



ABH March Committee Meetings

Friday, March 10

Children's Services,
10 a.m.
Corporate Compliance,
10 a.m.

Monday, March 13

Billing, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 14

ACCS, 2:30 p.m.

Wednesday, March 15

Quality & Outcomes,
10 a.m.

Thursday, March 16

RRS TSS, 10 a.m.

Friday, March 17

MID DUIL SOA, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 21

OTP, 9:30 a.m.

Friday, March 24

CBHI, 10 a.m.

Tuesday, March 28

PDT/PHP, 10 a.m.
DEIJ, 12 p.m.

To learn more about
ABH's Committees, click
[here](#).

ABH Supports Black History Month

February is Black History Month! The national theme for 2023 is Black Resistance, exploring how “African Americans have resisted historic and ongoing oppression, in all forms, especially the racial terrorism of lynching, racial pogroms, and police killings since our arrival upon these shores” ([ASALH](#)). ABH commemorates Black behavioral healthcare and human services professionals who demonstrate resistance by providing quality behavioral healthcare to historically excluded populations, and we celebrate how behavioral health treatment providers and the people we serve benefit from a diverse professional community. ABH continues to address racial inequities, advocate for culturally responsive care, and work to eliminate disparities in our behavioral healthcare system in order to ensure equitable access to quality mental health and substance use disorder treatment for underserved populations and communities.

We encourage you to celebrate Black History Month, and have compiled some resources that may help you do so:

- [A Proclamation on National Black History Month, 2023 | The White House](#)
- [Governor Healey Signs Proclamation Recognizing Black History Month | Mass.gov](#)
- [Association for the Study of African American Life and History \(ASALH\) Black History Month Virtual Festival](#) - This year's festival will celebrate the theme of black resistance in the past, present, and future, starting February 1, 2023.
- [ABH Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Justice Toolkit: Organizational Culture Change](#) - Find a range of accessible organizational practices and tools to guide you and your team as you work to assess DEI&J within your own agency; develop strategies and take action to advance your own organizational goals; and establish processes for continuous evaluation and improvement of your chosen DEI&J practices.
- [Addressing Common Issues for Leaders in Equity Culture Change: Budgeting, Planning and Problem Solving](#)

- [National Council for Mental Wellbeing Webinar Recording: Addressing Diversity, Equity and Engagement in Organizational Structures](#) - Explore implicit bias, moral injury and what organizations can do to create safe, secure and equitable environments for all staff to reduce trauma, avoid re-traumatization and build resiliency.
- [Black Mental Health Matters: A Resource Guide](#)
- [Network of Care Culturally Responsive Behavioral Health Resource Hub](#) - Find resources and behavioral health providers who tailor their services to support the emotional and mental wellness of specific racial, ethnic, or cultural identity groups.

Is your organization celebrating Black History Month? Please let us know! Contact Meg Socha at msocha@abhmass.org, and ABH will share your information in our Resource Roundup.

Keeping Coverage

As you may know, the federal government provided for continuous Medicaid coverage for individuals beginning in March 2020. This meant that many Medicaid enrollees kept coverage even if they did not respond to eligibility redetermination requests or



would be ineligible under standard program rules. The federal government is now ending the continuous coverage requirements and states must redetermine eligibility for all Medicaid members. This redetermination process will be the single largest health coverage transition event since the first open enrollment of the Affordable Care Act and the Medicaid expansion.

The state Medicaid program (MassHealth) will return to its standard annual eligibility redetermination processes beginning April 1, 2023. Over the course of 12 months, all current MassHealth members will need to renew their health coverage to ensure they still qualify for their current benefit.

MassHealth is partnering with the Massachusetts Health Connector, Health Care For All, and other partners to make sure MassHealth members know how to renew coverage and to be aware of other coverage options if they are no longer eligible for MassHealth. ABH members can be important partners in educating MassHealth members about coverage renewal and the importance of keeping their contact information current with MassHealth. It is also important for providers to continue to check MassHealth's Eligibility Verification System (EVS) daily as is required by the All Provider Manual, because service delivery to ineligible individuals can result in nonpayment.

MassHealth is making available provider education resources and member-facing materials to support renewal efforts. See [page 4](#) for key resources.

Removal of DATA Waiver (X-Waiver) Requirement

Section 1262 of the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023 (also known as Omnibus bill) includes provisions to increase access to medication-assisted treatment for Opioid Use Disorder. Effective immediately, SAMHSA will no longer be accepting NOIs (waiver applications) and all practitioners who have a current DEA registration that includes Schedule III authority, may now prescribe buprenorphine for Opioid Use Disorder in their practice if permitted by applicable state law.

