MAC Brainstorming Sessions

Meeting 5: May 22, 2024

Welcome and Check In

Heather welcomed the group and reviewed meeting guidelines. Participants shared a few insights into things they are hoping to continue to learn from the Brainstorming Session process including:

- Clarifying the opportunity the MAC may have, especially in terms of communicating with MassHealth Members
- Clarifying the 'nuts and bolts' of MAC operation

Each group member also shared something they learned from participating in the brainstorming sessions. Members shared:

- They are a great way to hear numerous points of view
- There are different viewpoints on everything
- These sessions are crucial to building an effective MAC
- Collaboration is the mother of equity
- The more voices we hear from the better the MAC will be
- Engaging diverse voices is critical and provides benefits for members themselves as we learn from each other
- Tips for facilitation and smooth meetings
- Strategies for participating on other committees
- Areas where MassHealth can improve
- Areas where we can provide clarity about the MAC
- Listening to people is the key to success
- Coming with openness and elasticity is critical to successful engagement
- Must be respectful of the different ways people share
- The brainstorming sessions demonstrate the amazing diversity in MAC members and the willingness of these members to participate in bettering MassHealth

Review of our Discussions

Heather provided an overview of the topics explored across the Brainstorming Sessions and the overarching themes that emerged. Throughout the course of this meeting, the

1

group will discuss and validate these findings so that they can inform an outreach plan for potential MAC Members.

The group first reviewed the focus of the brainstorming discussions, which included a review of previous application experiences, the MAC ideal approach, and MAC outreach ideas. Overall, the group emphasized that the MAC should represent diverse experiences and recognize intersectionality.

Intersectional Identities of Potential MAC Members

A group member provided context on the term "intersectionality," which was coined by Dr. Kimberle Crenshaw to describe the experience of Black women at "the intersection" of sexism and racism. Since Crenshaw introduced the term, it has been used to describe the experiences of many different communities at the intersection of varying marginalized identities. Through discussions, the group identified the importance of reaching MAC members with intersectional identities. Heather shared slides breaking out various communities that participants highlighted to include in outreach. Participants provided additional insights, including:

- Consider breaking down "non-permanent residents" further to better describe the communities included, such as people without documentation, people in the process of becoming documented, as well as other non-permanent residents, such as college students
- Consider indigenous communities, especially those whose tribes may have different legal statuses within Massachusetts
  - A participant shared additional resources on how indigenous communities are impacted by healthcare:
    - https://www.businessinsider.com/climate-changed-after-europeans-killed-indigenous-americans-2019-2?op=1
    - https://montanafreepress.org/2024/05/20/medicaid-unwinding-deals-a-blow-to-a-tenuous-system-of-care-for-native-americans/
- Add CommonHealth to the various programs graphic
- Add Independent Living to living settings graphic
- Ensure people who cannot leave their homes are included

MAC Approach

Participants provided the following additions to consider in the MAC approach:

- Determine how caregivers and service users are considered in membership

2

- Consider the need for various language and translation services for both meeting materials and live meetings
- Create a MAC mission statement
  - A participant recommended reviewing Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership meeting materials by contacting Clara Carr or Johnna Gralick
- Create MAC bylaws
- Clarify the MAC's capabilities
  - For instance, could the MAC answer questions for MassHealth members?

Creating Effective Outreach Materials

Across Brainstorming Sessions, the group discussed critical topics to inform MAC outreach, including messaging, accessibility, strategies, and partners for success. Participants discussed what has been learned thus far and provided additional insights.

Messaging

Participants provided the following recommendations for MAC outreach messaging:

- Use person first language
- Avoid loaded language such as overly technical or complicated language
- Consider using regional terminology or slang terminology
- Consider how to make messaging culturally relevant
- Use relatable language such as
  - "Struggling with figuring out MassHealth?"
  - "Want to help people like you access healthcare in Massachusetts?"
- Use inclusive language and phrases such as
  - "All are welcome regardless of ..."
- Be clear about what we mean by "accommodations"
- Use terms like "generous" in relation to accommodations
- Demonstrate in messaging that members will be able to make a real difference
- Share information about compensation and other supports provided, such as childcare
- Share MAC values and mission statement

Outreach Accessibility

Participants shared insights into improving outreach accessibility and to ensure potential members understand accessibility of the MAC.

- Consider consistent timeslots for meetings
- Consider legal accessibility of joining the MAC for potential members currently or recently incarcerated
- Consider technological accessibility, including explicitly describing what technological assistance will be available to help members participate

Outreach Strategies

The participants provided strategies to improve outreach, including:

- Hiring local marketing agencies to understand ground level advertising
- Connecting to rural places, including those connected by railroads
- Reaching out to places where members may be experiencing emergency enrollment
- Connecting with populations leaving prison and getting access to MassHealth
- Advertising in places where people are seeking state aid
  - SNAP
  - 311 or 211 lines
  - Fuel assistance
- Advertising in places where people are in contact with the Justice System
  - Probation offices
  - Prisons
  - Court houses
  - Community Legal Aid
- Connecting with people at libraries
- Connecting with colleges
- Connecting with the Clubhouse coalition
- Ensuring partners have the resources they need to successfully outreach for the MAC, including materials and training

Mapping Partnerships

Heather showed the group examples of how the partnerships identified may be "mapped" to reach the populations identified by the group. Participants added additional partners to the examples shared for reaching older adults, including:

- Add institutional settings, such as nursing homes, prisons, assisted living, and senior housing
- Add Veteran Service Offices

Planning for the Next Meeting

The final Brainstorming Session will include participants from all Brainstorming groups. The group discussed key points they wanted to share during the upcoming meeting:

- Ideas about what is important to this Brainstorming Session, such as trust, inclusion, equality, appreciation, respect, and being present
- The importance of the MAC to improve MassHealth
  - A group member provided the following context for this point: MassHealth was the inspiration for the CARES Act, and the expansion of Medicare for All, and in many ways, it has led the expansion of health care holistically, from beginning of life, anywhere in MA, to the end of life, anywhere in MA. It's important MassHealth grows and transforms into a larger, better, and more comprehensive program, instead of retreating into funding, gatekeeping, or greed. The whole nation depends upon the MAC's growth instead of its collapse.

Participants also provided the following suggestions for sharing these ideas during the meeting in an accessible and engaging way:

- Consider presenting slides, examples, or even footage from previous Brainstorming Sessions
- Consider pulling memorable or meaningful quotes from meetings and sharing them on a slide
- Consider sharing graphics and Jam Boards from previous meetings
- Consider asking participants after the meeting to share what they remember most or what was most important from the process and creating a word cloud to display these ideas
  - Note that the term "Word Cloud" can be confusing and consider using another term like "Word Garden"
- Consider requesting participants share their bios with the entire group in the next meeting
  - Bios may include a sentence about the person as well as a sentence about where they want to see the MAC go in the future
- Note that the large attendance for the next meeting (about 40 people) may make sharing difficult

The group also discussed the opportunity for participants to facilitate during the next meeting. One member volunteered to share on behalf of the group and provided an email address so that other participants may contact him about what they would like to see presented.

Wrap Up

Next steps that emerged from this meeting include:

- Participants will fill out the meeting evaluation survey
- Presenters will test their audio functionality ahead of the meeting
- Haylee will share meeting notes with the group