

HOME HEALTH (CARE COORDINATION)

The goal of the Home Health services is to enhance individuals' overall well-being by integrating physical and behavioral health care. All services are individualized to meet the needs of each person served and are designed to facilitate a seamless continuum of care. Care coordination embodies a recovery-focus model of care that respects and promotes independence and responsibility.

At the end of 2022, the COVID-19 pandemic continued to affect the physical and mental health of the consumers that MHA serves. During this time, MHA continued to follow and often exceed the guidelines provided by the Center of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) regarding infection control during the pandemic. The steps taken to protect MHA staff and consumers included promoting social distancing in poorly ventilated environments, mask wearing, hand hygiene, and disinfection of offices and vehicles. MHA continued to provide valuable physical and behavioral health services to consumers throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. To ensure the highest quality of care services were provided face-to-face following CDC guidelines regarding mask wearing and social distancing. Telehealth services were provided when appropriate, including if consumers were experiencing COVID-19 symptoms or felt more comfortable utilizing telehealth services during the global health crisis.

As the status of the COVID-19 pandemic changed throughout the year, education was provided to staff on all CDC recommendations on a consistent basis to ensure that all staff were updated on all changes made to guidelines. On May 11, 2023, the COVID-19 public health emergency ended. Due to the research that indicates individuals diagnosed with a severe and persistent mental illness to be at higher risk of poor outcomes related to the infection, MHA continued to promote the importance of vaccination against COVID-19. This includes providing education and linkage to a vaccination site or provider. In addition, MHA provided education to staff on transitioning from following COVID-19 guidelines with all consumers to using personal protective equipment as needed once the public health emergency ended. MHA continued to encourage staff to self-monitor for symptoms of COVID-19 and were instructed to review possible symptoms of COVID-19 with agency Registered Nurse to obtain guidance on testing and isolation.

MHA staff continues to support each consumer in choosing physical and behavioral health service providers and assists in coordinating these services appropriately. Each individual is given the option of receiving behavioral health services through MHA programs and medical services through MHA's Prospect Primary Healthcare, located in the same building as MHA's day treatment program, Prospect House. If an individual chooses to utilize a health care provider outside of MHA, staff continues to assist individuals in coordinating services and identifying their strengths and needs. For those without a primary care provider, individuals served under our agency are offered a yearly physical at Prospect Primary Healthcare regardless of insurance coverage or income. MHA staff continues to model and teach skills to help individuals advocate their needs to their health care providers. All individuals are provided with Medical Provider Communication forms, which can be filled out with the assistance of MHA staff prior to medical appointments to help promote continuity and quality of care.

MHA staff continues to support individuals in managing their health concerns through providing resources and education. Skills-based groups are conducted by MHA staff in several programs, covering topics such as budgeting, coping skills, and stress management. Also, health related groups are run regularly by a Registered Nurse in which all individuals MHA serves are

welcome to join. During these groups, individuals learn about health promotion and chronic disease management practices. During the 2023 fiscal year, 118 consumers attended MHA's health education groups. Health education and counseling provided by MHA nursing staff is available to all consumers on an individualized basis.

MHA staff, throughout all programs, continue to be flexible in order to meet the needs of the individuals served. This includes ensuring that appointments are scheduled at a place and time that is convenient and comfortable for the individual. In the event of a planned or unplanned absence of staff, another team member assumes responsibility of duties and continues services without interruption. All on-call needs are met either by phone or in-vivo, and are available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, including holidays and weekends. This service is available for support and crisis intervention, including onsite and offsite supports via telephone, face-to-face contact and collateral contacts with caregivers and other service providers.

All programs continue to conduct Comprehensive Intake Assessments which determine the coordination of services that are needed. Staff gather information such as past medical and behavioral health history, family health history, and past hospitalizations. Information is also gathered on current medication use, profile and treatment, and any current health concerns or needs. Suicide Risk Assessments are completed with each individual to promote prompt identification of life-threatening crises and appropriate intervention. Identification of chronic disease status is completed, including but not limited to the presence of asthma, cardiovascular disease, pulmonary disease, diabetes, hypertension, and obesity. Individuals in all agency programs collaborate with MHA staff to create a person-centered plan that addresses areas of need in both physical and behavioral health. This plan is developed by the individual, and all staff members involved in the individual's care have access to this plan to promote continuity of care. Staff assist individuals in identifying appropriate services and scheduling appointments based on the needs indicated. Individuals diagnosed with severe and persistent mental disorders are shown to have a shorter lifespan due to preventable chronic conditions that are untreated. Prospect Primary Healthcare monitors Body Mass Index (BMI), vitamin D levels, glucose levels, and blood pressure for the individuals who participate in this program as they are considered high risk. As of the end of FY2023, Prospect Primary reported a BMI average of 25% within normal range, vitamin D average of 59% within normal range, glucose level average of 60% within normal range, and blood pressure average of 67% within normal range.

MHA staff recognizes the importance of consistent staff education to better serve the individuals in our programs and community. All staff are provided with verbal and written educational materials and are also provided with ways to use this information to assist individuals with their own health needs. All program sites have a binder labeled *Health Home* which contains written educational documents on the most prevalent disease processes and the most common medications used within the population of individuals MHA serves. These same documents are also available to all staff digitally on a shared network to be used for self or consumer educational needs. All MHA staff are also provided with an annual psychopharmacology and summer heat and sun risk training to ensure they are knowledgeable on current psychotropic medications being prescribed and to assist staff in providing important education about these medications to consumers.

Each program offers all individuals an opportunity to complete a Consumer Satisfaction Survey. The surveys are completed in order to measure an individual's satisfaction in areas of personal treatment, physical environment, consumer/staff interactions and overall quality of services. All results are analyzed and reviewed.