

# How Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) is shifting to integrate health care in the Foster Care Program

## Summary

The state Health Care Authority (HCA) is leading a change in the Washington Apple Health (Medicaid) program that is designed to fundamentally improve health outcomes and care for individuals in foster care, foster care alumni and individuals in adoption support.

For many individuals, services are split between a regional Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) for behavioral health needs, and a statewide Managed Care Organization (MCO) contracted to provide care coordination for eligible clients. (Behavioral health is comprised of mental health and Substance Use Disorder [SUD] services.)

## Delivering whole-person care

Coordinated Care of Washington (CCW), which has been accountable for this population's physical health needs since April 1, 2016, will begin delivering integrated managed care on January 1, 2019 statewide.

CCW will provide health care coordination across a full continuum of services, so these activities are not divided across multiple health care entities for a single individual. CCW will have a full network of medical and behavioral health providers, allowing them to support referrals across provider types.

Additionally, CCW's contract requires that they coordinate with county-managed programs, criminal justice, long-term services and supports, tribal partners, and others through an Allied System Coordination Plan.

## Integrated managed care

Integrated managed care has shown success for the general Apple Health population in Clark and Skamania counties, where a single health plan is accountable for the full array of physical and behavioral health services for each client. Since making the transition in April 1, 2016, the community has since seen [several statistically significant changes in care](#) compared to other regions of the state. Chelan, Douglas, and Grant counties launched integrated managed care in January 2018.

Integrated managed care is a vital first step in improving health outcomes and client care, but it is just the beginning of clinical integration in Washington. Integrating the way the state purchases and administers medical and behavioral health services sets the foundation for MCOs and providers to work toward integration at the delivery system level, all to the benefit of individuals seeking care statewide.

