



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
DEPUTY SECRETARY FOR MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE SERVICES

November 24, 2014

To Inpatient Behavioral Health HealthChoices Providers,

As part of regulations published in 2003 by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS), the Pennsylvania Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services (OMHSAS), in partnership with the Behavioral Health HealthChoices Contractors (BH-HC Contractors) and Behavioral Health Managed Care Organizations (BHMCOs), are required to conduct statewide Performance Improvement Projects (PIPs) that focus on improving the behavioral health system of care for Pennsylvania HealthChoices members. Beginning 2014 through 2017, OMHSAS has selected a new PIP of focus entitled "Successful Transitions from Inpatient Care to Ambulatory Care for Pennsylvania HealthChoices Members Hospitalized with a Mental Health or a Substance Abuse Diagnosis." This PIP was selected based on analysis of prior statewide PIP results, further focused data studies, extensive literature reviews, and stakeholder feedback. Each of the five BHMCOs within Pennsylvania that serve HealthChoices members are required to submit a comprehensive PIP proposal that details barriers, potential solutions, planned activities and performance measures to address improving member transition from hospital-based inpatient care to outpatient (ambulatory) care.

The successful implementation of the PIP will partially involve the collaboration of the BHMCOs and the BH-HC contractors in developing steps that are inclusive of the diverse behavioral health needs of the Commonwealth. This process requires collaborating with local inpatient facilities and outpatient programs to understand the barriers that members encounter when transitioning from an inpatient stay and the successes that services have already accomplished. Additionally, OMHSAS has required each PIP to include an analysis of the discharge management protocols for inpatient facilities within BHMCO coverage areas. As part of this requirement, the BHMCOs and BH-HC Contractors will be selecting and visiting several local facilities to review member records and talk with inpatient staff in order to contribute to a statewide understanding of effective discharge protocols that are being implemented.

OMHSAS appreciates your support and participation as we implement and continue our commitment to quality care for the individuals we serve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dennis Marion".

Dennis Marion  
Deputy Secretary