

June 19, 2018

## PCPS: Community Partners program launches

On July 1, 2018, MassHealth will launch the Community Partners Program. This initiative will impact providers in accountable care organizations (ACO) and managed care organizations (MCO), as well as members with significant behavioral health and Long Term Services and Supports (LTSS) needs across Massachusetts.

### **What is a Community Partner?**

A Community Partner is a community-based organization that works with a member and his or her ACO's or MCO's primary care provider and health plan to help coordinate and manage health care services.

- Behavioral Health Community Partners support members with serious behavioral health needs. There are 18 Behavioral Health Community Partners agencies across the state.
- Long Term Services and Supports Community Partners work with members who need help meeting their needs for self-care and basic activities of daily living. There are nine LTSS Community Partners across the state.

All Behavioral Health and LTSS Community Partners participate with MCOs. Relationships vary among ACOs due to regional access.

### **What can Community Partners do?**

Community Partners may be able to help:

- Assess members' needs
- Assist providers with planning the right treatments and services for members
- Work with providers to change the type of care a member receives, for example, inpatient to outpatient care
- Manage and check medications
- Provide health and wellness information to members
- Identify community and social services programs that can support members
- Assist members in selecting culturally sensitive providers

### **Who qualifies for participation in a Community Partners program?**

A portion of our membership will be eligible based on specific criteria.

- For Behavioral Health Community Partners, there are approximately 3,500 eligible enrollees statewide. For LTSS Community Partners, there are approximately 24,000 eligible enrollees statewide. *This means that a small percentage of your MassHealth panel will be eligible for Community Partners services.*

- MassHealth initially will assign members to specific Community Partners in the first six months. After that, ACOs and MCOs will be able to assign members to Community Partners.

### **How does this affect PCP practices?**

Beginning in July, your practice may begin receiving calls from Community Partner care coordinators who want to speak with you about one of your patients. You'll work with the Community Partner as a member of your patient's care team and help develop the person-centered care plan. The care coordinator can help you enhance your patient's treatment experience by:

- Increasing awareness of your patient's medical and functional needs
- Helping to connect you to your patient's other health care providers
- Helping your patient carry out goals of your patient's care plan
- Helping your patient better understand his or her care instructions

Each PCP practice must identify a care team point of contact responsible for communicating updates regarding the member's care to the Community Partners. In addition, each PCP practice must sign off on behavioral health or LTSS care plans. The required signatures must come from a PCP or PCP designee such as an RN or other licensed medical professional, or a covering MD, nurse practitioner, physician assistant or doctor DO.

As is current practice, the patient's PCP makes referrals to medically necessary specialty care for which the ACO, MCO or MassHealth requires referrals. Conducting medication reconciliation is part of patient care transitions.

To learn more, go to the [Providers section at BMCHP.org to access a Community Partners program overview](#). Or you may call Provider Services at 888-566-0008.