

Report on Elderplan FIDA Participant Advisory Committee/Town Hall Meeting & Feedback Session

March 28th 2017, 11:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m., Brooklyn, NY

Elderplan conducted its first 2017 Participant Advisory Committee/Town Hall Meeting and Feedback Session for FIDA participants on March 28th, 2017. The meeting was held at the Corporate Offices of Elderplan/Homefirst in the Sarah B. and Sarah W. Training room.

ELDERPLAN FIDA PARTICIPANT ADVISORY COMMITTEE/TOWN HALL MEETING

The event was carefully designed to engage Elderplan FIDA Participants. The program included a brief overview of the valuable benefits offered by Elderplan's FIDA plan, a recap of the Plan's performance to date and a focus on healthy eating. In addition, participant questions and feedback about their experiences with Elderplan FIDA were encouraged. Midway through the PAC, a discussion led by a certified nutritionist on healthy eating was conducted. Feedback Session followed the PAC, and lunch was served at its conclusion.

Recruitment

Elderplan is highly committed to recruiting Participants for the Town Hall session. Invitations were mailed to the homes of all FIDA Participants. Elderplan also partnered with Logisticare, the Plan's transportation vendor, who performed initial and follow up outbound calls to members to confirm their RSVP as well as schedule their transportation pick up and drop off to the event.

One week prior to the Town Hall, Elderplan successfully recruited 17 participants to attend the PAC and Feedback session, who also RSVP to bring 13 guests, for a total of 30 attendees. The 17 Participants represented approximately 5% of our membership at the time and included representation from all five Boroughs of NYC. A call-in option was also presented to the members if they could not attend the meeting in person.

Transportation was offered to all Participants and an accompanying family members or home health aides.

Attendance

Given the age and frailty of many of our Participants, there was a slight falloff in actual attendance from initial RSVP estimates. On March 28th, thirteen FIDA Participants and eight accompanying caretakers attended Elderplan's Q117 FIDA Town Hall Meeting and Feedback Session. This represented approximately 3.8% of our membership at the time. The PAC attendees came from the Bronx, Brooklyn, Manhattan and Queens. Eleven of the thirteen attendees spoke English. The two attendees who spoke Spanish were provided a translator during the Town Hall session and subsequent lunch. Ten were women and three were men. Seven brought home health aides with them, one brought her husband in addition. Three needed the assistance of a walker and two were in wheelchairs.

THE PROGRAM

Introduction

Diane Ashley, Vice President/Chief Marketing Officer and moderator of the PAC and Feedback Session, welcomed everyone to the Plan's Participant Advisory Committee meeting/Town Hall.

At the start of the program, Participants were given a brief history of MJHS, how Elderplan was one of the original social HMOs and how Elderplan continues to carry on a tradition of compassion, dignity and respect first established by the Four Brooklyn Ladies when MJHS was founded in 1907. Before proceeding with the program, Participants were encouraged to ask questions and share their thoughts at the conclusion of each brief section of the program.

FIDA Benefits and Services

Chad Johnson, AVP, Medicaid & Integrated Products from Elderplan, explained the benefits offered by Elderplan FIDA, and how they differ from other integrated and long term care programs. Specifically, this included the benefits of having an Interdisciplinary Team (IDT), development of a Person-Centered Service Plan (PCSP), behavioral health and substance abuse coverage, continuity of care protections, zero cost, coordination of Medicare and Medicaid home and community benefits, an integrated appeals and grievances process and the over-the-counter drug benefit.

Elderplan addressed questions and concerns raised by FIDA Participants at the conclusion of this segment, and even brought up commonly asked questions that Elderplan has received through Participant Services.

Many of the questions centered on the desire of Participants to retain their own doctors, over-the-counter item coverage list, and issues with transportation. Elderplan panel members indicated that Care Managers as well as the Account Management staff from Logisticare will go around the room during lunch to address any issues the participants have brought up directly. There was also a request for a list of covered items on the over-the-counter list, which we provided to each participant. Participants were encouraged to call Participant Services and speak with their Care Manager at any time, if they have a problems or concerns about the physician network.

