

Provider Connection



A newsletter of the MassHealth Primary Care Clinician (PCC) Plan



Important Numbers

Emergency Services Program (ESP)
1-877-382-1609

MassHealth Service Center
1-800-841-2900

Member Services

PCC Billing

PCC Provider Enrollment

MBHP
1-800-495-0086

Behavioral Health Provider Enrollment and Credentialing

Behavioral Health Provider Billing

Integrated Care Management Program (ICMP)

Member Engagement Center

PCC Plan Hotline

Letter from the Directors

Dear Primary Care Clinicians and Behavioral Health Providers,

Welcome to the new format of the PCC Plan provider newsletter, **Provider Connection!** As part of our ongoing efforts to improve communication with our providers, and direct resources toward the **integration of physical and behavioral health care**, we are thrilled to present you with this **new and improved newsletter**.

Provider Connection, previously named the *PCC Plan Quarterly*, will feature news, resources, and information benefitting **both primary care clinicians and behavioral health providers**. Our goal is to give providers in the MassHealth PCC Plan and Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership networks timely and relevant information that will both **support the delivery of integrated care** and **keep you in the loop** about some of the most important changes affecting MassHealth today. Some of the new columns include:

"Voices from the Field," written by you, our providers. This column is a forum for you to share best practices, research ideas, community partnerships, and more with your colleagues.

"Practice Pointers," offering information and advice to combat common challenges and increase efficiency in your practice or office.

"Upcoming Events and Trainings," to keep you updated on the most relevant and helpful trainings available to you statewide and virtually.

All of us at the PCC Plan and MBHP are excited about these changes and hope you are too. We welcome your feedback, suggestions, or participation in future columns.

Nelie Lawless, Director
PCC Plan

Chris Counihan, Director
Office of Behavioral Health

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Voices from the Field

Welcome to "Voices from the Field," a new column designed by and for you, our provider network! With each edition of Provider Connection we hope to introduce you to one of your colleagues in the primary care or behavioral health communities. **And we need you to participate!** Please consider sharing a few paragraphs about special aspects of your clinical practice, innovative clinical service models or research projects, and/or examples of community partnerships that have been sustained and continue to advance - especially those emphasizing integration of primary care and behavioral health.

For this edition, we decided to start from within. We'll hear from one of our newest staff members here at the Massachusetts Behavioral Health Partnership (MBHP), **Nancy Norman, MD**. Dr. Norman is an internist who came to MBHP by way of the Boston Public Health Commission and The Dimock Community Health Center. Take it away, Nancy!

I wouldn't be surprised if you were asking yourself right now "An internist and former public health official...what's she doing at MBHP? Did she get lost on the way to the Mayor's office at City Hall or The Dimock Center?" Not quite! I assumed the role of Medical Director of Integration at MBHP in September 2012 and couldn't be more excited about my new position. It allows me to work with departments across the organization, and our colleagues at MassHealth, while **furthering my commitment to improving health outcomes for all - especially those most vulnerable.**



Along with the Medical Director of the PCC Plan, **Dr. Linda Clayton**, I co-chair the **PCC Plan Clinical Advisory Committee**, am involved with the **Integrated Care Management Program (ICMP)**, which offers care management to Members with complex co-morbid conditions, and work with senior leadership and our partners in state government on **policy issues** including health care payment reform and practice redesign efforts. And that's just a start!

Immediately prior to MBHP, I was Chief Medical Officer at the City of Boston Public Health Commission (BPHC), where I supervised many departments, including HIV/AIDS, Homeless Services, and Addiction Services. While at BPHC, I led the development of the **Center for Health Equity and Social Justice** and remain committed to forwarding this work in my new role at MBHP. My career to date has been about exploring **the synergies between health equity, health policy, and health care reform**. I am also continually impressed with what I see as an increasing recognition among providers about the importance of **care coordination and integration**.

I try to keep the connections "live" between what I focus on at work and what I think is important in my community. I cherish time working with youth in Boston who are interested in health sciences, or at times just interested in having a conversation with an adult who will listen. I hope my work here at MBHP will only **open more doors and possibilities for these future leaders of our society**.

Dr. Norman can be reached at nancy.norman@valueoptions.com. If you're a provider and interested in contributing to "Voices from the Field," please e-mail us at MBHPCommunications@valueoptions.com.

We'd be happy to hear your ideas and suggestions for future newsletters. Please email us at MBHPCommunications@beaconhealthoptions.com.

