

MassHealth Member Advisory Committee (MAC)

Meeting 5 (virtual)

September 30, 2025, from 12:00 pm to 2:00 pm

Attendance

- 14 out of 17 MAC members were in attendance
- MassHealth: Malinda Ellwood, Viveka Prakash-Zawisza, Celia Segel, MassHealth Eligibility Operations team members
- UMass Chan: Catie Geary, Olivia O'Brien

Welcome and Housekeeping

- The first [MassHealth Program Advisory Committee \(MPAC\)](#) meeting is on October 14th from 2:00pm-3:30pm.
 - The three elected representatives will attend on behalf of the MAC
 - The meeting is open to the public, so anyone can attend.
- Two MAC members will present at the upcoming Delivery System Technical Advisory Council (DSTAC) meeting to discuss the work of the MAC and strengthening member engagement.
- MAC representatives that attend the MPAC and DSTAC meetings will provide updates at the next MAC meeting (#6).

MAC Meeting Schedule

- A voluntary MassHealth 101 Overview will be offered for MAC members on October 28th from 12pm to 2pm (virtual)
- The next MAC Meeting (#6) is on Tuesday, December 2nd, from 12pm to 2pm (virtual)

In-Person Meeting Planning

After discussion, members decided the in-person meeting should be held in early 2026, on a Tuesday afternoon in the Worcester area (a virtual option will still be offered). Some members also volunteered to assist with planning. MassHealth will follow up with additional information about and other logistics. Members can also reach out directly.

Meeting 4 Reflection Survey Results

- Survey feedback was very positive – members were happy to be diving into substantive topics and learning more about MassHealth.

Objectives for Meeting 5

1. Understand the different customer service pathways for support at MassHealth.
2. Learn about organization, coordination and oversight of the customer service and Disability Evaluation Services (DES) entities.
3. Discuss experiences and suggestions to strengthen member experience.

MassHealth Customer Service Pathways

MassHealth Operations gave an overview of MassHealth's [customer service pathways](#).

MassHealth Enrollment Centers (MECs)

MassHealth gave an overview of the seven [MassHealth Enrollment Centers \(MECs\)](#) and the critical role they play in supporting applicants and members throughout the eligibility process. MECs generally focus on assisting individuals with applications and renewals. They can also help check the status of submitted materials, including, e.g., disability evaluations and other forms (but do not assist with health plan enrollments).

Each MEC has a physical location and offers in-person service (walk-in) or virtual assistance by appointment. Each site offers reasonable accommodations and other supports, including e.g., interpreter services for over 150 languages and Video Remote Interpreting (VRI) and Assistive Listening Devices (ALDs) (available upon request).

Discussion

- Members appreciated the flexibility offered by walk-in and virtual options and suggested that the ability to schedule in-person appointments in advance be extended to all sites (this is currently being piloted at the Springfield MEC).
- MAC members want to understand more about utilization of MECs and CSC, and whether one option is more effective at successfully processing applications.
 - MassHealth shared that applicants typically contact MECs by phone, but will follow up with more detail (e.g., estimates on numbers for each)

MassHealth Customer Service

MassHealth presented an overview of customer service operations (managed through a contract with Automated Health Systems (AHS)), including agent training. Customer Service Center (CSC) agents can be reached at (800) 841-2900 (TDD/TTY: 711). Agents assist with all types of MassHealth questions, including eligibility, health plan enrollments, access to care and finding providers. Agents escalate cases to specific program teams (such as Transportation or Pharmacy) as needed.

Discussion

MAC members shared positive experiences with customer service. For example, a member shared an experience where an agent called to check in with them after they had an emergency room visit.

Some MAC members also discussed challenging experiences, including, e.g.:

- “Referred eligible” cases where a person’s MassHealth enrollment originates from being qualified for benefits through another government agency, for example, from receiving social security benefits from the Social Services Administration (SSA).
 - MassHealth explained that MECs/CSC are unable to make changes to any underlying case or member demographic information for these cases, and members must contact the originating agency to make the change.
 - Updates are then sent automatically to MassHealth from the other agency.
 - However, not all members who receive supports from other agencies are referred eligibles (for example, members who may also receive services from the Department of Mental Health (DMH) are not referred eligibles).
- Getting appropriate and efficient support on more technical issues for cases where cases may temporarily exist in multiple systems (i.e. within HIX and MA21)
- Trying to disenroll foster and adopted children from assigned MassHealth health plans (since they are exempt from requirements to enroll in managed care)
- Coordinating between MassHealth and other insurance (also called Third Party Liability (TPL)).

