

New Journeys-First Episode Psychosis

First Episode Psychosis (FEP) poses a significant challenge among youth and young adults in Washington. Schizophrenia spectrum disorders, marked by disruptions in perception of reality, affect their daily lives. New Journeys aims to revolutionize mental health care by providing early screening, evidence-based interventions, and improved quality of life for affected individuals and their families, making a positive difference in the lives of youth and young adults facing FEP in Washington.

Coordinated Specialty Care

Coordinated Specialty Care (CSC) is recognized worldwide as the best evidence-based practice model for the treatment of first episode psychosis. In 2015, [New Journeys](#) was developed as Washington's own Coordinated Specialty Care model using the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Mental Health Block Grant First Episode Psychosis 10% set aside.

This vital treatment provides access to services as symptoms emerge, rather than waiting for someone to become severely or chronically ill. It involves a multidisciplinary team providing a full range of person-centered, community-based services that includes an individual's natural supports. This treatment also includes a public education and outreach function that is intended to hasten the identification and rapid referral of youth and young adults experiencing a first episode.

New Journeys evaluation findings suggest that individuals who participate in New Journeys experience better outcomes when compared to receiving regular outpatient services.

Second Substitute Senate Bill (2SSB) 5903 (2019)

Early intervention was a priority of the Children, Youth, and Family Behavioral Health Workgroup (CYFBWG) who advocated for this legislation. The implementation of [2SSB 5903](#) aims to ensure

individuals across the state of Washington will be able to access the vital services provided by New Journeys, regardless of their geographic area of residence or insurance enrollment status.

Completed action steps:

- September 2024: [Expansion of up to 20 New Journeys teams in various stages of development statewide.](#)
- July 1, 2024 –New Journeys Encounter Rate service-based enhancement was developed in partnership with Mercer and TriWest actuarial groups and with feedback from services users. HCA worked to develop an additional service-based enhancement to address gaps in the team-based rate by expanding coverage to those falling outside a 24-month benefit eligibility period and to provide flexibility for varying caseloads.
- The 2024 Psychosis CARE virtual conference was a huge success, having 979 unique registrants and a final attendance of 680. This event featured two keynote speakers with lived experience: Pat Deegan and Nev Jones.
- December 29, 2022: Final progress report on early identification and intervention for psychosis statewide implementation New Journeys: Coordinated Specialty Care for first episode psychosis.
- July 1, 2022 – Team Based Rate (TBR) service-based enhancement funded through Medicaid and state funds.

Future strategic goals and action steps

New Journeys seeks to align with the overarching strategic goals established by HCA through strategic actions steps:

- 1) Equitable access to integrated, value-based care:
 - Continued expansion of New Journeys teams to ensure evidence-based health and recovery support interventions will be available to those in need.
- 2) Aligning payments and systems:
 - Implementation of funding to support sustainability, positive outcomes, and

financially responsible use of services through early intervention.

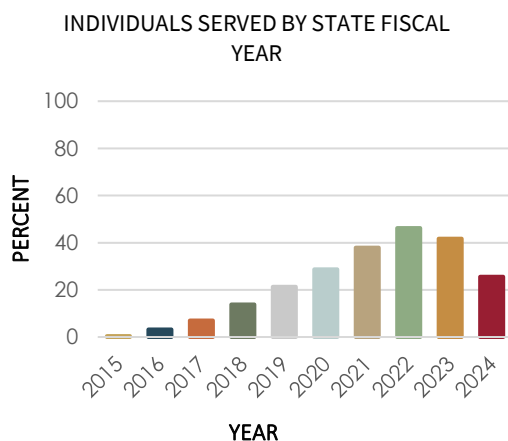
3) Focusing on person and community-centered healthcare systems.

- Continuing to address needs of cultural and regional adaptations to evidence based interventions.

Evaluation and outcomes

The Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine at WSU conducts the statewide New Journeys evaluation, with a focus on its impact on clinical and functional outcomes. The evaluation informs improvements to the model based on Washington data.

Since 2015, more than 760 unique individuals have been served by New Journeys teams across the state. During SFY 2023, 176 individuals were enrolled with and received services from a New Journeys team.



New Journeys Enrollment by State Fiscal Year

New Journeys evaluation findings suggest that individuals who participated in New Journeys reported:

- Fewer experiences of psychosis
- A significant decrease in reports of depression and anxiety
- A decrease in reported psychiatric hospitalizations
- Improvements in quality of life
- A rise in school enrollment from baseline at 27% to 44% after receiving services

- Attendance or procurement of at least part-time work or volunteering increased from 22% reported at enrollment to 55% post-enrollment

Recovery stories from participants and supports

“When I started New Journeys, it was better for me because they could come to my apartment. I barely wanted to leave the house, it gave me such bad anxiety and driving was the worst because I was always scared, I would see something while I was driving, and I would get into a car accident... To me everything was still real, I couldn't handle when someone said I was imagining things or that they weren't real. At New Journeys no one has ever done that to me...”

“The thing about New Journeys has been the ease of access and use of the services. All the complications that might be involved in taking care of someone have definitely been simplified to the most bare minimum for me from what I had previously expected as my brother's care provider. There's a lot of consolidation of responsibilities that you would normally carry being shifted to different team members who do different jobs for your family member, which you would otherwise have to take the slack for. They've always been very helpful, kind, and thoughtful. I couldn't imagine dealing with everything I've had to over the last couple of years without having New Journeys there in your corner, you know?”

Intergovernmental

Washington's development of coordinated specialty care and implementation of Medicaid funding strategies has received national attention, being featured in the following events and publications:

- SAMHSA Center for Financing Reform and Innovation Webinar on CSC Financing Strategies and the SAMHSA State Technical Assistance CMHS State Quarterly Data Call.
- Washington was featured case study in the SAMSHA publication <https://store.samhsa.gov/product/coordinated-specialty-care-for-first-episode-psychosis-costs-financing-strategies/pep23-01-00-003>.

- Washington submitted a letter of support along with the National Association of State Mental Health Programs to the National Center for Medicaid Service (CMS) helping to establish a new HCPCS Level II code for CSC.
- Washington was interviewed by the National Association of State Mental Health Programs for a SAMHSA issue brief on the implementation of the new Healthcare Common Procedure Coding System (HCPCS) code for CSC.

Budget 2024

- MHBG 10% minimum set aside = \$3,938,381.01 actual
- MHBG COVID Enhancement (FY22 – FY24) = \$2,307,000 total through 3/14/2024
- MHBG ARPA (FY24 – FY26) = \$3,984,273 total through 9/30/2025
- State and Federal Proviso Funds = \$2,915,730

More information

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