Notwithstanding any of the information appearing in this *Provider Connection* newsletter, the rules governing the state's PCC Plan, behavioral health, and pharmacy programs are governed by state and federal law and regulation and by the state's PCC, behavioral health, and pharmacy contracts. In the event of any conflict between any provision set forth in this *Provider Connection* newsletter and any other provision of law, regulation, or contract, the legal and/or contractual provision shall take precedence over the provision in this *Provider Connection* newsletter.

Optimizing the Health and Wellbeing of Refugees in the Commonwealth

Jennifer Kasper, MD, MPH

Instructor and Chair, Harvard Medical School Faculty Advisory Committee on Global Health Faculty, Massachusetts General Hospital for Children (MGHfC) Division of Global Health Pediatrician, MGH Chelsea HealthCare Center

Patricia Guglietta, MD

Pediatrician, MGH Chelsea HealthCare Center Coordinator, MGH Chelsea Pediatric Refugee Health Assessment Program

Massachusetts is one of the most ethnically diverse states in the nation; in 2012 the Commonwealth welcomed **nearly 2,300 refugees and asylum seekers** from across the globe. The top five countries of origin were Iraq, Bhutan, Somalia, Burma, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo¹. Refugees and asylees are different in that refugees apply for admission to the United States from overseas, while asylees make their claim for refugee status from inside the United States² or are admitted to join family members who have been granted asylum.

Refugees and asylees bring with them **unique medical and behavioral health challenges**. New refugee and some asylee arrivals receive a required, two-visit medical evaluation at a Department of Public Health (DPH)-approved refugee site. These visits include a complete medical exam, infectious disease (e.g., tuberculosis and parasites) screening, mental health screening, and provision of all vaccines. After these two visits, patients then choose a primary care site.

¹ Massachusetts Department of Public Health/Bureau of Infectious Disease/Refugee and Immigrant Health, Updated May 2013, www.mass.gov/dph/refugee.

² Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention arrival notifications to Massachusetts Department of Public Health; Refugee Resettlement Agencies.

Some of the major issues to keep in mind when caring for refugees and asylees:

- **The impact of chronic, noncommunicable diseases (NCD) and mental health concerns:**

Patients may have previously undiagnosed NCD, in addition to malnutrition and micronutrient deficiencies.

Providers may also need to assist patients with mental health concerns. Many refugees have come from countries with extreme deprivation, war,

violence, genocide, and torture. They are at risk for depression, anxiety, Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD), and other mental health problems.



- **Poverty, overcrowded housing, food insecurity:**

Refugees and asylees in most cases flee their countries of origin under dire circumstances with little but the clothes on their backs. When refugees arrive in the US, they are aided by a resettlement agency (known as a Voluntary Agency, or VOLAG) and are automatically eligible for all public assistance programs (e.g., Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), etc.) because they are legal immigrants. Undocumented immigrants are eligible only for limited benefits – MassHealth Limited (adults) and the Children’s Medical Security Plan (CMSP). The US government provides financial assistance to refugees for four months after arrival. Many families are not yet self-sufficient by this time, because they have either been unable to find employment or they find jobs that do not provide enough income to support their families. They are at high risk of becoming homeless.

- **Language and literacy barriers:** Both make navigating the health care system, school, and new society challenging. The Massachusetts General Hospital Chelsea HealthCare Center (MGH Chelsea) has on-site interpreters who are also trained as community health workers. These staff members are key to improving access to health care and creating a true medical home for newly arrived patients. They educate providers about cultural awareness and sensitivity to family structure, roles, and responsibilities, understanding of illness, diagnosis, medication, and use of alternative forms of medicine. They also function as cultural brokers between provider and patient.
- **Navigating the school system:** This can be difficult because in some cases parents did not complete formal education in their countries of origin and may have a hard time understanding the US school system. For their children, integration and English language acquisition can be daunting. MGH Chelsea has a school liaison that helps to monitor newly arrived students and facilitates communication between parents and medical providers. Children's Hospital Boston also has a program for refugee and immigrant children that partners with Boston Public Schools.

Key Resources for Practitioners

MBHP and the PCC Plan offer specialized **Refugee Community Support Programs (CSPs)** with staff from many different countries (e.g., Burma, Somalia, Iraq, Burundi, Vietnam, Croatia, Serbia, Bosnia, and Sudan). The programs are collaborative efforts with community-based agencies in Peabody and Springfield. For more information contact:

- o **Donna Frates, Regional Director**
MBHP Northeast Region
Ph: (978) 716-3350 Fax: (855) 294-0149
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- o **Linda Trott, Regional Director**
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Fax: (855) 818-1248
Linda.Trott@valueoptions.com

Massachusetts Department of Public Health:

- o Refugee and Immigrant Health Program
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/refugee-and-immigrant-health.html>

Legal Issues:

- o MA Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, <http://www.miracoalition.org/>
- o MA Law Reform Institute, www.mlri.org

Public Assistance Resources:

- o ABCD, <http://www.bostonabcd.org/>
- o Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/consumer/basic-needs/food/wic/>
- o Greater Boston Food Bank, <http://gbfb.org/>

Guidelines for Clinical Care:

- o Refugee Health Assessment: A Guide for Health Care Clinicians
<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph/programs/id/public-health-cdc-refugee-and-immigrant-health.html>
- o Refugee Health Technical Assistance Center – run by a group of nationally recognized organizations in refugee health
<http://refugeehealthta.org/>

Children- and Family-Specific:

- o Resources include the Somali Development Center (SDC) in Boston, Shanbaro Community Association (Somali Bantu assistance agency) in Chelsea and Boston, and the Bosnian Community Center for Resource and Development (BCCRD) in Lynn. The BCCRD is part of the New American Center, a consortium of organizations that offer a variety of services.
<http://newamericancenter.wordpress.com/>
- o Bridging Refugee Youth & Children's Services, www.brycs.org, is a national organization that provides technical assistance to agencies serving refugees and immigrants, with a focus on children and families.

Upcoming Events and Trainings



Webinars:

Preventing Underage Drinking

The Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking is developing a series of webinars featuring national leaders and experts discussing the **extent and nature of underage drinking, lessons from recent research, and evidence-based strategies**. The first webinar, "Preventing Underage Drinking: Introduction and Series Overview," is available through this link: https://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/webinars/2013_Jan/January2013_archive.htm. Webinars will be archived for viewing.

An Integrated Approach to Treating Depression in the Adult Primary Care Setting January/February 2014

The evidence for the effectiveness of the treatment of depression in primary care makes "collaborative care," also known as the "IMPACT" or the "Diamond" model, one of the best supported approaches to a chronic illness that we have. In this webinar, a team made up of behavioral health clinicians and a primary care physician will outline the **elements of the evidence-based protocols for treating depression in adult primary care**, including the roles of the treatment team (behavioral health clinician, PCP, care manager, and consulting psychiatrist) and how such a protocol can be used as the basis for a broader implementation of the integration of behavioral health in primary care. For more details and to register, contact the MassHealth PCC Plan Management Support Services Program at MassHealthPCCPMSS@valueoptions.com.

Training Resources:

The **Massachusetts Area Health Education Center** (MassAHEC) Network is a statewide system of six regional offices, in collaboration with the Office of Medical Education at Boston University School of Medicine and a network office at UMass Medical School. MassAHEC offers Continuing Education Programs for health professionals on topics such as:

- o Mental Health
- o Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender
- o Children with Special Needs
- o Geriatrics
- o Minority Retention and Recruitment
- o HIV/AIDS, Train-the-Trainer
- o Death and Dying and Minority Health Issues/Disparities

To learn more:

<http://www.umassmed.edu/ahec/index.aspx>

The **Massachusetts Health Care Training Forum (MTF)** is a partnership between MassHealth and the MassAHEC Network office. MTF provides accurate and timely information relating to MassHealth and other public assistance programs to staff of health care organizations and community agencies that serve MassHealth members, the uninsured, and underinsured. MTF also provides participants the opportunity to ask questions and make suggestions regarding MassHealth policy and operational changes.

To learn more:

<http://www.masshealthmtf.org/>

MassHealth Provider Trainings cover topics such as the Children's Behavioral Health Initiative (CBHI), the Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths (CANS) certification training, and others.

To learn more:

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/provider/insurance/masshealth/training/masshealth-provider-training.html>



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**Introducing the new PCC Plan provider newsletter:
Brand new look and integrated content for PCCs
and behavioral health providers inside!**

Practice Pointers

Health Literacy Toolkit

Did you know that more than one-third of all patients have limited health literacy? To help you communicate effectively with patients of all health literacy levels, the **Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality has developed a Health Literacy Universal Precautions Toolkit**. It contains **tips** on improving spoken and written communication with patients, **information** about patient self-management and empowerment, **ideas** to help patients access non-medical supports such as housing, transportation, and support groups, and more. The toolkit contains a one-page **Quick Start Guide** with a short video, **20 tools** to assess your practice and improve your communication with patients of all health literacy levels, and **appendices that contain over 25 resources** including health literacy assessment questions. The toolkit can be accessed online at: <http://www.ahrq.gov/professionals/quality-patient-safety/quality-resources/tools/literacy-toolkit/healthliteracytoolkit.pdf>.

