



Health Care Alert

A QUARTERLY PUBLICATION PROVIDING HEALTH CARE TIPS FOR PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL AND/OR DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THEIR SUPPORT TEAMS

The Special Need's Unit Meeting: Service in the Special Needs Community

The Special Needs Unit (SNU) meeting is comprised of a diverse network of regional representatives with a similar goal in mind – to share information about health insurance relevant to the special needs population (i.e., Intellectual Disabilities, ID). These meetings take place quarterly throughout the year and serve as a venue to discuss and exchange pertinent updates and changes about the current health insurance system including Medicare, Medicaid and MCOs.

The meeting provides those that deliver direct services or care an optimal opportunity to ask specific questions regarding health insurance and health care needs in regards to the intellectual disability community. Representatives from the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services and the Special Needs Unit Representatives from all 5 counties in the Southeastern Region of PA are present and prepared to assist in any way they can.

The **Special Needs Unit Representatives** are as follows:

Keystone First
www.keystonefirstpa.com
Patrice Flynn
215-937-5318

Health Partners
www.healthpart.com
www.kidzpartners.com
Leah French
215-991-4378

United Healthcare Community Plan
www.uhccommunityplan.com
Martha Fountain, RN, CHCQM (Medicaid ONLY)
410-540-4368

Aetna Better Health - PA
www.aetnabetterhealth.com
Venus Connors, RN, BSN
Special Needs Case Management
215-282-3521

Feel free to join us at our next quarterly meeting to stay abreast on topics surrounding special needs insurance and other health care needs. If you would like to be added to our listserv to receive meeting announcements or meeting minutes, please feel free to contact Briana Downs at bdowns@pmhcc.org or 215-546-0300.



Inside this issue:

Special Need's Unit (SNU) Meeting	Cover
Community Events and Conferences	2
Autism: Health Promotion and Awareness	3
2016 SE Region Risk and Incident Management Information Sessions	4
Announcements	4

COMMUNITY EVENTS AND CONFERENCES

OUTREACH DEPARTMENT

The Outreach Department at Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care has been busy since the New Year, participating in a *multitude of community events and conferences* highlighting the intellectual disability community. As always, it is our mission to **provide resources** and **educate the community** on changes within the system and services provided. Through the many community events we have been a part of this year, we continue to support the ID community in every way we can.

Some of the events we have *participated* in at this time are:

- Brighter Futures Awards
- Montgomery County Integrated Health and Wellness Fair
- PSD Transition and Resource Fair
- Person Link Resource Day
- Holy Family's Caregiver Symposium

Upcoming Events:

- Alliance Conference on April 15th, 2016
- There's a Place For Us Parent Support Group Community Outreach on April 16th, 2016
- Philadelphia Regional Conference on Developmental Disabilities on May 13th, 2016

As the year goes on, we will continue to find more ways to outreach to families, caregivers, parent support groups and individuals within the ID community. Each year we set new goals, one for this year is to attend more events in the Southeastern Region of Pennsylvania including: Bucks, Chester, Delaware, Montgomery and Philadelphia counties. To help us reach our goal, if you would like to have us *participate* in a health fair, resource day, conference or community event, please feel free to contact our **Outreach Department** at 215-546-0300 ext. 3230.

EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

PCHC has collaborated with The Department of Behavioral Health and Intellectual disAbility Services and BHID/CTT to bring several Nationally Recognized Speakers to the SE Region starting Spring 2016. Please check our website for registration for the following events.

- **Multidimensional Approaches to Treating Trauma** (Ginny Focht-New, PhD & Beth Barol, PhD) 5/06/16
- **A Day with the National Alliance for DSP's (NADSP)** (Joseph Macbeth & John Raffaele) 6/18/16

We will also be offering the last Module of Pennsylvania Dual Diagnosis Direct Support Curriculum (PA DDX) this spring/summer. PCHC will continue to run/offer the PA DDX Curriculum in its entirety for the Region on an annual basis. We start at Module I in September of each year. We will offer topics each month from the curriculum. Please look for our announcements or visit our website to register for any upcoming training.

