

Apple Health and Homes

Background

On January 9, 2017, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) approved Washington’s Section 1115 Medicaid waiver, known as the Medicaid Transformation Project (MTP). Foundational Community Supports (FCS) – the third initiative of Washington’s MTP – provides supportive housing and supported employment services to high-risk Medicaid recipients with complex physical and/or behavioral health needs. Program goals are to promote recovery through self-sufficiency and integration into the community and to reduce the need for high-cost intensive services by helping individuals find and maintain stable housing and competitive employment.

Chapter 216, Laws of 2022 established Apple Health and Homes (AHAH) to align health care and housing for individuals with complex needs by combining the acquisition and development of permanent supportive housing (PSH) with community support services (CSS). The legislature identifies FCS Supportive Housing (SH) services as the mechanism for delivering CSS, also known as pre-tenancy and tenancy-sustaining services, which are reimbursable under Washington’s 1115 waiver. AHAH is a collaborative partnership between HCA, the Department of Commerce (COM), and DSHS to house eligible individuals experiencing homelessness and provide CSS to help them obtain and keep stable housing that aligns with their preferences and recovery goals.

Eligibility

To be eligible for Apple Health and Homes, an individual must be:

- 18 years or older,
- Enrolled in Medicaid and eligible for FCS

and be experiencing one of the following risk factors:

- Chronic homelessness
- Dependence on costly institutional care
- Dependence on restrictive adult residential care/treatment settings

The program also allows for individuals who are likely eligible but not yet enrolled in Medicaid, but

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otherwise eligible to receive FCS Supportive housing services, to enroll in the housing benefit.

The legislation identifies the role of the “coordinating entity” that determines eligibility and authorizes enrollment, and also coordinates with a network of providers for the placement of eligible individuals into the housing of their choosing. HCA has identified Amerigroup, the Third-Party Administrator of the FCS program, as the coordinating entity for Apple Health and Homes.

Funding

The Foundational Community Supports program is funded through the 1115 Medicaid Transformation Project, renewed for a new 5-year period as MTP 2.0, on July 1, 2023. For the 23-35 biennium, \$14,439,000 of the Foundational Community Supports Medicaid budget was appropriated for Supportive Housing services and administrative costs for services provided to Apple Health and Homes housing benefit recipients.

	SFY24	SFY25
GF-Federal	\$4,868,000	\$5,064,000
GF-Local	\$2,209,000	\$2,298,000
Total	\$7,077,000	\$7,362,000

Because these are Medicaid funds, these dollars pay for services to individuals receiving the Apple Health and Homes housing benefit while enrolled in FCS SH.

Supportive housing services

AHAH recipients who are enrolled in FCS SH will be authorized to receive pre-tenancy and tenancy sustaining support services. These services are designed to help individuals with significant barriers find and maintain stable, independent housing.

These innovative services are demonstrating the positive health effects that safe and secure housing can provide to people in need. The goal is to match people to independent housing that meets their needs and provide them with services to keep housing long-term. The services themselves do not pay for rent.

Housing vouchers

The Department of Commerce (COM) is a partner in AHAH and has the role of dispersing rent assistance,

in the form of vouchers, on behalf of eligible enrollees. AHAH is designed to allocate two types of vouchers: tenant-based rent assistance (TBRA), which allows an individual to find independent housing of their choice, and project-based rent assistance (PBRA) vouchers which pay for rent in PSH units funded by the AHAH Capital program. This program funds the creation of new PSH units to house the individuals eligible for the AHAH housing benefit.

Provider resources

HCA and COM have designed a robust portfolio of training, technical assistance, and capacity grants to support the implementation of AHAH. This includes the development of webinars and trainings such as the Washington Supportive Housing Institute and Medicaid Academies led by HCA in partnership with Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH). Capacity and pre-development grants have been distributed to providers to support the development of new housing units, as well as increase the number of Foundational Community Supports providers in Washington.

Estimated launch

HCA, COM, and DSHS have created an interagency workgroup to collaborate on the design and implementation of this new initiative. Current steps towards implementation include intentional solicitation of stakeholder feedback and receipt of national technical assistance to further guide the decisions and design of the initiative. The agencies anticipate launching the program in late 2023 or early 2024.

For more information

Contact:

Scott Tankersley, FCS Program Administrator
scott.tankersley@hca.wa.gov

Matt Christie, FCS Supervisor
matt.christie@hca.wa.gov