The Moderator also emphasized how valuable these Town Hall feedback sessions are in order to obtain the important issues that our participants may have and be able to bring that information back for quick and effective resolution. It's Elderplan's goal to ensure all participants receive the best possible care and achieve the best possible outcome.

Elderplan FIDA Performance Update

As of March 7, 2015, Elderplan had 342 enrollments/participants in FIDA and 33 dis-enrollments in 2017. Participants were reminded that we're here for them if they should have any questions. There were seven appeals during this reporting period and only five grievances. All were resolved to the Participant's satisfaction.

Eating for Wellness

Josephine Frisari, RN and AVP of Quality and Performance Improvement, conducted a presentation on improving eating habits. With the use of food props, she demonstrated the mantra of “Reflect, Replace, and Reinforce”. This was a very informative presentation, focused on replacing unhealthy habits with new ones, and reinforcing a commitment to eating healthy. Healthy eating tips and the Healthy Eating Plate were shared with the group. There was a Q&A towards the end and one of the participants asked what would be a replacement for fiber if you are allergic to nuts.

Jhack Sepulveda, a certified Nutritionist, engaged the group in an interactive discussion on tackling obesity, heart disease and Diabetes, culprits of non-healthy eating. He brought to the attention of the group methods of cooking that can decrease fat; broiling versus frying, for example, as well as healthy eating takeaways. For example, he displayed a bottle of Minute Maid apple juice which notes 57grams of sugar on its list of Nutritional Facts, which equates to approximately 14.5 teaspoons of sugar. The participants were engaged and seemed to enjoy the lively discussion.

Feedback Session

At the conclusion of the Town Hall, Participants, their family members and home health aides were asked if they had any additional questions or comments they'd like to share.

One participant shared concerns that his wife's dentist's office is not wheelchair accessible for conducting x-rays, as she is unable to stand. The Plan responded that we would put the participant in touch with the Care Manager during the lunch break so they can have a face-to-face discussion and some assistance to solve the matter.

Three participants requested face-to-face meetings with their Care Manager to discuss private health matters during the lunch break as well.

One participant brought up a complaint regarding the transportation provider with issues around timeliness and the helpfulness of the drivers. Two other participants chimed in and agreed to the timeliness issue with drivers.

Since Logisticare, Elderplan's transportation vendor, was onsite for the meeting, Logisticare Account Managers were able to address transportation concerns.

The original participant that brought up the transportation complaint later volunteered that she really likes Homefirst/Elderplan and really enjoys the services we provide.

Conclusion of Program

In closing, all Participants were thanked for choosing Elderplan FIDA and for traveling to participate in our first Town Hall Meeting of the year. Also, participants were informed that both a PAC and Feedback Session would be hosted next quarter, with details to follow.

Before concluding, Participants were once again given the contact information for Ombudsman Services and introduced to Carol Walsh, a paralegal from New York Legal Assistance Group (NYLAG) representing Ombudsman Services. Ombudsman contact information was given as follows:

FIDA Participant Ombudsman
1-844-614-8800

TTY: 711
Online: icannys.org

Participants were also reminded of Elderplan FIDA Participant Services contact information, which is:

Elderplan FIDA Participant Services
1-855-462-3167
TTY: 711
8:00 AM to 8:00 PM, 7 Days a Week

Participants were requested to bring all Plan issues to Elderplan's Participant Services number for resolution before reaching out to the Ombudsman, so Elderplan can have an opportunity to resolve. Carol Walsh agreed.

Lunch and Informal Conversation

Members of the Elderplan panel and staff, along with the Ombudsman and Logisticare staff, joined the participants for lunch. The only comment that arose came from one Participant who stated that even though her doctor did not want to join the network, she liked Elderplan FIDA so much that she was going to stay. All Participants were asked if they'd be open to coming to future Town Hall meetings or Feedback Sessions. They all said, "Yes."

At the conclusion of the Town Hall meeting and lunch, all Participants were provided transportation safely back to their homes.