



The Cutting Edge

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN NJ

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

Carolyn Beauchamp, President and CEO

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Having Trouble Getting an Appointment with a Mental Health Care Professional?

Call The MHANJ Access to Mental Health Care Initiative for Help and Support! We can:

- Walk you through the maze of private and public insurance
- Provide advocacy and support through the process
- Follow up with the Authorities to address the laws and regulations for access to care

How? Call the NJ MentalHealthCares line at 866-202-HELP (4357) and the friendly staff will help you identify resources available for you. If needed, they will refer you to the MHANJ Community Advocate for more support through the Access to Mental Health Care Initiative.

Medicaid Funded Transportation Update

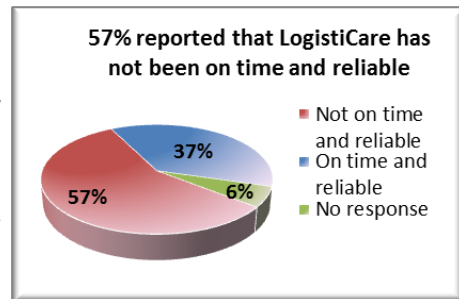
In May 2016, the Mental Health Association in New Jersey (MHANJ) announced the release of their Medicaid LogistiCare Transportation Feedback survey. The survey found that 57% of LogistiCare users reported that their transportation had

been late or unreliable and more than half had missed important appointments due to their transportation being late or not picking them up at all. These alarming results were an eye-opening wake-up call indicating that something needs to be done, statewide, to fix this fractured system.

Since the survey's release, legislation has been introduced by Assemblywoman Huttel and Senator Vitale ([A3616/S2317](#)), to improve the system and provide oversight of the services. Based on MHANJ's study recommendations, A3616/S2317 calls for:

- Users to be picked-up within 15 minutes of their scheduled time
- All providers, both directly contracted and sub-contracted, to receive training that will include meeting the special needs of passengers
- Procedures to follow when handling complaints
- Appropriate and courteous treatment and interactions with the person receiving transportation services
- Accountability of transportation services offered by a provider
- Random auditing of the information maintained by the provider

Additionally, the bill mandates that the contracted and sub-contracted companies be held accountable, by reporting annually to the Governor and the legislature on compliance with the performance and training standards listed above. This report shall include the number of times transportation was late, the number of complaints about non-compliance with performance or training standards and penalties imposed by the department or provider. This report shall also be made public on the departments website.



We'd Love to Hear from YOU!

Please contact MHANJ Community Advocate, Cynthia Spadola at cspadola@mhanej.org with your questions, comments, feed-back, concerns and advocacy issues!

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Concerns about this system have reached a federal level. The Office of the Inspector General (OIG) has found fraud within NJ's LogistiCare operations. The OIG, within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), works to protect the integrity of HHS programs as well as the health and welfare of program beneficiaries. The OIG is dedicated to combating fraud, waste and abuse and to improving the efficiency of HHS programs, through a nationwide network of audits, investigations, and evaluations.

Recently, the OIG conducted an audit of New Jersey's Medicaid transportation system, and released their report entitled "New Jersey Did Not Adequately Oversee its Medicaid Nonemergency Medical Transportation Brokerage Program." Based on the audit, the OIG reported that the "New Jersey Department of Human Services (State agency) did not adequately oversee its Medicaid nonemergency medical transportation brokerage program to ensure that (1) vehicles used to transport beneficiaries met State standards, (2) drivers were licensed and qualified, (3) prior authorizations were obtained, (4) transportation providers maintained required insurance coverages, (5) beneficiaries received Medicaid-eligible medical services on the date of transportation, and (6) services were documented."

To see the MHANJ's FULL Medicaid LogistiCare Transportation Feedback Survey Report, [click here](#).

To see the OIG's Report, [click here](#).

CSPNJ and Community Wellness Center Managers Unite with MHANJ to Show Support for A3616/S2317

Carolyn Beauchamp, President and CEO of MHANJ and Jody Silver, Executive Director of Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey (CSPNJ), along with Elena Kravitz, Manager at Moving Forward Wellness Center, Lisa Stone, Manager at Freedom Trail Community Wellness Center, David Leon, Manager at New Beginnings Community Wellness Center, provided testimony to the Assembly Human Services Committee on May 19th and again before the



Left to right_ David Leon_ Manger of New Beginnings Community Wellness Center_ Elana Kravitz_ Manager of Moving Forward Wellness Center_ and Carolyn Beauchamp_ President and CEO of MHANJ_ joined together to give testimony.

Senate Health, Human Services and Senior Citizens Committee on June 16th. Both committees consider bills, resolutions and other matters relevant to health and human services. In her testimony, Carolyn thanked the Bill's sponsors, Assemblywoman Huttle and Senator Vitale, for their vested interest in Medicaid Transportation Services in New Jersey, and added that the "MHANJ firmly believes that transportation is an integral component to achieving and maintaining stability for those with serious mental health issues. Regular, reliable and punctual transportation is essential for wellness and recovery to occur.

Jody shared that "many Center members have voiced serious challenges regarding LogistiCare transportation services: being left to wait outside in the cold or extreme heat for over 2 hours, missing medication monitoring appointments, being yelled at and ridiculed for having a physical disability, and lack of responsiveness when consumers file complaints."

The message was clear; passing this legislation is imperative in ensuring that these challenges become obsolete. These points were echoed again and again in each of the poignant testimonies provided. Elana closed her testimony by stating, "I cannot emphasize enough how essential Medicaid Funded Transportation is for those living with mental illness and how important passing [this Legislation] is to ensuring safe, reliable transportation, to all served by it."

A3616 was released from the Assembly Human Services Committee with a vote of 6-0, and was sent to the Senate Budget and Appropriations Committee.

Along with MHANJ and CSPNJ, A3616/S2317 is also supported by the NAMI- NJ and the Good Care Collaborative.



Learn more about [MHANJ's Government Affairs](#) efforts.

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