

Fiscal Year
23/24

**Berks County
Mental Health
Developmental Disability &
HealthChoices Programs**



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Our MISSION

To provide quality care as well as the delivery of efficient public services and supports for individuals with mental illness and developmental disabilities so that they can increase their opportunities and abilities to lead lives of dignity and independence. Acknowledging that recovery is an ongoing process, MH/DD is committed to promoting personal growth, choice, and inclusion of consumers in their community.



Advisory Board Members

Brian Wlazelek, Chair	Yvonne Stroman, Vice Chair	John Bastek	Dr. Edward Chastka
Joe Conway	Crystal Dobroski	Jonathan Encarnacion	Dr. Jo Kelly
Kelly Kulp	Jenna Martorana	James Miller	Christopher Neidert
Jean Morrow	Pastor Manuel Perez	Comm. Michael Rivera	



Mental Health Program

Mental health base funds pay for the following:

- Treatment services for uninsured
- Community residential rehabilitation group homes
- Supported living
- Psychosocial rehabilitation services
- Peer support services
- Student assistance programs
- Crisis Intervention/Emergency Services
- CHIPP (Community Hospital Projects Program)



8,736
SERVED

3.15%

INCREASE IN TOTAL
EXPENDITURES



\$11,980,504
FY 2023/2024

Developmental Disabilities Program

The MH/DD Program oversees the Berks County Developmental Disabilities Program. This program promotes opportunities for individuals with disabilities to lead full and productive lives within our community. It is our goal to ensure that services and supports are provided to meet the needs of consumers with intellectual disabilities in the least restrictive setting possible. We want all individuals whom we serve to be active members of our community and live a life of quality.

The Developmental Disabilities Program was awarded additional Waiver capacity through the Department of Human Services, Office of Developmental Programs. This resulted in Berks County receiving:

- 13 Consolidated Waiver
- 85 Community Living Waiver

This brings the grand total of consumers receiving Waiver services in Berks County to:

- 576 Consolidated Waiver
- 296 Community Living Waiver
- 453 Person/Family Directed Supports



Early Intervention Program



The early intervention program helps families with the development of their children, ages from birth to three years of age, who have special needs due to developmental delays, disabilities or special risk factors.

Reasons for referrals:

1	Blind/low vision
5	Deaf/hard of hearing
1336	Developmental concern
4	ECE Suspension/Expulsion Risk
10	Lead Exposure
2	Low Birth Weight
10	Medical/Health condition
127	NICU care
16	Parental substance exposure (including alcohol)

1,973
UNDUPLICATED
CHILDREN

729 – female
1244 – male

\$4,737,494

FY 2023/2024

Unduplicated tracking children - 213

Unduplicated Waiver children - 448

Early Intervention Program

Coaching Initiative from OCDEL

Pennsylvania's Early Intervention (EI) program has been promoting coaching supports and services and collaborative partnerships for infants, toddlers and preschool children with disabilities and their families, caregivers, and early childhood education (ECE) professionals.

Coaching is designed to promote sustainable growth in knowledge, skills and behaviors for an individual or group. The focus when coaching a parent is observation, instruction and reflection so professionals, families and caregivers can use evidence-based practices for the development of young children in everyday activities and routines.

7/1/23 – 6/30/24 Berks County Activities:

- The Berks County Core Leadership Team, established to guide and monitor the implementation of the coaching initiative, met regularly to continue leading and providing supports necessary to EI staff.
- EI staff continued to work through the Infant Toddler Service Delivery Learning Path developed for the coaching initiative. These courses have been identified as the foundational knowledge pieces to implementing the new practice.
- Berks Early Care and Education Council Annual Retreat - 9/8/23
 - o **Presentation Title:** Early Intervention Service Delivery Coaching Across Settings
 - o **Session Summary:** This presentation outlined the key features of how this new approach has been rolling out over the past several years and the role of administrators, service providers, families, and community partners in this process. Homebased Coaching, the service delivery method for Early Intervention Birth to Age Three, Embedded Instruction for Early Learning, and the approach for Preschool Early Intervention were described. The importance of collaborative efforts among Early Intervention and Early Childhood professionals and the families they serve was highlighted. Participants learned more about how these service delivery models support caregivers to take the lead supporting their children in meaningful, everyday routines in home, early care and education and the community.
 - o **Number of participants:** 80
- Mailing to Pediatricians - 5/15/24
 - Mailing conducted to 55 local pediatricians regarding Early Intervention and to promote community “buy-in” for using the new coaching model.

Homeless Assistance Program (HAP)

Human Service Development Fund (HSDF)



HAP	HSDF
\$451,563	\$358,833
TOTAL EXPENDITURES - FY23/24	TOTAL EXPENDITURES - FY23/24

Homeless Assistance Program (HAP) funds rental assistance to allow individuals to remain housed. These funds also provide care management for an array of housing service providers as well as Bridge Housing for individuals and families.

Human Service Development Fund (HSDF) assists in the following: Meals on Wheels for people under 60 years of age, school prevention services, case management, and a forensic interviewer for children.