Specifically, the new law:

- Removes the X-Waiver registration requirement. All health care providers with a standard DEA controlled medication registration will be able to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder without separate registration, subject to state requirements.
- Removes the patient limits. All health care providers with a standard DEA controlled medication registration will be able to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder to as many patients in their practice as needed, subject to state requirements.
- Removes the special DEA "X" prescribing number. Health care providers can use their standard DEA controlled substance registration number to prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder.
- Removes counseling referral and ancillary services requirement. Health care providers with a standard DEA controlled medication registration can prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder in the course of their normal medical practices, subject to state requirements.
- Removes X-Waiver training requirement. Health care providers with a standard DEA controlled medication registration can prescribe buprenorphine for opioid use disorder, subject to state requirements.
- While there is no longer a training requirement specific to obtaining an X-Waiver, the bill includes provisions that will require that all health care providers registered with the DEA take an 8-hour course on substance use disorder.
- SAMHSA and DEA are actively working on implementation of these training requirements, which become effective in June 2023 ([Removal of DATA Waiver \(XWaiver\) Requirement | SAMHSA](#)).
- See DEA's announcement here: [DEA announces important change to registration requirement](#).
- Snapshot of the former federal rules and the changes:
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1OwOAvy3oEs5DUtKAToS8irT4ZWApdezV/view>.

Free Youth Mental Health First Aid Training

Youth Mental Health First Aid is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people. The course introduces common mental health challenges for youth, reviews typical adolescent development, and teaches a 5-step action plan for how to help young people in both crisis and non-crisis situations. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, substance use, disorders in which psychosis may occur, disruptive behavior disorders (including AD/HD), and eating disorders. Register [here](#) for a course on March 14, April 24, May 19 or June 5. The course is FREE.

SAMHSA Survey

SAMHSA recently released the annual National Survey of Drug Use and Health for 2021. It includes national data on the use of tobacco, alcohol & drugs, SUD & mental health challenges, and the use of treatment services.

You can access it [here](#).

February Health Care Cybersecurity Call

Join the Massachusetts eHealth Institute (MeHI) and the MassCyberCenter on February 9th at 10 a.m. for their monthly health care provider cybersecurity call. As always, they will be joined by representatives of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and the Commonwealth Fusion Center who will provide updates on recent cyber threats and trends.

These calls will continue to occur on the second Thursday of every month and will feature a discussion leader from MeHI and the MassCyberCenter, DHS, the Commonwealth Fusion Center, and additional guest speakers to provide updates on emerging threats and cover a monthly topic of interest from the group. You can register for the call now by visiting their [Zoom registration page](#).

If you have any questions on the series please email fathy@masstech.org.

This series was developed as an outcome of the 2020 Baseline Cybersecurity of Massachusetts Healthcare Provider Survey. The Association for Behavioral Healthcare, Home Care Alliance of Massachusetts, LeadingAge Massachusetts, Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association, Massachusetts League of Community Health Centers, Massachusetts Medical Society, and Massachusetts Senior Care Association partnered with MeHI and the MassCyberCenter to develop and circulate the survey.

Behavioral Health Help Line

The Massachusetts Behavioral Health Help Line (BHHL) is live. The Help Line will connect individuals and families to the full range of treatment services for mental health and substance use offered in Massachusetts, including outpatient, urgent, and immediate crisis care. Individuals will receive for real-time support, initial clinical assessment, and connection to the right evaluation and treatment.

Call or Text 833-773-2445

Chat is available [here](#)

- Available 24/7, including holidays.
- It's free, confidential, and no health insurance is required.
- Real-time interpretation in 200+ languages.
- Deaf or hard of hearing? Contact MassRelay at 711.
- The BHHL can help with any mental health or substance use concern.

Federal Behavioral Health Funding

The passage of the federal Fiscal Year 2023 Omnibus Spending Act included many behavioral health provisions & over \$10 billion for behavioral health programming. The National Council for Mental Wellbeing has a detailed summary available [here](#).

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Keeping Coverage Key Resources

MassHealth has developed numerous provider- and member-facing resources and tools to support the redetermination campaign:

- MassHealth Eligibility Redetermination [Landing Page](#). This landing page has information for MassHealth members and providers and other partners about renewing MassHealth coverage.
- MassHealth Eligibility Redetermination [Outreach Toolkit](#). This toolkit serves as a communication guide and provides partner resources to help prepare for the end of the continuous coverage requirements. It includes downloadable posters, flyers, template social media messaging and more.
- MassHealth Eligibility Redetermination [Presentation Deck](#). This deck provides additional redetermination initiative information, including basic initiative timelines, and context.
- MassHealth Eligibility Redetermination [Email Sign-Up](#). Individuals can complete an online form and sign up to receive emails for the latest news and updates on MassHealth's redetermination process.

A Peek in the Personnel File

On January 25, Governor Healey appointed Kate Walsh, the current Chief Executive Officer of the Boston Medical Center (BMC) health system, as Secretary of the Executive Office of Health and Human Services. Prior to her tenure at BMC, Walsh served as Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Brigham and Women's Hospital, Chief Operating Officer for Novartis Institutes for Biomedical Research, and Senior Vice President of Medical Services and the MGH Cancer Center at Massachusetts General Hospital. She also held positions in a number of New York City hospitals.



ABH congrats Secretary Walsh and ABH is looking forward to working with her!

Interesting Reads

- [As ER waits stretch for days, Mass. turns to in-home care for children's mental health.](#) *WBUR*.
- [Author Tracy Kidder profiles Boston's doctor to the homeless community, Jim O'Connell.](#) *WBUR*.
- [Behavioral Telehealth Loses Momentum Without a Regulatory Boost.](#) *Kaiser Health News*.
- [10 Things to Know About the Unwinding of the Medicaid Continuous Enrollment Provision.](#) *Kaiser Family Foundation*.