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MDHHS to hold Affinity Group meetings for 298 Workgroup

LANSING, Mich. – The Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS) today announced the first meeting dates for the Section 298 Initiative Affinity Groups – the next step in developing recommendations for improving the coordination of physical health and behavioral health services as directed by the state legislature.

The first scheduled Affinity Group meetings will be focused on eligible populations and their families. These meetings will occur from 1 to 4 p.m. on Oct. 4, and from 6 to 9 p.m. on Oct. 5 at the East Lansing Hannah Community Center. MDHHS will announce additional Affinity Group meetings over the next few weeks. MDHHS will also facilitate Affinity Group meetings for providers and payers later this fall. Organizations also have the option to host and facilitate their own Affinity Group meetings.

During these meetings, MDHHS will collect ideas, input, and feedback from stakeholders to help inform the development of the recommendations by consulting with individuals who receive services, families, providers, service agencies, associations, and other stakeholders.

The Section 298 Initiative is a statewide effort to improve the coordination of physical health services and behavioral health services. The 2017 executive budget proposal began a statewide discussion to develop the best approach for coordinating physical and behavioral health services. The original 298 Workgroup met from March 2016 to June 2016 and produced a report, a set of core values, and design elements for future discussions. The new 298 Facilitation Workgroup and the Affinity Groups will provide additional feedback on the recommendations which must be submitted to the legislature by Jan. 15, 2017.

MDHHS is accepting written comments from those wishing to provide feedback but unable to participate in an Affinity Group meeting. Questionnaires are available on the 298 Workgroup webpage www.michigan.gov/stakeholder298 under the “Affinity Group Questions” section. Completed questionnaires should be sent via email to MDHHS-298@michigan.gov or by mail to the Section 298 Initiative, with the Policy, Planning, and Legislative Services Administration, South Grand Building, 5th Floor, 333 South Grand Avenue, Lansing, Michigan 48933.

For more information about the 298 Facilitation Workgroup or the Affinity Groups, visit www.michigan.gov/stakeholder298. To set up an Affinity Group meeting for your organization, email MDHHS-298@michigan.gov.

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