

# Benton Local Advisory Committee (BLAC)

**Purpose:** The BLAC ensures that the integrated healthcare needs of Benton County Oregon Health Plan members and their communities are effectively and efficiently addressed by the IHN-CCO Community Advisory Council (CAC). The Committee functions by consensus and makes efforts to be flexible and inclusive.

## Ground Rules

- Work to be respectful of one another
- Arrive prepared
- Actively participate with to-the-point contributions meant to move discussion forward
- Stick to the agenda with the Chair's assistance and observe the agreed-upon time for each agenda item
- Stay focused on present agenda item
- Assist others to stay focused on the agenda item and suggest that new items be added to the bike rack.
- Wait to be called upon
- Listen for understanding rather than response
- Balance being brief with telling your story
- Keep language simple; avoid acronyms/ jargon, and check for understanding
- Use the consensus & brainstorming guidelines
- Limit external distractions and take phone calls outside

## Proposal Presentation & Discussion Process

- All proposals must be submitted on the Proposal Form
- Help in completing the Form will be available to anyone that would like to submit a proposal
- Help may be provided by the CAC Coordinator, BLAC Chair, or other committee member
- The proposal will be placed on a BLAC meeting agenda, and the Proposal Form will be sent to BLAC members before the meeting
- The person submitting the proposal will have the opportunity to present it and answer questions

## Evaluation Criteria for Proposals

- Consistency with BLAC purpose and responsibilities, as stated in the Charter
- Fit of the proposal with the CHIP
- Appropriateness for BLAC: is the BLAC the best entity, or is another group better suited?
- Staff or member time the proposal will take
- Duration of proposed project
- Required resources
- Level of BLAC member interest
- Urgency of issue being addressed
- Impact on population served

## Brainstorming

- Set brainstorming sessions apart from decision-making.
- If possible, use flip chart to record ideas
- Don't stop to clarify or evaluate ideas as they are generated
- Be creative, use imagination, take risks; go for quantity.
- If trying to solve a complicated problem, it is okay to share partial solutions
- After a list is generated, go back and clarify each idea, if needed—clarify, don't evaluate
- Group similar ideas, if helpful
- Add to list, if needed
- Only when the group run out of ideas does the evaluation of ideas begin

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## Consensus—How to Come to Agreement

### Consensus Definition

Consensus is defined as general agreement. It is reached when all members can say:

- They understand the views of others
- Others understand their views
- Whether or not they prefer the decision, they support it because it was openly reached and it is the best decision at this time

This allows for varying levels of agreement. When we strive for agreement or consensus using this definition we are looking for a solution where each person is in one of the top three tiers of Levels of Agreement diagram.

### Consensus Process

- Once a recommendation is on the table, the Chair asks members whether each can support it
- If most members are in support, the Chair returns to those who are not in support to ask for changes to the proposal that would address their concerns (and keep others in agreement)
- If the recommendation cannot be modified to all members' satisfaction, there are three choices:
  1. The individual(s) who couldn't support the recommendation reconsider and decide not to block consensus, OR
  2. The recommendation is set aside, at least for the time being, OR
  3. The Chair asks whether the group wants to move to a vote on the recommendation, as consensus was not reached
- Record the decision. Then, decide and record next steps to move forward, if appropriate, including timeline, responsible parties, etc

### Consensus Guidelines

- Accept that there may be varying levels of agreement
- Make sure all views are heard & understood
- Approach the discussion with an open mind; accept that an original idea may evolve through the process of reaching consensus
- Recognize that the objective is to reach a decision that can be supported by all members of the group, as much as possible
- Any group member may disagree with a potential decision. Those who disagree must search for an alternative or modification to bring all members into agreement
- The goal is to reach agreement. If an alternative decision or modification is not forthcoming, those who disagree with the potential decision must reevaluate their position in order to achieve the goal
- Once consensus is reached, everyone in the group must be committed to the resolution

### Levels of Agreement

High Agreement	I can say an unqualified yes to this decision
Moderate Agreement	I find the decision acceptable
Low Agreement	I don't fully agree, and I need to register my concerns. However, I won't block the decision, AND I will support it because I trust the wisdom of the group.
Moderate Disagreement	I don't agree with the decision. I feel I must block it, but I will work with the group to modify it to reach consensus.
Disagreement	I feel there isn't a clear sense of unity on this issue or proposal. We shouldn't pursue it at this time.