EVV, there are 2,940 consumers using EVV and there are 855 surrogates and 4,482 PCA’s. The next numbers will be the people who have completed EVV training, which is 447 consumers, 284 surrogates, and 934 PCA. 594 devices have been provided to consumers and surrogates, and 802 devices have been requested by PCAs. Kiame asked is it that most people are not requesting the training? They're just jumping straight using the app. Is that why there's such a discrepancy between the number of people trained and the number of people using it? Gerri responded, training isn't mandatory, not least for the consumer. Chris asked if there were any number of consumers who are should have be using EVV on the number of people who consumer employers, who've been are in the sort of sanction process, because at a certain point, if you don't comply as a consumer employer, then you're booted off the program, you're moved into another program. Gerri responded, I don't have those numbers currently, but I will say that I don't believe that sanctions have officially started, but I can confirm that. Gerri will investigate it and see if that information is available.

PCA ID Card RFR

The ID cards are on track but still in review will be posted summer 24. The complex care survey, initially t, when it went out the first time, had 790, when it went out again, we now have 1,970 responses to date, and expecting more to come in. The survey itself is a tool among many ways to solicit feedback on this topic, and we are kind of discussing internally other possible ways to solicit feedback. Justin stated that the council members had raised concerns about the survey. Had some suggestions for it, and were hoping to have a meeting, with MassHealth to discuss this further. Jocelyn responded by letting the council know that a meeting with MassHealth is in the works. Also, feedback from the council members was shared directly via email with MassHealth.

Independent Assessment Entity

The RFI is still open, and it closes on June 28, once it closes and the RFI is reviewed, the plan is to look at all the feedback and incorporate as much as possible into the model contract.

Chris stated that the council is opposed to this and the IE, and RFR, and that we are very open to joining with the community and looking at the problems that have been identified. MassHealth has decided to just keep plowing ahead with this, RFR. My then questions are the so there was a model contract that was posted, there was an RFR that was posted. Are those all going to be amended, and by what time? And I've seen that the close of the RFR, if you go on their website, it's contradictory. It says two different dates. So, do you have clarification.

Gerri responded that the plan is to when that feedback is received, to amend if, where and when. If possible, the model contract, but it's based on the feedback that's received. That is my understanding. So, yes, the new due date is that we that's what you were referring to. It was extended to June 28.

For Health Update

Recruiting Pilot Expansion

Erica shared a slide with a table to show an overview of our jobs, job seeker recruitment events since April, and the events are listed by priorities. So just a reminder that priority one sites are career centers and community colleges and counties that the council, in partnership with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, deemed as having the greatest need for PCAs, or the greatest opportunity to place job seekers as PCAs. 18 events that we have held since you last met in eight. Old, we spoke with 245 job seekers, and among those, 245 job seekers, at least 67 have created an account on the Mass PCA directory. So, we're really pleased to see that over a quarter of these attendees have created a profile on the directory. Next slide she shared a heat map of our job seeker recruitment efforts since our statewide expansion began in January. This map is showing the career centers, the mass higher career centers and community colleges that we've been networking with, so those sites that are white, we've spoken with folks from those sites that haven't actually arranged for a job seeker event yet, the sites that are in yellow, we've we have an event that's scheduled, and then the organizations that are in green show the sites that we have presented to their job seekers. Also, the sites that are in the darker green, we've attended more information sessions or job fairs with those sites. And then the lighter green, we've attended fewer. We've attended more than three information sessions or job fairs with mass hire Central. So, the mass hire Worcester Career Center, mass hire Boston, and mass hire Brockton and Pam who couldn't make this call today, has been working hard to speak with staff from all these sites and all of the sites that we have gone to present to their job seekers. She's constantly working toward getting things scheduled again in the books.

Jocelyn asked to clarify how the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development work that has been initiated with sheltered immigrants’ feeds into the priority system. Erica responded I did present a little bit of an overview of how we kind of came to this determination for priorities. So, priority one was based on the council's analysis of looking at that consumer employer survey that was distributed last December, there was a survey question asking, Are you looking to hire a PCA? So, based on the outcomes from that question, based on the county representation, along with what we're seeing in the mass PCA directory data, specifically the proportion of PCAs to consumer employers from the county, that's how we determined our priority one areas, and so mass hires priority one areas did somewhat align with our priority one, but then they also had other priority sites that we then listed as priority two, and those are based on their own sort of determination. So, the sites that were involved with the legal clinics that were held to help increase work authorizations for job seekers, as well as just generally, the resources that they have available to support those job seekers who are sheltered immigrants.

Status of Mass PCA Directory Accessibility Issues

Lisa stated I wanted to provide an update on some work that we have been doing for the last few months or so in order to bring the accessibility of the directory to the to some current standards that are in place. The first thing that we did was scanned the directory with this interesting tool that shows how people with different disabilities access the information that was on it. Our IT team was able to fix the majority of the issues that were really largely related to things like font sizes needed to get a little bit bigger, the contrast, for some things needed to change. The contrast needed to be more of a contrast. And there were places where we did not have alternate text, and we added the alternate text. So, I'm happy to report that the majority of the work is completed. There is some work that does remain. It's a really large project, so we have to actually update the entire directory framework so that we can incorporate the final few accessibility updates that we have to make to the directory. And from what I know right now, our proposed deadline for completion of that is either on or before June 30, 2025.

