



The Cutting Edge

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION IN NJ

GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS UPDATE

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Special Edition

May 23, 2016

Medicaid Transportation for Health Care Consumers Late or Unreliable in New Jersey, MHANJ Survey Finds

*An alarming 57% of respondents said transportation has been late or unreliable in last 6 months;
53% missed important doctor's appointments due to late or failed transportation*

In a survey conducted by the Mental Health Association in New Jersey (MHANJ), an alarming number of respondents (57%) indicated that their Medicaid transportation to mental health treatment and care has been unreliable or late in the past six months; while 53% indicated that the failed transportation service caused them to miss important doctor's appointments. MHANJ conducted the survey in response to complaints and concerns about the inconsistency in quality and reliability of LogistiCare, the company contracted in New Jersey to provide transportation to individuals living with mental health conditions who have Medicaid.

"As an advocacy organization, the Mental Health Association in New Jersey is concerned that unreliable transportation causes those with mental health issues to experience disruptions in their treatment," said Carolyn Beauchamp, President and CEO of the MHANJ. "We firmly believe 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."

Survey Results Indicate Significant Problems with Transportation Service

In partnership with Collaborative Support Programs of New Jersey (CSPNJ), the survey was completed by 311 individuals living with mental health conditions who have Medicaid and currently utilize, or have utilized, LogistiCare transportation services in the last 6 months. The outcomes of this survey indicate that there are significant problems, statewide, that affect individuals living with mental illness who rely on LogistiCare to get them to medical appointments. Additional issues include:

- Nearly a third noted serious concerns with the safety of both driving practices and vehicle condition
- Approximately 25% of participants indicated that they had been treated rudely, disrespected, sexually harassed, yelled or cursed at or were unable to have their physical disabilities/needs attended to

- More than a third had filed, or tried to file, a complaint, and 52% of them received no response or saw no change at all
- Nearly half of those surveyed indicated that they are not at all or only slightly satisfied with LogistiCare overall
- Almost a quarter indicated that they have stopped using LogistiCare because services were unreliable, they were treated poorly, they felt unsafe, etc.

Addressing This Issue

On May 19, 2016, in response to the MHANJ's Survey, the Assembly Human Services Committee heard testimony from CSPNJ consumers of mental health services who direct Community Wellness Centers throughout New Jersey and consumers of mental health services who have experienced these problems first-hand. Assemblywoman and Committee Chair Valerie Vanieri Huttie sponsored and introduced [A3616](#), which proposes increased oversight accountability, timeliness and more specific provider training. The Bill passed unanimously by the Committee.

"Our survey, it's results, and A3616 are timely, as the state has recently received bids for a new transportation service to be the contracted Medicaid transportation broker. This legislation will ensure that those dependent on Medicaid funded transportation, will have improved transportation service," Ms. Beauchamp said.

The MHANJ, CSPNJ and other partner organizations will continue to advocate for improvements in the Medicaid transportation system.

[Please click here to read the Medicaid Transportation Survey results and report.](#)

About the [Mental Health Association in New Jersey](#)

The MHANJ is a statewide private non-profit advocacy organization dedicated to improving access to treatment and opportunities for children and adults with mental illnesses through legislation and advocacy efforts. Our organization works with consumers and families to create a better life for those with mental illness.



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

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