



MEDICAID CLIENT VOICE COUNCIL ENGAGE

Volume 6

The Medicaid Client Voice Council seeks to amplify voices and increase feedback from the clients of Medicaid-funded programs.



Despite being on the job less than a week, DHS Secretary Kristi Putnam jumped right in and answered questions at the January meeting.

What's BEING SAID

“Good policy and really working with people and building collaborative ideas and new practices is what I love to do. I love seeing Cabinets work together. So, one of the things hopefully you will see a lot of is the Department of Human Services reaching out to the Departments of Education, Corrections, and all the other Cabinets because I think the best work done is work that we do together.”

Kristi Putnam



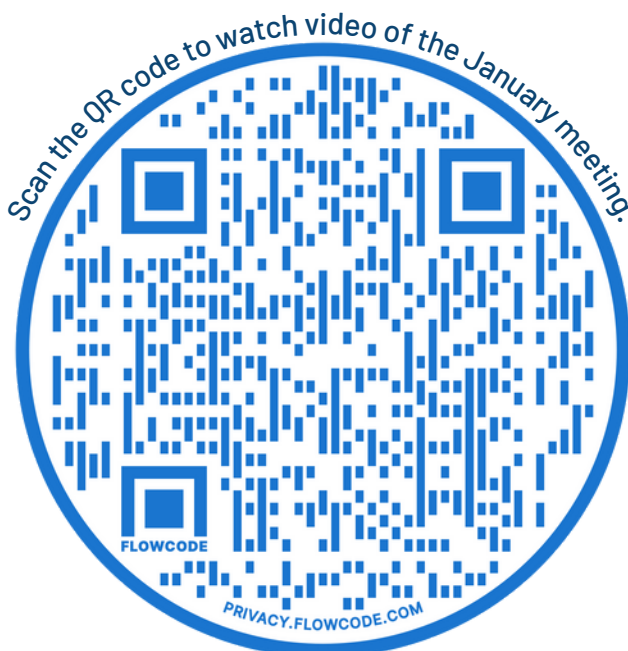
What's HAPPENING



HOME AND COMMUNITY-BASED WORKFORCE STABILIZATION

Melissa Weatherton, DHS Director of the Division of Developmental Disabilities Services, told Council members about how American Rescue Plan funding is being used to improve home and community-based services in Arkansas. "We're improving services for clients with IDD (intellectual and developmental disabilities), behavioral health, and those that are physically disabled or aging." Weatherton explained that over \$100 million dollars has been made available to providers to fund \$1,000 recruitment bonuses, up to \$15,000 retention bonuses, and \$3,500 for providers serving people with complex care needs. The money must be used by March 31, 2024. Council members requested and were provided with a list of all the providers statewide that have received funding for this initiative, which also includes enabling technology, an educational campaign, community-based crisis response system training, and improved transitions.

VIEW THE LAST MEETING



What's AHEAD

Next Council Meeting

Tuesday, March 28th, 11 a.m.-2.p.m.

AFMC Campus



DHS Deputy Director of Health and State Medicaid Director Janet Mann and DHS Director of County Operations Mary Franklin

MEDICAID CONTINUOUS COVERAGE SET TO END

Division of County Operations Director Mary Franklin told Council members that automatic enrollment in Medicaid programs will end on April 1. Over 400,000 Arkansans were allowed to remain enrolled in Medicaid programs during the Public Health Emergency even though many were not eligible under normal circumstances. "We want everyone who is eligible for services at DHS to receive those services. But we also have a charge to make sure that those who are receiving the services are eligible so that we maximize the resources that are available to serve everybody."

COUNCIL INPUT

Council members asked questions on a variety of topics, including the upcoming end to continuous Medicaid enrollment. Several noted that the expected increase in workload for DHS staff will hit during a hiring freeze. Deputy Director Mann informed members that extra help is being added/reallocated, and contractors are being considered to help with inquiries and appeals. Members also discussed the idea of community-based response teams to assist with children and adults experiencing a mental-health crisis and the need to raise wages for health care workers in general.



Newly elected Council Vice-Chairperson Kristin Arnold



Council member CaSandra Glover

Meet THE COUNCIL



**KRISTEN ARNOLD
CONWAY**



**DEANDREA BASS-CARRIGAN
CONWAY**



**ALISON CABALLERO
LITTLE ROCK**



**LAURA CARTWRIGHT
FAYETTEVILLE**



**NAYTHAN DYKE
FORT SMITH**



**DEBRA ECKL
LITTLE ROCK**



**BRITTANY GILMORE
DEQUEEN**



**CASANDRA GLOVER
SEARCY**



**FRANK HELLMER
LITTLE ROCK**



**GALE HOLLAWAY
JONESBORO**



**HEATHER HONAKER
LITTLE ROCK**



**KETTY KONISKE
POCAHONTAS**



**KEVIN HOOVER
EUREKA SPRINGS**



**MICHELE LAPPIN
WHITE COUNTY**



**BRADLEY LEDGERWOOD
CASH**



**ETANDRA MCCLURE
WEST MEMPHIS**

Meet THE COUNCIL



MICHELLE PEDRO
SPRINGDALE



BETTY RAIFORD
PINE BLUFF



AMANDA SANDERS
MOUNTAIN HOME



REBA SHIPLEY
JONESBORO



YOLANDA TRAYLOR
LITTLE ROCK



JERRY WATSON
PINE BLUFF



DARONDA WILLIAMS
PRESCOTT