

02 NEWSLETTER 2026

The Why Right Now

This month's All Hands reflected the kind of honest dialogue and shared accountability that will continue to shape who we are as an organization. Our conversation left me feeling energized for the road ahead.

We rolled out our guiding posts to our 2026 organizational goals, which were shaped through months of leadership conversations and direct staff feedback.



KERRY DELANEY
CEO



**PRIORITIZE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND TECHNOLOGY
ENABLEMENT FOR OUR STAFF.**



BUILD AND SCALE NEW BUSINESS LINE(S).



CONTINUE TO DEVELOP OUR CULTURE OF QUALITY AND ADVOCACY.



STRENGTHEN OUR WORKPLACE CULTURE.

On the advocacy front, our team is in Albany pushing to restore CCOs to the Targeted Inflationary Increase after being excluded from the Governor's proposed budget.

I never want us to lose sight of the fact that **quality care is advocacy**. Your persistence, passion, commitment, everything you bring to your job every day — it all matters in the end.

I told you at the All Hands that trust is built through consistency, follow-through and honest communication. I meant every word of that, and I'm asking you to hold this leadership team accountable to it. We have real work ahead of us, and the only way it gets done is together.

We compiled a [document that answers some of the questions](#). Please take a moment to review and let us know if you have any lingering questions. The full All Hands recording and presentation are [linked here for your reference](#) as well.

What's New + What's Changing

Advocacy Update

CCOs have not received a funding increase in several years, and we already absorbed a 4% cut while costs continue to rise across the board. If funding is not restored in the state budget, the impact will be felt by every member and family who depends on a care manager to navigate a complex Medicaid system.

Our team is working alongside CMANY to push for restoration and advance legislation that expands medication administration by trained DSPs and Medicaid coverage for family caregiver services.

This effort cannot live in Albany alone. **Send a message to your state legislators using the [CMANY one-click advocacy tool](#).** A pre-written letter is provided, but adding your own personal experience makes an enormous difference.

CMANY recently hosted a CCO Staff Webinar to talk about the NYS budget and its impact on our work. View the recording and presentation [linked here](#) to stay in the loop.

Mark your calendars for upcoming advocacy events, including the **NYDA Capitol Legislative Rally** on Tuesday, March 10, in Albany and the **Rally in the Valley** on Friday, March 13, at Rockland Community College.



Leadership & Operations Updates

Here's what you need to know from the BLT this month:



Quality Management Plan: The 2026 QMP is moving through the approval process after being reviewed by BLT and the Quality Steering Committee. This year's QMP represents a meaningful evolution from a primarily compliance-based plan to one that's more analytics-driven and focused on measurable outcomes. The plan **expands** preventive care tracking to include cancer screening and chronic disease measures and **strengthens** our ability to identify and support high-risk populations. It also **deepens** collaboration across departments and **reinforces** our commitment to keeping care managers engaged around quality initiatives, outcomes and successes.

Unpaid Sick and Safe Time Policy: Effective February 22, you will be front-loaded with 32 hours of Unpaid Sick and Safe Leave at hire and annually thereafter, in compliance with updated state law. The expanded policy covers public disasters, caregiving, housing and subsistence benefits and workplace violence situations. You may choose to use paid or unpaid leave, unused hours do not carry over and retaliation for use is prohibited.





Care Management Updates: The team is working on projects for two new MediSked tools: a CAS/CANS Custom Note Form to capture member and family experiences with assessments, and Life Plan Escalation Letters that standardize outreach with Life Plans are delayed beyond OPWDD’s required timeframes.

A separate project is underway to **develop Medicaid escalation letters** that notify members and care teams when recertifications are due or coverage is interrupted, with the goal of standardizing the process and giving care managers easier access to accurate, actionable Medicaid status information across their caseloads.

These projects are in the planning stages and have not yet been launched. We will keep you updated as they move forward.

Administrative and Operational Support Updates: The team is working to **streamline the consent review process** by moving toward automated, one-click responses that replace manual workflows. This work is in early stages with a 3-6-month timeline for full implementation.

They’re also developing a process to **verify key member information in MediSked at enrollment**. Expect training on the new MediSked Member and Contact Module in Q2 by our Business & Data Solutions team, with the improved process rolling out in Q3. Additionally, our team is working to prioritize a list of MediSked enhancements for 2026, and we will be sending a survey to Care Managers to get your input! Be on the lookout for the survey coming soon, so we can focus on what is most important to YOU.



New enrollee documentation is being expanded to include languages other than English, with translated materials expected by the end of Q2.

Provider program announcements and support broker lists are now available as quick links on the Care Manager SharePoint home page, and the **AdminHelpMe@caredesignny.com mailbox is now available for providers to request copies of Life Plans.**



2025 Annual Report: Our 2025 CDNY Annual Report is officially live! You can [view the report linked here](#). The report highlights the measurable impact of your work across more than 31,000 individuals statewide, including improvements in outcomes, strong member satisfaction and continuity of care. The report captures key moments and milestones from 2025, including statewide advocacy efforts, major system transitions and continued organizational growth.