BERKS COUNTY SUPPORTING FAMILIES COLLABORATIVE


The Berks County Administrative Entity spent time in the 23/24 fiscal year, enhancing efforts to create networking activities for families, and resources for those with intellectual disabilities and/or autism. Through the *Berks County Supporting Families Collaborative*, an exciting event was held on June 29th at Bern Farm in Reading. It was “A Summer Luau” and featured the Solo Expression Dance Co. Everyone dressed in their best luau gear for this day provided fun, socialization, refreshments, and an awesome dance experience. As you can see from the photos, those in attendance had the most amazing time!



The Berks County Supporting Families Collaborative continues to develop, expand membership and connect with community partners. The focus of their work is the core belief that “all people have the right to live, love, play and pursue their own life aspirations in the community”.

For more information about resources or to become involved, please check out the Facebook Page: Berks County Supporting Families Collaborative or email us at berkscountyae@sam-inc.org.





HealthChoices Program



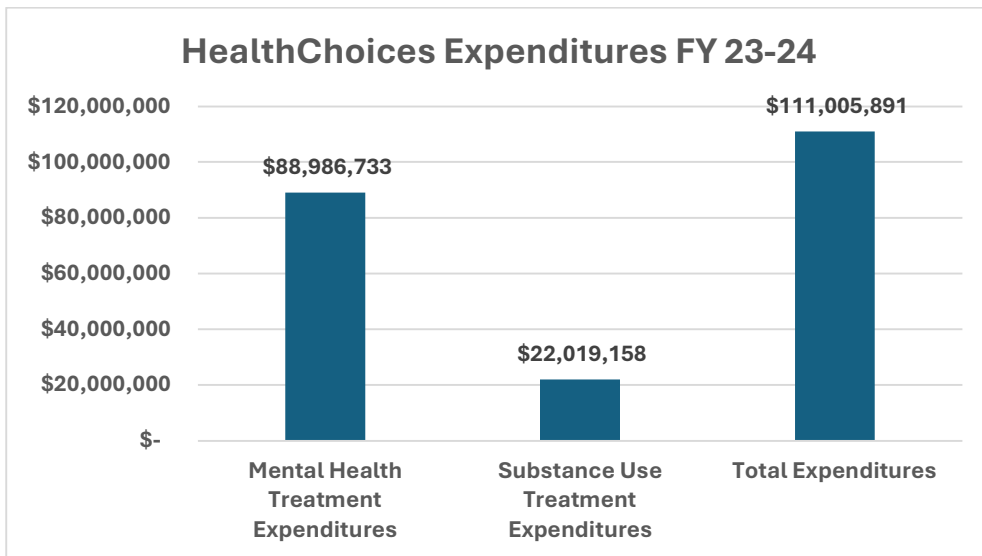
HealthChoices is Pennsylvania’s mandatory managed care program for Medical Assistance (MA) consumers. The program is designed to improve access to and the quality of care for MA consumers throughout Pennsylvania.

The PA Department of Human Services (DHS) has contracted directly with Berks County to manage the HealthChoices behavioral healthcare services to county residents since October 2001. The County, in turn, sub-contracts with a managed care organization (MCO), Community Care Behavioral Health (CCBH), to manage behavioral healthcare services on behalf of the County HealthChoices Program. The MCO’s responsibilities include provider network development, utilization management, quality management, claims management, information systems, reporting, member services, preventative and outreach.

HealthChoices Data - FY 2023/2024

 TOTAL ELIGIBLE MEMBERS	104,744
 TOTAL UNDUPLICATED MEMBERS SERVED	21,196
 MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES	19,489
 SUBSTANCE USE SERVICES	4,088

HealthChoices Program



Reinvestment since 2002

\$35,535,098

Enhanced HealthChoices Services

NEW Mental Health Diversion



Purpose: Assess, divert from emergency department (ED) or inpatient psychiatric care, and link to community-based services. For all ages.

Integrated Community Wellness Center (ICWC) at Tower Health Reading Hospital ED

75% diversion rate

KidsPeace Walk-in Assessment Center

83% diversion rate

Crisis Intervention Team training for First Responders began this year with two 40-hour trainings.

High-Risk Population



Purpose: Provide intensive community-based mental health and substance use disorder services for high-risk members.

BCC High Engagement Team

✓ Comparable to an ACT team

✓ Serve ages 14+

69% had no Inpatient stays during services

93% sustained community tenure

Berks County Suicide Prevention Grant

In collaboration with Penn State Pro Wellness and the Berks County ruOK Task Force, the Department of Health awarded funding to provide evidence-based training and infrastructure development regarding suicide prevention and intervention for Berks County teens and young adults.

During 2023-2024, Cohort 1 schools, consisting of Wyomissing and Brandywine Heights completed a mental health assessment for their schools. All sophomore students are being trained in Teen Mental Health First Aide. In addition, ten percent of the educators for that grade are receiving training in Youth Mental Health first aid.

Additional partners include Berks Counseling Center and the Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU). Their staff have become certified to provide the training for students and staff. Penn State Pro has also assisted in a redesign of the ruOK website. This website can be reached at www.ruokberks.com.

Stay tuned for next year when 3 school districts may participate in Cohort 2!



Strike Out the Stigma



The **8th Annual Strike Out the Stigma** game was held June 4, 2024, at the First Energy Stadium of the Fightin Phils.

Over 7,000 people were in attendance in support of Strike Out the Stigma of mental illness. This year brought an amazing crowd ... higher than ANY OTHER class AA team in the United States! The line literally went around the stadium and was the longest line so far this year.

