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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|  | October 5, 2021 | 2:00-3:30 p.m. | Zoom Conference Call |

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| coUNCIL members in attendance | Ann Ackil, Lauren Peters, Karen Shack, Christopher Hoeh, Kristen McCosh, Cindy Purcell, Tim Kunzier, Joe Tringali |
| 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 2:00 p.m.

1. **Council organizational matters**

Review and approval of the minutes from the August 10, 2021 Council meeting

Ann Ackil made a motion to approve the August 10th minutes. Chris Hoeh seconded the motion, and the minutes were approved by unanimous vote.

1. **Executive Director’s Report**

Update on Advancing Racial Justice and Equity in the PCA Program

Lauren reported that the committee will meet again in a few weeks. The committee has asked PCA workers to attend. Chris Hoeh asked Council members to suggest consumers of color who may want to participate in the committee. Future meetings will focus on planning for public forums.

Labor Management Committee update

Attending council members at the last Labor Management meeting included Lauren, Ann Ackil and Chris Hoeh. As part of the provision of the last collective bargaining agreement, the committee discussed advanced PCA tasks. The Training and Upgrading Fund presented models for assessing tasks. The sub committee will suggest next steps at upcoming meetings.

Chris Hoeh and Joe Tringali have volunteered to participate on the EVV sub-committee. The first meeting will take place October 6. The EVV MOU will be sent to all committee members and the report will be shared with Council members. Chris noted PCAs using their own personal devices have expressed privacy concerns. A voucher will be provided for PCAs to purchase devices expressly for EVV implementation and use. Lauren informed Council members the first report will be due January 1, 2022.

Pre-pandemic New Hire Orientation sanctions were paused during the pandemic. This has come to an end and sanctions will now be imposed starting with those PCAs sanctioned prior to the pandemic. PCAs will have till the end of the year to complete New Hire Orientation.

PCA vaccination requirement update

Deadline for PCAs to receive the full series of vaccinations is October 31, 2021. MassHealth mailed a notification of the requirements to both consumers and PCAs.

The Council is required to impact bargain over the requirement and the first session has taken place. Union proposals included additional educational training, time-off requests, and confidentiality of medical contraindication information. The Union supports PCAs being vaccinated. PCA attestation forms have been provided and PCAs are expected to share with employers. Consumers may ask for a letter from a physician, in the case of PCAs requesting a medical exemption however they are instructed not to retain paperwork regarding vaccination status. Chris Hoeh requested the forms being distributed be sent to Council members. Joe Tringali stated his PCA brought the forms to his attention, and he argued that the credibility of the Council can be brought into question since these forms were not shared with the Council prior to being sent by MassHealth to PCA workers. Lauren noted that the letters had been shared with the Council. Becca Gutman of 1199SEIU asked if consumers were compelled to accept exemptions from PCAs and what next steps may be required. Lauren noted Home Health Agencies have provided guidance on this issue and she will share this information with Council members.

Budget Report

Lauren provided the FY22 Funding 1st Quarter report to Council members. She highlighted that consultant resources include contracts with Recruitment and Retention, Training and Upgrading Fund (TUF) and PPE resources with 1199SEIU.

Council Resources

Chris Hoeh asked Council members to consider how they can support the on-going Council work. He stated he felt that the shortage of PCAs is a crisis. He proposes the Council re-examine if an Executive Director is necessary and that the reinstatement of the Executive Director role be considered. He suggests a sub-committee be established to review a job description for the Executive Director role in the day-to-day operations of the Council office. Joe Tringali and Karen Shack agreed to participate. Kristen agreed and stated she understood the current model of the Chair also assumed the role of Executive Director. Lauren noted that the pause on hiring a new Executive Director was because of the focus on collective bargaining that was taking place at the time. She supports a sub-group to highlight the role of the Executive Director as it relates to the function of the Council. Lauren will review the job description and share it with the workgroup. Chris asked Council members to email him if they wish to participate in the workgroup. The workgroup will present a follow-up at the next Council meeting. Chris asked that budget reports, contracts and minutes be added to the website.

Recruitment and Retention Update

Lisa Marschke reported on the following updates:

* PCA Directory
* The Mass PCA Directory is now on the MassHire Job Quest website
* The Directory is included on Handshake covering 27 Community Colleges
* Lisa presented the Directory at the MassHire Virtual Job Fair
* Consumer Video Series are now available including guidance on hiring PCAs at <https://madirectcare.com>.
* Directory User Support is being provided to PCM Skills Trainers. The Directory Counselor accounts will enable PCM staff to assist consumers in job searches.

Joe Tringali asked if consumers need to provide new job descriptions. Lisa stated that updates to the directory will not impact consumer job descriptions, however she suggested consumers update job postings and descriptions on an on-going basis. Joe and Cindy Purcell stated difficulty in filling PCA positions requiring more advanced medical needs. Joe argued again that differential pay needs to be addressed, to attract PCAs experienced in providing more advanced medical care to consumers who require it.

MassHealth Report

Jarred Damico reported that Tempus Unlimited has been selected as the Fiscal Intermediary. Transition messages have been provided to consumers regarding the process. PCM agencies are involved in the communications regarding the transition. Tempus will host informational meetings and is looking at additional outreach efforts including inserts on PCA pay. Jarred will continue to share updates with the Council. Chris noted the deadline for submitting paperwork is October 8th and asked what will happen on January 1st if paperwork has not been submitted. Jarred will discuss making the website easier to navigate to facilitate the submission of paperwork.

American Rescue Plan Funding for HCBS

Lauren reported that CMS proposal submissions are due October 15, 2021. She asked for indication from Council members if they want to review materials prior to submission. The following Council members indicated their interest:

Chris Hoeh – yes

Karen Shack – yes

Ann Ackil – yes

Kristen McCosh – yes

Joe Tringali – yes

Cindy Purcell – yes

Lauren will schedule a meeting and provide materials for review.

With no other agenda items for discussion. Cindy Purcell made a motion to adjourn, Chris Hoeh seconded the motion, and the meeting adjourned at 3:40 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michelle Byrd