



MI Health Link

JULY 2023 BULLETIN



Meet the MI Health Link Team: Pam Gourwitz

Hello, I am Pam Gourwitz, the Director of the Integrated Care Division.

I graduated from Michigan State University with a Bachelor's and Master's in education. I taught first and second grade for eight years, and then transitioned into health care where I have spent the last 25 years. I first was introduced to the MI Health Link program while I was working with a health plan. I have been with the State of Michigan for a little over seven years.

My husband and I like to travel and are 'foodies'. We live with our four-legged fur baby Mac. I like to read, and love being around the beach and water.

I look forward to the implementation of the next version of the MMP program. I am blessed to be surrounded with such a great team of hard working, passionate individuals.

-Pam

Program and Policy Notes

MI Health Link Program, Contractual, Policy Requirements and Highlights

Medicaid Coverage of Community Health Worker (CHW) Policy Draft Released

The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) has developed and released a formal policy draft with the purpose of incorporating CHW services as a covered benefit under both Medicaid managed care and fee-for-service programs.

CHW services focus on preventing disease, disability, and other chronic health conditions or their progression, and promoting physical and mental health. The draft policy has a proposed October 1, 2023 effective date and can be located [here](#).

MDHHS Bureau of Physical Health and Aging Services Administration (BPHASA) has engaged stakeholders with its efforts to ensure a diverse perspective is captured to inform and provide recommendations to MDHHS around defining CHW services, qualifications, supervision, and other required policy elements. The Department is accepting comments and feedback on the proposed policy through August 18, 2023. Comments can be sent to Elizabeth Pitts at pittse@michigan.gov

Education and Support Opportunities

The Sixth Annual *Older Adult Mental Health Awareness Day Symposium*, presented by the National Council on Aging (NCOA), was a successful day of speakers and resources to support many populations and in case you missed it there is more information on the National Council on Aging [website](#).

Please save the date for the 7th annual *Older Adult Mental Health Symposium* that is currently scheduled for **May 2nd, 2024!**

Using an Equity Framework to Evaluate & Improve Medicaid Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS)

Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at 2:00pm

This free webinar will use Justice in Aging's HCBS Equity Framework to help advocates and other stakeholders think about the ways in which equity is embedded in HCBS and to advance policies to ensure all eligible individuals have access to adequate and quality services. Presenters will walk through the Framework and provide examples of inequities in policies, program rules, and decision points. The webinar will help attendees use the Framework to identify similar issues and equity-centered solutions in the HCBS programs they work on. To register click [here](#).

Looking for Continuing Education opportunities? Check these programs and websites for upcoming events in 2023:

[Jenerations Health Education](#)

[Michigan Center for Rural Health](#)



Beneficiary Health and Welfare:

Elder Abuse within the LGBT Community

It is estimated that there are approximately 3 million lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals 50 years of age and older in the United States. As a group, LGBT older adults experience unique economic and [health disparities](#). LGBT older adults may disproportionately be affected by poverty and physical and mental health conditions due to a lifetime of unique stressors associated with being a minority and may be more vulnerable to neglect and elder mistreatment. They may face dual discrimination due to their age and their sexual orientation or gender identity. Generational differences and lack of legal protection may cause older LGBT adults to be less open about their sexuality. Social isolation is also a concern because LGBT older adults are more likely to live alone, more likely to be single and less likely to have children than their heterosexual counterparts. All of these considerations can be compounded by intersections of sex, race, ethnicity and disability.

A recent study was conducted with 416 LGBT older adults, aged 60 and older. 65% of respondents reported being victimized by verbal abuse, threat of violence, physical and sexual assault due to their sexual orientation. The study found men were physically attacked three times more often than women.

When working with LGBT older adults, it is important to respect the individuals gender identity and gender expression by using the name and pronoun used by the individual. Always ask the individual what their preferred name is and never assume based on appearance. Build rapport and provide active listening when engaging with LGBT older adults. It is imperative to be aware of LGBT resources within the communities you serve to connect individuals if needed.

For more information click [here](#).



Resource Link:

Greater Good in Action: Science Based Practices for a Meaningful Life

Happiness, resilience, connection, and kindness are skills that can be taught and developed over time—with practice, which is why The University of California Berkeley's [Greater Good Science Center](#), in collaboration with [HopeLab](#), launched *Greater Good in Action*. Synthesizing hundreds of scientific studies, Greater Good in Action collects the best research-based methods for a happier, more meaningful life—and puts them at your fingertips in a format that's easy to navigate and digest.

The practices in Greater Good in Action are for anyone who wants to improve their social and emotional well-being, or the well-being of others, but doesn't necessarily have the time or money to invest in a formal program. The practices in Greater Good in Action are not intended to be a substitute for therapy, or to serve as a form of mental health treatment for people suffering from depression or other major mood disorders.

These practices range from stress resilience, to parenting, to mindfulness, and many more. Please take the time to find a practice that could help in daily life and work. Click [here](#) for more information.



Q & A: Your Questions About MI Health Link

If you have a question about the MHL program we want to hear from you. We will work to get you the information you need.

Q: Can a beneficiary receive Non-Medical Transportation (NMT) if they are not receiving Expanded Community Living Supports (ECLS), or do these services go hand-in-hand?

A: NMT and ECLS are separate services provided under the MI Health Link waiver program and it is not a requirement to have both services. Beneficiaries can be enrolled in ECLS and may not have a need for NMT or vice versa. Please reference the Minimum Operating Standards (MOS) for a more in depth look at each service's requirements.

Please send any questions for future bulletins to Integratedcare@michigan.gov

Topic Submission

If you have suggestions for topics to be addressed in future additions of the MI Health Link Bulletin, please send them to Integratedcare@michigan.gov



Quick Links

[MI Health Link Website](#)

[CMS Financial Alignment Website](#)

[MI Health Link Minimum Operating Standards](#)

[MDHHS Medicaid Provider Manual](#)

Previously Released MHL Bulletins

Previously released MI Health Link Bulletins can be found by visiting the [MI Health Link Website](#).

[Become a foster parent through Michigan Department of Health & Human Services foster care program.](#)



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