Our summer schedule for the PA Dual Diagnosis Curriculum is as follows:

- **Overview of Syndromes** 5/06/16 SE Area Staff Development Training Ctr.
- **Mental Health Therapy & Dual Diagnosis** 5/06/16 SE Area Staff Development Training Ctr.
- **Functional Behavior Assessment and BSP** 6/15/16 Willow Grove Giant
- **Stress Management for Direct Supporters** 6/16/16 Willow Grove Giant
- **Autism Spectrum Disorder** 7/15/16 DCIU

To register, please visit www.pchc.org or contact us at 215-546-0300 ext. 3685.



Health Promotion and Awareness

A person's physical health is an important factor in their mental and emotional well-being. This concept is especially important for those who have an Autism Spectrum Disorder. An Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and Autism are both general terms for defining a neurodevelopmental disorder. In simpler terms, Autism is a disorder of brain function that affects a person's ability for social interaction, communication, emotion and learning.

Ongoing research is suggesting that gastrointestinal (GI) disorders are more common among those with Autism. The cause of the relationship continues to be explored. Conditions such as: chronic constipation, irritable bowel syndrome and reflux are several examples of these physical health concerns.

Recognizing GI concerns in those who have Autism can be a complicated process due to communication difficulties and behavioral challenges. Communication deficits can make it difficult for a person with autism to describe their symptoms. Ironically, the only symptom of a GI issue may be new or worsening behavioral concern.

While the best evaluation and treatment approaches of the association between GI problems and Autism are not fully known, research continues. Expert consensus suggests that a person with Autism be provided the same diagnostic work-up and thoroughness than those without it. Healthcare professionals need to recognize that problematic behavior in patients with Autism may be the symptom of a physical health condition, with more focus now on gastrointestinal disorders. Experts suggest the need for autism-specific guidelines for GI evaluations, especially for those with communication barriers. For specific advice about care and treatment, please consult your health care provider.

Resources:

McElhanon B., McCracken C., Karpen S., Sharp W. Gastrointestinal Symptoms in Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Meta-analysis: Gastrointestinal Symptoms in Autism Spectrum Disorder: A Meta-analysis. *Pediatrics* April 2014, 872-883.

Reddy B., Saier M., Autism and Our Intestinal Microbiota. March 2015, 51-55.

NIH Public Access Manuscript Published in final edited form

Curr Psychiatry Rep. The Gut Microbiome: A New Frontier in Autism Research, 2013 February; 15(2): 337

2016 SE Region Risk and Incident Management Information Sessions for Providers and SCOs

Keeping it Real – Continuity of Quality Communication



Communication is at the core of what we do. Effective communication is essential. These sessions will focus on the quality of communication and its importance in incident management and investigations. The goal will be to explore effective ways to communicate with families, with staff, within our own agencies, and with other agencies and entities.

- 05/17/16 – 9:30 am – 3:30 pm
- 05/19/16 – 9:30 am – 3:30 pm
- 05/31/16 – 9:30 am – 3:30 pm

Reminder to those who have registered. The seminar will be held at “Bridgeport” Southeast Area Staff Development, 123 Boro Line Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406. If you have any questions please contact Latonya Thomas at 215-546-0300 ext. 3655 or Denise Brown at ext. 3650.

Announcements

Regional Nurse Network Meetings

An opportunity for developmental disabilities nursing education and discussion.

***If you are not on our e-mail list, or have changed e-mails, please contact Patty Graves at pgraves@pmhcc.org.*

Special Needs Unit (SNU) Meetings

All SNU meetings take place @ *SE Area Staff Development Training Center* (123 Boro Line Road, King of Prussia, PA 19406) from 10am – 12noon. Please contact Briana Downs at bdowns@pmhcc.org for more information or to be added to the SNU Meeting list.

Regional Nurse Network Meetings

April 8, 2016
July 15, 2016
October 7, 2016



Special Needs Unit Meetings

April 20, 2016
July 20, 2016
October 19, 2016



Learn more at www.pchc.org



Philadelphia Coordinated Health Care

123 S. Broad Street ♦ Philadelphia, PA 19109 ♦ 215-546-0300 ♦ fax 215-790-4976

PCHC is a core program of PMHCC, Inc.

FUNDING PROVIDED BY PHILADELPHIA DEPARTMENT OF BEHAVIORAL HEALTH/INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY SERVICES, THE BUCKS, CHESTER, DELAWARE AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY OFFICES OF INTELLECTUAL/DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES AND THE OFFICE OF DEVELOPMENTAL PROGRAMS, PENNSYLVANIA DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE