

AgeWell New York was developed to bring an integrated, multidisciplinary care management approach to health care coverage for the senior and disabled populations, according to the organization.

The managed care organization (MCO) was started in 2012 as a Medicaid Managed Long Term Care (MLTC) plan and, in 2015, expanded its health care plan offerings to include Medicare Advantage Prescription Drug Plans serving the New York metropolitan area.

We recently interviewed Dana E. Sherwin, AgeWell New York executive director, about her organization's mission and challenges, among other topics.

**Q: What is the mission of your organization?**

**Dana E. Sherwin:** Our mission is to bring significant value to the Medicaid and Medicare plans we offer to the New York metropolitan community. These are public health insurance programs, offered by AgeWell New York as well as by other private sector health plans. Those who are eligible for these

insurance programs look to us not only to fulfill the coverage and benefits promised by Medicaid and Medicare, but also to extend our expertise and resources to improve access to care, promote health and wellness, and address complex health and sociodemographic issues particular to seniors and/or disabled individuals.

**Q: What makes AgeWell New York unique compared to other similar organizations?**

**DS:** We started AgeWell New York with a laser focus on the people, processes, and technology that would best create a health plan serving the needs of the senior and disabled populations. The people that we hired and the work processes we put in place needed to be tightly connected and committed to the health care needs of the aging population in our New York metropolitan communities. We built our health plan and our care management structures with this singular



Dana E. Sherwin

focus. Additionally, our slogan, "We're here for your call," and our related practices, have transformed into positive customer experiences that make us stand out to members and providers in our network.

**Q: Tell me a bit about your job, including your favorite part of what you do.**

**DS:** As executive director, I am responsible for achieving strategic and operational objectives for the plan, ensuring financial sustainability

via thoughtful examination of issues and finding solutions through collaborations and innovations.

**Q: What would you say are the biggest challenges facing your organization and the healthcare sector?**

**DS:** One of the biggest challenges facing our plan and the health sector now is addressing the needs of an aging population that wants to continue to live in their homes but needs an expanding set of health services and other resource support. Keeping individuals at home with multiple chronic conditions and needs for assistance with activities

of daily living requires significant intervention at multiple levels.

**Q: What role does technology play in your organization?**

**DS:** Technology plays a big role in our operations and decision analytics capabilities. We seek to use technology to improve our ability to understand the health care needs of our enrollees and enhance our ability to find ways to support members with quality care, access to services and wellness programs. We are also conducting various pilot programs that bring telehealth services to those members with chronic health conditions, in partnership with our network providers.

**Q: Are there new initiatives or programs in your organization?**

**DS:** The centerpiece of our care management services is an integrated model of care to promote and improve health outcomes and quality of life.

Our new initiatives connect to this model and include expanding partnerships with our providers, to avoid unnecessary hospitalizations and close gaps in care; bringing additional behavioral health services to those members with existing or newly diagnosed conditions; disseminating health education resources; and making available guidance to members who may need access to additional federal and state financial assistance programs.



and advancing business growth on a continual basis. I have many favorite parts of this job. One is to foster the professional development of our management team and create a learning environment for all employees. Being part of a fast-growing company with a service mission, it is awesome and inspiring to lead and learn from such smart and dedicated staff throughout the plan.

**Q: What is the biggest challenge of your job?**

**DS:** The biggest challenge of my job is to continually be attuned to the complexities of the health care delivery system and the needs of our enrollees, and respond with resources and expertise in a way that is effective and produces long-lasting results. We respond to these challenges

