

Our Healthcare Journey: A Monthly Bulletin for Ohio Medicaid's In-Home Service Providers

December 1st, 2022



Welcome back to another installment of the monthly newsletter for Ohio Medicaid's in-home service providers, prepared by Public Consulting Group (PCG)! Each month, look out for a roundup of the resources, training, and support available to help ensure your success as an Ohio Home and Community-Based Services (HCBS) Waiver / in-home service provider.

In this issue you will find:

- Information about our new initiatives, including:
 - Insights from our surveys and focus groups
 - January Continuing Education (CE) training opportunities
 - The Provider Toolkit
 - The new PCG Match system
 - The Independent Provider (IP) Mentorship Program
- Help Needed! – Emergency service needs around the state
- Making a Difference – Impacts of the Holidays on the Individual-Provider Relationship

We hope you find this information engaging and helpful!

Rule Updates

PCG does not have rule updates to share this month. Please continue to review the monthly bulletin for any future rule updates.

New Initiatives

Ohio HCBS Survey and Focus Group Results

Our engagement with providers, individuals, and case managers has provided invaluable insight that continues to shape our provider recruitment and retention efforts.

In June, we received a total of 1377 survey responses from providers, individuals, and case managers from 78 of Ohio's 88 counties. We also conducted two focus groups in September, enabling us to explore what is important to individuals.

Thanks to this feedback, we have developed an even stronger picture of the scale, causes, and impact of the direct-care shortage in Ohio. Some of our key takeaways include:

- Providers, individuals, and case managers all felt that providers needed more live training opportunities.
- Individuals value providers who work with them regularly and with whom they can develop a relationship.
- Providers and individuals would like more tools and resources to connect.
- Individuals want resources to help them identify providers that meet their needs.
- Providers expressed a need for more support, tools, and resources to help them grow in their careers and to navigate documentation.

With these needs in mind, we launched, or are in the process of developing, the following tools and resources:

Available Now:

- [Live CE trainings](#) on topics that individuals, case managers, and providers identified as important.
- [A Provider Toolkit](#) with several blank templates to support providers with their documentation.
- Additional provider [enrollment support and training](#).
- [Training for individuals](#) to help them interview and choose a provider. (Note: Scroll down the page to the following update from September 29, 2022 - New Training for Individuals and Families Available! How to Choose the Best Service Provider for Me)

Coming Soon:

- PCG Match tool to facilitate connections between providers and individuals based on individuals' support needs.
- Independent Provider (IP) Mentorship Program to connect new providers with experienced peers who can provide guidance and support as providers build their careers.

Thank you all for your participation! We will continue to use your feedback to drive our efforts and look for ways to engage with you in our work, so it meets your needs!

Monthly Continuing Education (CE) Courses

Thank you to everyone who attended our November CE trainings! If you were unable to attend the sessions, you can view past trainings [here](#).

Please see the upcoming training topics and times below. **Note that due to the holidays, the Continuing Education training originally scheduled for December, will be held on January 4th.** As a reminder, licensed professionals (social workers, counselors, and

RNs) **MUST attend the LIVE training sessions in full** to receive professional CEs. Non-licensed providers can attend either live or recorded trainings.

Supplementary Waiver Services

Wednesday 1/4/2022 2:00 pm via Teams Webinar

This training provides an overview of the specifications and requirements for various waiver services such as Community Integration and Transition, Adult Day Health Center, Out of Home Respite, Supplemental Transportation Services, Home Delivered Meals, and Personal Emergency Services. The training is geared toward waiver nurses, personal care aides, and home care attendants. Following this training, participants will be able to:

- Identify the varying services available to individuals receiving waiver services.
- Identify how these services can help individuals on waiver programs remain in their homes and maintain independence.
- Recognize how these services affect their role as a waiver aide, home care attendant, or nurse.
- Identify when an individual may have unaddressed needs that could be met by these services and provide recommendations to the case manager.

Interested in joining this training? Please register [HERE](#) by 2:00 pm 1/4/2023.

How to make the Most of Your Provider Toolkit

Wednesday 1/25/2022 2:00 pm via Teams Webinar

As a provider you are responsible for maintaining documentation that meets current requirements in order to comply with Waiver regulations. However, searching for or creating compliant forms can be a time consuming and difficult barrier for many providers. Now that you have access to the provider toolkit, a collection of forms to help providers remain in compliance with documentation, we hope this responsibility will be a bit easier. This training will orient providers to the Provider Toolkit forms available to nurses, home care attendants and personal care aides and offer insight into how to make the most of the toolkit! Following this training, participants will be able to:

- Locate and sign up for initial access and ongoing updates to the Provider Toolkit.
- Determine what forms to use depending on the service provider type.
- Determine when and how to use the various forms available.
- Understand how to accurately complete the forms to help ensure successful structural reviews.

Interested in joining this training? Please register [HERE](#) by 2:00 pm 1/25/2023.

Both of these courses meet the requirements for ODM's required annual 12 hours of continuing education and the Supplementary Waiver Services meets the requirement for 1 hour of licensed professional CEs.

Provider Toolkit

Have you signed up to receive your Provider Toolkit? The Provider Toolkit is a collection of forms approved by ODM that can help you maintain your compliance with documentation requirements. There are toolkits available for Personal Care Aides, Home Care Attendants, and Nurses.

This month, we would like to highlight the Facesheet, which is the first form found the toolkit. The Facesheet is used to document all required identifying information for every individual for whom you provide services. There is a Facesheet included in each of the toolkits for all provider types. We hope you find this form (and the entire toolkit) to be

useful in completing your documentation.

