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**SPONSOR:** Daphne Woodyly

**PURPOSE/AUDIENCE:** Q2 meeting was held on Wednesday, June 26, 2024, needs to be to the State within 30 days

**MARKETS:** LA

**BAYOU HEALTH REPORTING**

**REPORT INFORMATION**

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**Definitions and Instructions:**

- **Reporting Quarter**

2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter, June, 2024

- **Agenda Topics**

- Introductions
- Health Plan Updates
- Member Complaints
- SDOH(Social Drivers of Health) and Healthcare Literacy
- Health Equity-Maternal Health Child
- Maternal Child Health, HIV and Congenital Syphilis Measures
- CBO(Community Based Organizations) Community Organization Info Corner

- **Health Plan Updates**

- Peter Lambousy initiated the meeting by letting everyone know that the session was being recorded for note-taking purposes, as they have to provide notes to the state.

- Peter gave a brief overview of the upcoming change in the dental benefit plan starting from July 1st. The updated dental benefit includes cleanings, x-rays, simple fillings, and extractions, up to a total value of \$500. He clarified for Willie, who specifically asked about exclusions, that complex procedures such as root canals, might not fall under this benefit.
  - Peter Lambousy and Molly Taylor emphasized the importance of member feedback in shaping their strategies and improving health equity. Taylor hoped that feedback from community partners would help them be better partners in addressing health equity across the state.
  - Lambousy discussed common member complaints and assured attendees that these were being addressed within a 24-hour period.
- **Member Complaints**
    - Peter Lambousy mentioned member complaints and assured the committee that they try to address these promptly. Following this, Kathy Victorian acknowledged seeing member complaints and Peter Lambousy affirmed that they are aware of the issues and are working to resolve them.
    - Peter Lambousy provided examples of common complaints such as difficulties in finding a specialist, challenges with filling prescriptions, and provider issues like shadow billing, balance billing, or doctors not accepting Healthy Blue members. He mentioned these issues are being referred to the case management team for resolution.
    - In response to a question from Willie about any exclusions to the new dental benefit, Peter Lambousy clarified that some complex dental procedures might not be covered under the new benefit plan, pointing out a potential concern for members.
    - Peter Lambousy mentioned that their team is consistently making efforts to deliver the care that every member needs despite the challenges. He said that member complaints are a critical aspect that their team constantly monitors. He asked if there are any feedback or concerns about member complaints from the team.
    - Riichi Torres-Oyama talked about the transportation problems faced by Medicaid members, stating the need for a solution, possibly a dedicated hotline number for clinics to use when these issues arise. He explained that this issue is currently being discussed in the Medical Advisory Committee with the MAC practitioners. He also explained that Dr. Upendra Kulkarni had brought the issue of Medi-Trans up in previous MAC meetings and it is on the agenda to discuss in MAC and SQC.
    - Responding to this, both Peter Lambousy and Molly Taylor appreciated the input. Molly Taylor stressed the need for a clear procedure on who to call or how to get help when faced with such transportation issues as a member or a clinic.
    - Peter Lambousy identified common complaints from members such as difficulties in finding a specialist, challenges with filling prescriptions, and provider issues like shadow billing or balance billing. He mentioned these complaints are addressed as soon as possible, within a 24-hour timeframe.