MassHealth confirmed CSC agents undergo training in all these areas (including cultural competence and soft skills) and can access a knowledge center and agent support line.

If a member is unable to resolve an issue with a CSC agent, they can request to speak to a supervisor. Members can also request reference numbers for calls and file grievances (or otherwise share these experiences) with MassHealth. Ideally members also note the date, time, and number they called from when connecting with CSC.

All calls are recorded, and when MassHealth has the reference number for a call, staff can go back and review the interaction and provide education and additional training as appropriate. For example, in response to a concern raised by a MAC member (and others) about an experience involving a member who also received services from DMH being mistakenly attributed as a referred eligible, MassHealth was able to do coaching and policy reminders for the agents involved.

The group spent some time discussing these issues, and MassHealth offered to set up calls with individual members to follow up on specific concerns related to adopted or foster children as well as more technical systems issues.

Customer Service Interactive Voice Response (IVR) and Self-Service Options

MassHealth also reviewed the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) menu process flow for customer service and available self-service options through My Services.

Discussion

One member expressed appreciation for being able to interact with IVR through non-verbal responses (such as pressing a number), which is important for individuals who may have speech or other disabilities.

MAC members also made suggestions for improving self-service functionality, including:

- Adding the ability to see payments (e.g., if MassHealth has paid a claim)
- Having a way for members to communicate and document communication preferences (e.g., email, text, phone call) through the website or app
- Having a chat feature staffed by live people (not AI) that is available online or via text to improve accessibility for members who are Deaf or Hard of Hearing
- Adding access to ASL interpreter options to self-service platforms.

Members also shared the following feedback:

- It is important for agents to value and affirm the lived experience of members, and to treat them respectfully and with cultural competence
 - E.g., asking for and/or consistently using a member's preferred pronouns.
 - Members encouraged more training for agents in these areas
- MassHealth should consider creating some specialty member services areas so that members can be transferred to agents with particular skill sets or experience as applicable
 - E.g., such as agents with more experience in eligibility and enrollment of foster and adoptive youth
 - MassHealth clarified that there are specialty webpages/member services numbers for some areas, such as [TPL](#) and [Coordination of Benefits](#)

MassHealth asked the MAC to continue to send feedback or questions regarding Customer Service (including email) moving forward.

Disability Evaluation Services (DES)

MassHealth presented briefly on disability verification and the supports available to members as they navigate the process. Due to time constraints, there was very little opportunity for questions and discussion on DES processes. MAC members were invited to send feedback or questions about DES directly to MassHealth.

[The Insurance Resource Center for Autism and Behavioral Health](#) was recommended by a MAC member as a helpful resource when going through the disability verification process.

The discussion will be continued at a later meeting.

Setting the MAC Meeting 6 Agenda

MassHealth proposed potentially giving a federal budget update and an introduction to 1115 Waivers at the next MAC meeting, which members supported.

Wrap Up and Closing

Next Steps

MAC members will:

- Complete the Meeting 5 Reflection Survey
- Review the minutes for Meetings 3, 4, and 5
- Email MassHealth if they want to help plan the in-person meeting
- Send additional feedback and questions on customer service and Disability Evaluation Services to MassHealth (email or phone)

MassHealth will:

- Send out Meeting 5 notes for review
- Follow up on questions asked during today's discussion from individual MAC members on strengthening customer service support for families of foster and adopted youth, TPL, and systems challenges.
- Continue tracking goals, agenda suggestions, and Parking Lot items

Parking Lot

- Continuation of learning and discussion on Disability Evaluation Services
- Explanation of aid categories was discussed at a high level and will be addressed at the October MassHealth 101 education session.
- Requirements for health plan or MassHealth network providers regarding soft skills and cultural competency training (similar to customer service agents)