

Strategic planning symposiums offer collaborative discussions and innovative thinking

A message from Jim Leonard, CEO, Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.

On October 23 in Center Valley, PA we hosted a strategic planning symposium for behavioral health executive directors and leadership titled, “Leading the Charge: Behavioral Health Innovations in the Lehigh Valley.” This solutions-focused symposium provided education to key leadership and convened focus groups to tackle critical current challenges in behavioral health.

This 5-hour event with 90+ participants facilitated discussions emphasizing the importance of coordinated action, with a central aim to improve behavioral health outcomes by addressing patient risks, enhancing service integration, advocating for funding, and removing systemic barriers across care pathways. Outlined below are the best-practice presentations and workshops we focused on during this unique opportunity to bring leadership together in one location. Together, we aim to drive meaningful change by improving crisis intervention options, expanding behavioral health resources, and advocating for policy reforms that support a sustainable, accessible behavioral health system.

Presentations and strategic planning development workshops

- **Addressing Emergency Department (ED) Boarding for Behavioral Health** – *Jody McCloud Missmer, St. Luke’s University Health Network*
- **Behavioral Continuum of Care** – *Chelsea Jones, Northampton County Department of Human Services*
- **Advancing Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) & Social Determinants of Health (SDoH)** – *S. Benay Berger, Bethlehem Health Bureau*
- **Enhancing Workforce Development** – *Mike Ditty, Magellan Behavioral Health of Pennsylvania, Inc.*



Next scheduled symposium

Committee subgroups have meetings scheduled and will prepare concrete recommendations to be presented at the next meeting on April 17, 2025, to be held at St. Luke’s Hospital – Sacred Heart Center in Allentown. If you are interested in learning more about this symposium series in the Lehigh Valley, send an email to twalker@magellanhealth.com.