- Riichi Torres-Oyama provided information about the Annual Assessment of Member Experience report that details all the top complaints and appeals issues and what the plan is doing to improve the results. He provided a link to the report for internal health plan staff.
- **SDOH (Social Driver of Health) and Healthcare Literacy**
  - Molly Taylor initiated a conversation asking attendees how they would define Health Equity. Martha Marak responded saying that for her, it meant that everyone has a fair and equal opportunity for the highest level of healthcare possible. Jessica reaffirmed Martha's view and expanded that it should be regardless of social status, geographic location, or demographic and other factors such as social determinants of health.
  - In response to these perspectives, Willie asked how they define a fair and just opportunity. Molly Taylor redirected this question to the attendees, asking them what Health Equity meant to them personally.
  - Peter Lambousy gave his take on the matter, saying that to him, justice meant understanding an individual's needs while respecting how much help they want. He pointed out the difficulty in connecting individuals with the right resources and coordinating different aspects beyond the medical side - such as food banks or utility assistance.
  - Robin emphasized that everyone, irrespective of race, color, creed, nationality, or beliefs, is entitled to good quality healthcare.
  - Brooke Deykin pointed out the difference between equality and equity, stating that for healthcare to be effective, it must be tailored to the specific needs and risks of each individual, as different groups may have different health risks.
  - Finally, Molly Taylor thanked Brooke Deykin for her insightful comment on the difference between equality and equity in healthcare. Once again, she emphasized the importance of feedback from the team in their ongoing efforts to address health disparities and improve health equity.
- **Health Equity-Maternal Health Child**
  - Molly Taylor addressed the disparities in maternal health for Black birthing people in Louisiana. She stressed the importance of providing access to care and trusted in-network providers for better health outcomes.
  - Taylor encouraged open discussion and feedback on health equity in the state, inviting partners to collaborate.
- **Maternal Child Health, HIV and Congenital Syphilis Measures**
  - Kolletta Davis discussed HIV screening recommendations, mentioning that individuals between the ages of 13 and 64, pregnant individuals, those with risk factors related to sexual transmission, and individuals who inject drugs should be tested. She outlined different testing methods including rapid antibody tests, rapid antigen antibody tests, and nucleic acid tests.
  - A broader discussion occurred around the stigma of HIV testing, touching on factors like fear, societal stigma, and the misconception that only certain groups are at risk of contracting HIV. Riichi Torres-Oyama stressed the importance of educating individuals about early detection and treatment benefits and creating a comfortable testing environment.

- Riichi Torres-Oyama brought up the often-avoided question, "Have you had sex with other men?" and acknowledged the reluctance people might have in discussing or admitting it. Peter Lambousy affirmed that all health information is private and protected.
- Patrice Pasley touched on the topic of rapid HIV testing. She conveyed her willingness to coordinate with Healthy Blue to inform their members about it.
- Other related topics, such as syphilis screening and community involvement in spreading awareness and education, were also discussed in the meeting.
- **CBO (Community Based Organizations) Community Organization Info Corner**
  - Peter Lambousy announced the CBO corner, thanking the presenters and participants for their time and feedback. He invited community organizations or anyone else to share information about any programs or initiatives that they're involved in that are currently benefiting the community.
  - Susan thanked Monette, appreciating the partnership with Healthy Blue in various efforts including a school supply drive. She indicated that supplies are being collected for distribution on July 30th at 'Families Helping Families', since Calcasieu Parish stopped the supply of these school materials.
  - Martha expressed her gratitude for the partnership with Healthy Blue as Rashad Bingham has been immensely supportive. She mentioned an important initiative they started in March - a new food pantry that operates like a grocery store for qualified neighbors. She excitedly talked about an associated education center with potential for hosting classes on various beneficial topics (like health, healthy cooking, and financial literacy). She invited all present, specifically Rashad and Healthy Blue, to partner more closely with them and utilize this room for the benefit of their neighbors.
  - Peter Lambousy thanked Martha for her update. He mentioned that they're planning listening sessions within the community to discuss social drivers of health and other needs. He enquired if Martha would consider hosting one such session at her food pantry, emphasizing he would prefer to do this without disrupting their operations.
  - Martha agreed to Peter's suggestion, offering Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays between 11 AM and 2 PM as potential times when the pantry is operational. She proposed that they could do it any time on Monday or Wednesday, or before or after pantry time.
  - In the spirit of engagement, Martha even suggested offering incentives for people to come, like an additional small food box or may be a hot meal, to which Peter agreed. Peter emphasized that they need feedback, and they did not want to cause disruption to the good work that others like Martha are doing.
  - Patrice highlighted the HIV testing event happening in relation to National HIV Testing Day. She mentioned that she works directly with Healthy Blue and therefore with numerous Healthy Blue members. She agreed that an organized event as discussed would be something the Healthy Blue members would appreciate.
- **Take Away**

**Follow-up/Items of Interest:**

- Throughout the meeting, there was an emphasis on clear communication, collaboration, and welcoming feedback. These aspects were discussed in several contexts such as when discussing health plan updates, member complaints, and ways to improve health equity. Particular attention was paid to the stigma around HIV testing and members were encouraged to provide their input on how to alleviate these difficulties.
- Robin emphasized that everybody has the right to quality health care, while Brooke Deykin added that equity may require treating each person individually based on their specific risks or needs. Demonstrating that these committee meetings play a vital role in addressing the challenges, finding solutions, and planning improvements in healthcare.