



Children and Youth Behavioral Health Work Group (CYBHWG)

July 15, 2025

[Watch on TVW](#)

Medicaid Developments

See TVW recording (4:00)

Highlights

- Health Care Authority shared the "[Medicaid in Washington State Fact Sheet](#)" with the group to give an overview of Medicaid developments and federal funding changes.

Recent Reports

See TVW recording (21:20)

Digital Technologies to Support Youth/Young Adult Behavioral Health

- The Digital Technologies full report is expected to come out in mid-August.
- HCA was directed to issue a Request for Information (RFI) to learn of the digital tools available that support youth Behavioral Health (BH), then have an expert panel review the information.
- The panel looked at:
 - Goals and outcomes
 - The panel noting the complexity dictates a need for a robust process of review, with structured support for the launch.
 - Costs to consider
 - Vendors
 - Products
 - Hardware
 - Infrastructure upgrades (some need higher speed internet)
 - Marketing/user incentives
 - Staffing
 - Things to keep in mind to prevent errors and avoid mishaps
 - Selection
 - End-users
 - Vendor claims
 - Buy-in
 - Leadership
 - Human capital
 - Troubleshooting
 - Support from startups on shoestring staff and budget



Questions/Comments

- It will be important to advocate for intentional education and outreach for the K12 audience.
- How do we avoid being duplicative with other resources?
- At Molina, we ran into some challenges a few years ago, that included an age issue, providing digital tools to minors, and compliance.

Mercer Report

- The data in this report helps the team build the context in to consider in the landscape.
- We don't have the perfect data or dashboard to help us get to those steps.
- Key findings of the 200-page report:
 - In 2018-2023 the monthly number of youth/young adults receiving inpatient MH monthly services doubled.
 - WA has lower than the national average of 15 pediatric beds per 100k population.
 - From 2018-2023 the number of youth receiving monthly outpatient services increased by 20%.
 - Only 37% of youth needing SUD services are able to access them.
- Gaps
 - Highest unserved population is 0-4.
 - Highest SUD unserved is 13-18.
 - 40% of children with BH needs did not get services.
 - 73% of children with SUD did not get services.
 - 54% of pregnant/parenting with SUD did not receive services.
- Challenges/Recommendations
 - Limited Evidence-Based Practices (EBPs), therefore, a recommendation would be to adjust the reimbursement rates and re-examine coverage strategies

Questions/comments

- Doing reports like this and using data is challenging, so is there any sense of how things might've gotten better or worse since the data they used?
 - Some of the data they had was from 2024, but your point is well taken, the education piece was awareness of existing programs.
- What was their recommendation for education for pregnant/parenting w/SUD and WISE?
 - In WISE, yearly system checks are done. There were 3200-3500 young people who needed WISE, and about 200k young people who had at least one indicated need.
 - WISE is provided in 6 regions, not every provider is the same. We don't rule out any youth with high acuity. The higher acuity, the faster we try and get them in.
- The more data we have the more we can tailor the system.
- Does it look at youth experiencing homelessness?
 - Don't recall anything specific in the data, but please send and share resources.



- If there's something that doesn't show up in the Mercer report, it doesn't mean that it's not going to show up in the strategic plan as a whole
- I think these are better stats than 10 years ago, but still not something we'd accept if it was physical health.

Washinton Thriving

Preview of draft Strategic Plan to be shared Mid-August

See TVW recording (1:20:46)

- The Sept. 18th meeting will be a joint in-person meeting with CYBHWG and WA Thriving.
- During the Oct. 14th meeting, we will discuss the final draft, with a consensus vote for approval and a then discussion final vote results to prioritize legislative recommendations.
- For the Nov. 12th meeting the members will vote on Statements of Support,
- The WA Thriving Strategic Plan will be accompanied by a cover letter to legislature and CYBHWG, an executive summary, and table of contents.

Three Strategic Imperatives

1. All about infrastructure: What powers and guides the system, including leadership, workforce development, and financing.
2. Specific programs and services that are or are not working well.
3. Principles and values. Finding ways to put them into practice and operationalize.

Washington Thriving emerging recommendations 2i and 2j

- 2i. Fill Critical Gaps in Specialized Care
- 2j. Develop Missing Middle-Intensity Services

Breakout Group Questions and Responses

- **Are we on the right track?**
 - General consensus from all groups that they are on the right track.
 - Folks glad to see that there was space for serious mental illness in ways that hasn't shown up before.
- **Is there something missing?**
 - Remain nimble, especially in integrated data systems.
 - Vet things for unintended consequences.
 - Duplicative credentialing and trainings, admin burdens.
 - Need true cost of care.
 - We need access to MOUD services for kids, especially under 16 and foster youth.
 - continued need of screening not just at young age but throughout school, some successes were highlighted.
 - Need for continual support services for families.
 - Emphasize youth and family voice.
- **What past successes or recent innovations can we build on in any of the areas?**
 - Mobile Response Stabilization Services (MRSS) rollout



- Research Units in Behavioral Intervention (RUB)I Program
- Kids MH WA / [HB 1580](#)
- **What questions or concerns should the team consider?**
 - How do we streamline getting high risk youth to these services, and fund it?
 - How do we recognize young people without parents/caregivers in their life, and celebrate the decisions they've made to take care of themselves?
 - Shoutout to Imagination Library; is there a way to do promotion of universal prevention attached to that?
 - How do we support provider agencies as well as individuals in the workforce?

Optional August Meeting

See TVW recording (2:00:15)

Highlights

- A discussion to refine the scope of proposed topic for optional August CYBHWG meeting.
- Currently thinking about SUD/MOUD with a potential focus on maternal mortality and child fatalities.
- Laurie Lippold has volunteered to help with the presentation planning.
- The Bridge Program has some young adults with lived experience, along with my counterpart Sarah, happy to help and engage for that meeting.
- [SB 6109](#) may be an option, with 12 buckets of resources for young children and pregnant/parenting with SUD/MOUD.

Public comment

See TVW recording (2:07:25)

- What is the timeline for vendors to come to the table to supply a statewide digital product to strengthen the System of Care?
 - Currently there is no identified funding.