Jocelyn asked while the directory framework is being updated, doesn't affect the current whatever the current usability of the directory is at the right? So, the directory will continue to function with all the accessibility updates that you've completed, as well as any upgrades that are completed prior to the update of the framework and then during the update of the framework. Is that correct? Lisa responded that before we go live with the new framework, we will institute our sort of normal course of ensuring that everything is tested, that it's all working, sort of in a development environment before we go live, so we'll be really sure that things will be working the way that they're supposed to be working. Erica continued the next slide has the mass PCA directory data, and the chart on the left shows the number of job seekers who have created a profile each month and who are also active and available to work. So, we're really pleased to see that it is in alignment with our statewide recruitment expansion that there is this increase in the January, February, months and onward And then the chart on the right shows the total number of job seekers and consumers who are registered on the directory. So, this is anyone who has filled out their profiles up to the point where they at least have their zip code, their state, location available to share. that we've reached over 10,000 job seekers on the mass PCA directory.

1. **Executive Director Report**
2. **Updates on Funding for PCA Directory Improvements**

Jocelyn stated it appears that we will be moving ahead with directory improvements funded through a source funded by the state, the requested improvements include technical changes to the directory that will keep data fresh and current regarding the availability of PCAs and interest in work that is available by consumer employers. There'll be an update to the notification system that will allow emails to be responded to or text to be responded to in the moment, and information shared about the availability of a job or a PCA. Additionally, we are planning to strengthen the geolocation so that traveling distances are more accurate and public transportation information is also potentially provided. And we're looking to share Community Guidelines on the directory set up an internal texting for job seekers and consumer employers to communicate and arrange for an opportunity.

1. **New Immigrant Recruiting Initiative**

A new immigrant recruiting initiative the council, along with EOHHS, the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development, Metro North, Mass Hire Career Center, the 1199 SEIU training and employment fund, and for Health Consulting began a collaboration in May to bring the personal care attendant job opportunity to a group of sheltered immigrants in Middlesex County, 14 new immigrants with work authorizations began to receive ESOL and computer literacy classes with a curriculum focused on locating and providing PCA services to consumer employers currently eligible for MassHealth PCA program, computer, literacy classes include PCA logistics, such as instruction on the use of the PCA directory and completing a time sheet in ESOL, computer literacy and PCA Logistics, along with interpreters and wraparound support, including child care, lunch and transportation for the participants, is being provided through a Commonwealth Corporation grant received by the training and upgrading training and employment fund with advocacy support from the 1199 SEIU. The Council convened and the collaboration and we're working with for health and the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development to coordinate in person and or virtual interviews between new residents and the PCA program, consumer employers in need of PCA services, the consumer employer MassHealth members will make all of the hiring decisions as always, and all the collaborators are hoping to replicate this approach at other mass higher sites, and we are speaking both with the Executive Office of Labor and Workforce Development and the 1199 SEIU about the possibility of developing a supervisory, mentoring support for these new immigrants as well. We have funding through the end of June.

1. **Committee Updates:**

Training Committee

Justin shared the first courses of the curriculum are going to be coming out in July. The new courses offered are on food safety, cross contamination, end of life care, cultural awareness, working with non-verbal consumers and independent living and living with disability. There is going to be some more focus groups with PCAs and consumer employers. There's going to be videos that include consumer employers and PCAs talking about their experiences around self-direction and how it applies to those topics. There's going to be consumer employer speakers to discuss more on self-direction. There's also a hope to have more consumer employers become facilitators within the program to help teach some of these courses. And then there's also talks on measuring the impact of self-direction as part of the evaluation process. And then in terms of promotion, there was a marketing folder made, and spoke about what the professional development program is going to be, the money offered for it, and both the union and the training and employment fund were going to distribute that. And then we also had kind of a, kind of a subcommittee meeting of that committee to discuss a third party, to review the training program, results, outcomes.

Racial Justice and Equity

Chris provided an update that stating we're looking for a vendor to manage a formal complaint resolution, problem solving process that will support PCAs and consumer employers who are experiencing racial discrimination, sexual harassment, bullying, other abusive behaviors, as well as related matters, with a conflict resolution approach, an education approach, we have to develop a narrative for an RFR request for response.

1. **Additional Items**

Chris asked if recording meetings would be permitted, a discussion was had among the council members. Chris made a motion to record meetings, Justin seconded 3 against, 2 in favor the No’s have it. Jocelyn will add to the agenda for the next meeting for further discussion.

Chris asked for a motion to conclude the meeting, Chris motioned, and Justn seconded the motion. All in favor. Meeting adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,

Leanne Burke