Sign up to receive the [provider toolkit on our website](#). By signing up, you will receive notifications when updates are made to existing forms and when new forms are available for your use.

Coming Soon! – PCG Match

We are excited to announce that PCG Match, our online provider and individual matching platform, will soon be available to providers, individuals, and case managers! We know it can be challenging to find individuals who need services and PCG Match was designed to make it easier for you to connect with individuals near you.

PCG Match allows providers, individuals, and case managers to create profiles and job postings. If you're interested in serving more individuals, simply register as a provider and complete your profile. Individuals and case managers looking for providers who match your experience and skill set will be able to view your profile and reach out if they would like to connect. Providers are also able to search job postings and can reach out to the individual or case manager to learn more about the individual and their service needs. Once you've found a match, you must be added to the individual's service plan before you start providing services.

To learn more and register for an account, please visit our website.

Coming Soon! – Independent Provider (IP) Mentorship Program

In early 2023, PCG will launch the Independent Provider (IP) Mentorship Program! This voluntary mentoring program will foster a supportive community where independent providers can learn from one another and strengthen the skills necessary to be successful in their careers. During this program, mentors and mentees will establish goals, meet with weekly, work towards new skills, and reflect upon growth. To thank mentors for their commitment and guidance, mentors will be eligible for a monthly stipend.

Application Process: This is a voluntary program. Selection is competitive and participation is dependent upon ODM approval. Stay tuned for more information about the program, including eligibility, application instructions, and details about mentor and mentee expectations.

Help Needed!

Emergency Provider Recruitment Efforts

ODM has partnered with PCG to identify appropriate providers for individuals in urgent need of support so they can safely remain in their homes. As a part of this effort, we would like to make you aware of the following needs:

County	Service Type	Schedule	Waiver Plan and MCO, if applicable
Montgomery	Personal Care Aide	Any hours, Monday-Sunday	MyCare Ohio, Buckeye
Montgomery	Nurse	Any hours, Monday-Sunday	Ohio Home Care

If you are able to fill this need and would like to be connected to the case manager to learn

Making a Difference

Impacts of the Holidays on the Individual-Provider Relationship

The holidays are a special time of year as families, friends, and neighbors come together to celebrate cultures, values, and traditions of every kind. Although many of us consider it a magical, joyous season of festivity the holidays can also be overwhelming and stressful as people navigate hectic schedules and inflated expectations along with their everyday responsibilities.

It is important for caregivers to solicit a candid conversation with the individuals they serve and/or their case managers to ensure that both the caregiver's and individual's needs are met during the holiday season. An open dialogue about expectations over the holidays is crucial to maintaining a successful individual-provider relationship. Here are a few suggestions to help you navigate this time of year:

1) Request to have your holiday care discussion at the earliest opportunity: Have a conversation with the individuals you serve and their case managers as soon as possible so everyone is aware of preferred holiday schedules. Taking this proactive step enables you to prepare supplementary care plans if needed and provides ample time for other arrangements to be made if you are planning to take time off or reduce hours over the holidays. Additionally, once a conversation has occurred, your individual's case manager will be able to accurately amend the service plan to reflect any holiday schedule changes.

Although providers can feel pressured into sacrificing their holiday celebrations to continue to provide services, it is equally important for you to take care of yourself. Start with an open conversation about meeting both your needs.

2) Cultural competency and awareness during the holiday season: Cultural competence emphasizes awareness of diverse cultures to help you effectively meet the needs of different cultural groups (1). It is important to be culturally aware during the holiday season when the individuals you serve may be celebrating traditions that may differ from your own.

Knowing the culture and traditions of the individuals you support can increase the quality of service you provide as well as produce better outcomes. If you don't already know, initiate a conversation with individuals you serve about their holiday practices and any specific holiday-related care needs. This could include decorations, meal preparation, or activities related to their traditions. Be aware that an individual may not take part in any holiday celebrations. Inquiring about an individual's culture and personalizing care based on their customs demonstrates your consideration for practices that are integral to their life.

3) Depression in home and community-based care settings: Although the holiday season is often a time of togetherness and celebration, many people grapple with holiday depression (2). The increased burden of social seclusion, reduced health status, and limited support services can exacerbate depression in HCBS settings (2). Individuals with few close personal friends or family may rely on providers to help them experience the joys of the season. Helping individuals participate in activities they enjoy can positively impact their feelings about the holiday season.

Providers should be alert and responsive to signs of depression in individuals, including social withdrawal, loss of appetite, weight loss, or insomnia. If you observe signs of

depression, document and convey this information immediately to the individual's case manager. Additionally, to effectively assist individuals who may be struggling with depression, be aware of your own potential for feeling down during the holidays (2). This [resource](#) can provide you with a few tips to help you and individuals manage feelings of holiday depression.

PCG recognizes how difficult the holidays can be for individuals and providers, particularly at this time of critical need. We want to take this opportunity to thank you for your service. Your work is appreciated. Your services are valuable. You are improving others' quality of life and adding meaning to the holiday season!

References

1) Cultural Competence in Health and Human Services. National Prevention Information Network. <https://npin.cdc.gov/pages/cultural-competence>. Published September 10, 2021. Accessed November 11, 2022.

2) Javens C. Managing Patient and Caregiver Depression During the Holidays. Axxess. <https://www.axxess.com/blog/clinical/managing-patient-and-caregiver-depression-during-the-holidays/>. Published December 5, 2019. Accessed November 11, 2022.



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