

The Autism Resource Community Hub of the Lehigh Valley (ARCH of Lehigh Valley)

The Autism Resource Community Hub of the Lehigh Valley (*ARCH of Lehigh Valley*) will serve Lehigh County MA eligible individuals diagnosed with an Autism Spectrum Disorder. Initially services will be provided to an estimated 200 children and their families. Adult services will be developed in subsequent years. While Lehigh County residents will be the first priority, the *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will serve eligible individuals throughout the Lehigh Valley.

The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will be located in Allentown where it will be accessible to public transportation and providers of other services that will wrap around the needs of the individual. This community center will be administered by a provider agency and advised by a community board comprised of all stakeholders including a strong family presence.

This "one-stop shopping" model integrates clinical and non-clinical approaches and training to the individuals who have a diagnosis on the autism spectrum or to family members touched by this diagnosis. The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will work in collaboration with individuals on the spectrum, families, county representatives, providers, experts in the field and other stakeholders to coordinate a continuum of services for individuals whose lives are touched by autism.

The Mission of the *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* is to provide a safe, therapeutic and educational environment for people with autism – regardless of age or ability – and their families. The mission will be accomplished by offering a range of clinical and community supports, resources and educational materials and training. These services will take place in an inviting and user-friendly service center, through a network of providers who are trained in Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD).

The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will secure a site that will be operational 6 days a week. Hours per day may be increased over time as need and financial stability is achieved. There will be multiple rooms including but not limited to: outdoor space, community rooms, treatment rooms, offices, sensory rooms, and resource rooms. There is the intent to offer space to other providers (OT, PT, speech) who may want to deliver services at the *ARCH of Lehigh Valley*. Community members and providers will be able to use open space.

The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* is a plan that presents a focused unified concept that allows for a strategy that starts small and builds its services as it becomes sustainable over time. This reinvestment plan describes the services that will be developed and delivered over a two-year period.

Phase I Services

1. ***Satellite Outpatient Clinic (in-plan)*** – Offers a range of services including individual, group, and family therapies, evaluations, assessment and psychiatry. A specific focus of the clinic will be offering extended groups – similar to an intensive outpatient model. Offers maximum flexibility in providing individual and group programming to identified individuals and their support systems. Services are billable under the outpatient license.
2. ***Diagnosis and Evaluation (in-plan)***- Designed to reduce wait time for diagnosis, improve access to services, be the springboard for an outcome based integrated treatment plan and to be designed around current thinking on best practices. An expert in autism spectrum disorders will be employed as a consultant to help determine best practices, evaluation measures, outcome measures and psychometric tools
3. ***Case Management (in-plan)***- Blended case management with an ASD specialty to assist in access, linkage and coordination of services. A multi-disciplinary approach where all voices

(across all stakeholders) are heard and informed decisions are made based on these shared goals and needs of the identified individuals.

BHRS Programs

4. **After School Program**– These services will be offered to families through a BHRS program exception. It will be based on ASD informed services, evidence based, best practices and promising practices.
5. **Summer Program** – BHRS program description for summer therapeutic activities program.
6. **Traditional BHRS** – MT, BSC and TSS

Training, technical assistance and quality is inherent throughout. The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will, in concert with the Bureau of Autism and other experts, develop an ASD specific training curriculum for professionals, therapeutic staff and parents across a variety of treatment modalities. A concerted effort will be made to coordinate and standardize training in coordination with the training curriculum that the Bureau of Autism has begun to establish. Incentives for providing autism informed services will be developed to assure quality of care. ARCH of Lehigh Valley staff will be required to receive this specialized training. In addition, families will receive assistance from ASD informed staff to help organize, evaluate and utilize resource information specific to their own needs. Families will have access to accurate information about professional services and support within the Lehigh Valley.

The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will stay in compliance with all Medical Assistance and OMSHSAS regulations, and Health Choices standards. The physical location as well as the clinical care staff will be required to meet DPW/OMHSAS licensing and BH-MCO contracting and credentialing requirements.

Initial Core staff for the ARCH of Lehigh Valley:

Administrative:

- (1) FT Program Director – oversight, provision of supervision for the CM and other clinicians
- (1) FT Assistant Program Director - provision of supervision for the CM and other clinicians
- (2) FT Receptionists / Admin Assistants / Billing clerk
- (1) PT Family Partner – 20 hours/week – liaison to families and providers

Outpatient:

FFS - Psychiatrist

- (1) FT Licensed Psychologist - evaluation, treatment and supervision
- (3) FT Clinicians (Master level)
- (1) Therapeutic Aide

Case Management:

- (2) FT Clinical Case Managers for groups and case management work

Training and Program Development:

- (1) FT Director of QI and Training - QI, Training and performance management
- FFS - Consultants – experts in the ASD field

After School Program (24 children - 4 groupings – 6 children in each group – ratio 1:3)

- (4) MA level clinician
- (4) BA level

Summer Therapeutic Activities Program (24 children for 6 week program – ratio 1:3)

- (2) MA level clinician
- (3) BA level
- (3) Non-bachelor's level (with at least 1 year of experience- supervised by licensed clinicians)

The *ARCH of Lehigh Valley* will hire a Director of Quality Improvement who will focus on training, quality improvement, data collection and performance management. The scope of Quality Improvement includes attention to the quality of care in clinical practice and “customer” service.