

# **A Member's Guide for Participating in HealthChoices Meetings**



*Developed by HealthChoices consumers in partnership with Value Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania for Cambria County*

1

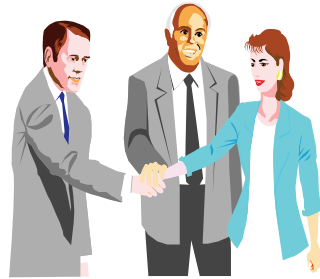
*HealthChoices members are often invited to attend meetings or become a member of a committee or workgroup.*



*Here are some things that will help you understand what happens at a meeting and what you may be expected to do.*

## WHAT HAPPENS AT A MEETING?

- A **Chairperson** plans and conducts the meeting.
- An **agenda** is a list of items that will be discussed or presented. Agendas are usually distributed to everyone present.
- People may be asked to introduce themselves, especially if they are new to the group. You would tell your name and if you wish that you are a HealthChoices consumer.
- You do not have to be specific about your diagnosis. You may also want to share something about yourself such as the county where you live.
- **Minutes** are a written record of what happens at a meeting. Participants are given a copy of the minutes.
- At the meeting the chairperson will ask the participants if the minutes are okay as written or if there are any corrections. If everyone agrees, the chairperson will announce “the minutes are approved.” If there is a correction, the person wishing to change the minutes states the change.
- The chairperson is responsible for making the change. The group then votes on the correction. If everyone agrees with the change, the chairperson will then say, “the minutes are approved as corrected.”



- Next if the group has committees, they may report on their activities. A **committee or workgroup** is a group of people who work on a special project.
- **Old Business** includes information or action taken on things, which were discussed at a previous meeting.
- **New Business** is information or action, which the group needs to discuss / or vote upon. If action is necessary, the chairperson will ask for someone to make a “motion.” A motion is a recommendation for the group to do something or agree with an idea.
- If a **vote** is necessary, the chairperson will ask you to indicate your choice. The chairperson will usually say “all those in favor say “Aye.” Those opposed, say “no.” The majority wins and the chairperson will announce the results by saying “motion passed,” “the “Ayes” have it,” or “motion defeated.”
- When all business is finished, the next meeting may be announced or determined.
- If there is nothing else to be discussed, the chairperson will **adjourn** (end) the meeting.



## **HOW SHOULD I PREPARE FOR A MEETING?**

- Get directions if necessary
- You might want to bring a pen and paper to take notes
- Arrive on time
- Be ready to introduce yourself
- Don't worry – being nervous is normal

## **WHAT SHOULD I DO AT A MEETING?**

- Listen carefully to what is being said
- Participate in discussions if you wish
- Keep your comments short so others have a chance to speak
- Be sensitive to others so your comments do not hurt anyone's feelings
- Ask questions if you do not understand what is being said



## **WHY SHOULD I ATTEND HEALTHCHOICES MEETINGS?**

- To learn more about the HealthChoices program
- To represent HealthChoices consumers
- To make improvements in the HealthChoices system
- To monitor the quality of HealthChoices care



**WHAT MEETINGS DO  
HEALTHCHOICES MEMBERS  
OFTEN ATTEND?**

- Local or regional CSP (Community Support Program) meetings
- Oversight committees to help monitor the quality of care provided to members (orientation may be required)
- VBH-PA advisory committee meetings that focus on the work of the managed care program (orientation may be required)
- Stakeholder regional meetings
- Consumer support groups
- Advocacy groups
- Planning sessions at the state hospitals
- Special events such as: public hearings, training events, county's annual review, VBH-PA forums

*If you would like more information about being active in the HealthChoices program by participating in meetings:*

**Call the VBH-PA toll-free number at:  
1-866-404-4562**

**Ask for extension 6501**

**TTY (Hearing Impaired)  
1-877-615-8502**

*We look forward to hearing from you regarding this exciting opportunity*