Thank you for the resilience, dedication and heart you bring to your work every day.

Moments That Matter

Care Manager Spotlight: Monike Samuels

Monike Samuels spent months searching for an ASL-inclusive program for member Anthony “Omari” Davis-Roberts, hitting dead end after dead end with staffing shortages, transportation barriers and unresponsive providers.

Her persistence put her in a room with Governor Kathy Hochul, where she described the gaps in staffing and provider availability that impact the lives of members who rely on specialized supports. The Governor’s office committed to helping Monike secure a program that meets Omari’s needs.

This is what advocacy looks like— a care manager who refuses to accept a dead end as a final answer; an employee who takes action to ensure that individuals have what they need to live the life they want. Thank you, Monike, for embodying the values of our work and making such a meaningful impact.



MONIKE, OMARI & HIS MOM, SONYA

Moving Poem from Self Advocate BJ Stasio

[BJ Stasio](#) is a self-advocate, writer and speaker whose work inspires others to raise their voices. His writing captures his dedication to the rights and inclusion of people with disabilities.

We encourage you to sit with this one. Read it slowly. Let it remind you why the work you do carries the weight it does.

See me
before the meeting starts,
before the goals are typed,
before my life is reduced
to bullet points and timelines.
See me as a whole person—
with a past that shaped me,
a present that challenges me,
and a future still unfolding.
Do not confuse my support needs
with a lack of vision.
Do not mistake my silence
for consent.
Sometimes my voice was ignored
so long
it learned to whisper.
Person-centered planning

begins with respect.
It slows the process down
until my truth has room to breathe.
It asks what matters to me,
not just what matters for me.
It honors my culture,
my faith,
my relationships,
the things that make my life feel familiar
and safe
and worth waking up for.
Advocacy steps in
when respect is tested.
When doors are closed politely.
When inclusion is offered
with conditions attached.
Advocacy does not speak over me—

it amplifies me.
It reminds the room
that my rights are not optional,
that dignity is not earned,
that belonging is not a privilege.
Together,
planning and advocacy
push back against systems
built on convenience instead of care.
They challenge assumptions
that limit expectations
and shrink dreams.
They shift the question
from What's wrong with you?
to What happened to you?
and finally to
What do you want for your life?
I am not here
to fit into a system.
The system must learn
to make room for me.
Person-centered means
my choices carry weight,
even when they differ from yours.

Even when they require flexibility,
creativity,
and courage.
It means my life
is not managed—
it is supported.
And when advocacy stands beside me,
not in front of me,
not behind me,
but shoulder to shoulder,
I rise into my own power.
I become more than compliant.
More than grateful.
More than resilient.
I become self-determined.
I become visible.
I become free.
This is not a model.
This is not a trend.
This is a moral commitment—
to see the humanity
in every person,
and to protect it
without compromise.

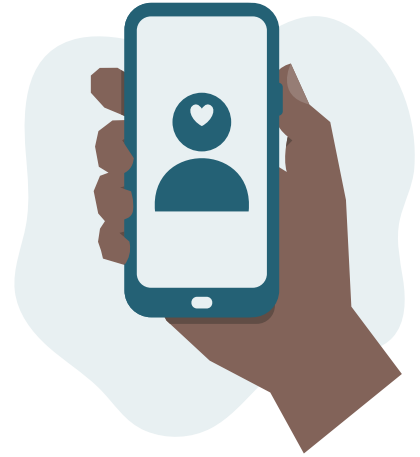
Resources & Reminders

Prioritize Yourself.

Seasonal affective disorder is *real*, and we know many of you are feeling it right now. This is a reminder that you have access to meaningful support, and **we want you to use it.**

Our **Employee Assistance Program** offers confidential mental health services at *no cost*, including counseling sessions, a wellness app and resources designed specifically for workplace stress and burnout.

These services are available through our EAP provider and through our insurance carrier. If you are not sure where to start, reach out to HR and they will point you in the right direction.



We're Hiring!

We find some of our best people through you. We're currently looking for:

- [Care Manager Supervisor - Brooklyn](#)
- [Care Manager Peer Mentor - Queens](#)
- [Care Manager Supervisor - Manhattan](#)
- [Talent Acquisition Specialist - Albany](#)

You can find all open positions linked below!

- [Partnership Solutions](#)
- [Care Design NY](#)

Share Your Stories

What are you and your team up to? We want to hear about it, whether it's a big win at work, a marathon you're training for, a new art class you started, or a volunteer effort you're proud of

Email us at communications@caredesignny.org to submit a shout-out.



Key Dates

Tuesday, March 10, 11:30 a.m. ET
NYDA Capitol Legislative Rally

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Friday, March 13, 11:00 a.m. ET
Rally in the Valley

[REGISTER NOW](#)

Monday, March 16, 2 p.m. ET
Colorful Connections Meeting