Personal Care Attendant Quality

Home Care Workforce Council

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# Personal Care Attendant Quality Home Care Workforce Council

Council Meeting

General Session

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| Minutes | June 9, 2020 | 1:00-2:00 p.m. | Zoom Conference Call |

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| coUNCIL  members in attendance | Lauren Peters, Karen Shack, Ann Ackil, Christopher Hoeh, Joe Tringali, Janet Rico, Cindy Purcell, Kristen McCosh |
| Council members not in attendance |  |
| Staff attending | Michelle Byrd |
| chair | Lauren Peters |
| Note taker | Michelle Byrd |
| agenda setting | No issues were added to previously-issued agenda |

Lauren Peters called the meeting to order at 1:06 p.m. and asked that Council members acknowledge the role of the Council on the issue of systemic racism. Becca Gutman thanked Lauren for opening up the discussion and hopes the Union can work with the Council discussing the role of systemic racism in the homecare workforce. Karen Shack suggested going forward with adding this issue as a regular Council meeting agenda item. Lauren will include it in the Executive Director Report.

1. **Council organizational matters**
2. Review and approval of the general session minutes from April 7, 2020

Lauren asked for a motion to approve the minutes. A motion was made and seconded and the minutes were unanimously approved.

1. **Executive Directors Report**
2. Covid19 Update

The Commonwealth continues moving through opening phases with a number of industries opening at cautious rates based on evaluation of metrics and data. PPE update on obtaining gloves for PCA workers. 700,000 gloves have been obtained and the Council will work with 1199SEIU to distribute to PCAs. The MassHealth PPE program continues to distribute masks and gloves to consumers. Each consumer can obtain a l4 day supply for a maximum of two workers. Consumers can access PPE through DME with a prescription from their physician. Becca noted that on-site distribution of PPE will take place on a monthly basis. The website for PCAs to request masks is available and are mailed directly to the worker. Karen Shack asked if there was any training for PCAs on safely using PPE equipment. Becca noted that the Training and Upgrading Fund is working on training videos. Joe Tringali noted that issues of cross contamination need to be addressed. Becca will discuss with TUF and with the LMC to develop training for PCAs. Janet Rico noted it should be a top priority and Paul Spooner suggested adding this training to the New Hire Orientation. Karen added that it would be helpful if consumers could send PCAs to a web safety training link. Lauren agreed and will add this issue to the next LMC meeting agenda. She will also check on any data or statistics collected about the impact on minority and disability communities. She asked that any additional concerns Council members may have be sent to her for review.

1. EAP

The proposal for an employee assistance program available to PCAs was addressed in a side letter to the current Collective Bargaining Agreement. A committee is working on a proposal and will provide it to the Council before the end of June. Karen asked if this will be a part of the EOHHS established EAP or as purchased services. Lauren noted that services will be purchased from an available EAP program.

1. **Program Updates**

A. Recruitment and Retention Report – Lisa Marschke

* Lisa noted that the PCA Fundamentals Curriculum includes training on infection control. She shared a report and noted that there have been on-going Train the Trainer events with a total enrollment rate of 98.
* Lisa noted that the phone survey of consumers receiving 40+ hours of PCA services per week will end in June.

Joe Tringali stated consumers with 40+ hours have difficulties finding PCAs willing to train and provide more complex medical needs for the same base pay rate. He states we need a differential pay rate and suggests a study to address the issue. Chris noted his agenda items were not added to today’s meeting agenda items and states the current HHA work-around is not working. Consumers are not aware of the HHA option to have spouses or guardians provide PCA services. Sherri Hannigan stated the information has been communicated to consumers. Paul Spooner stated consumers should contact their PCM agency for guidance. Chris noted this is not part of the current work-around. Whitney Moyer noted that updates are provided in the weekly Covid 19 situational conference calls. She noted there is a conflict of interest in having spouses and guardians providing PCA services as part of the current MH PCA program policy and MH is not pursuing a waiver from the federal government. Joe suggested the Council support differential pay rates for PCAs however Whitney noted that MH would need to study the metrics of the system wide program.

Becca stated that the LMC should address this issue. Lauren agreed and noted that currently there has not been a decision on the extension of PCA hazard pay past July 31st. Chris noted he supports the extension. Lauren stated the next Council meeting will take place in August but will work on adding an additional meeting in July and will check the calendar for possible dates. She asks Council members forward their suggestions for agenda items a week in advance of scheduled meetings.

With no further agenda items open for discussion, Lauren Peters ended the meeting at 2:13 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Byrd