Washington State Health Care Authority

HCA's purchasing strategy

Vision: A healthier Washington.
Mission: Powered by the people we serve, we improve health across Washington by advancing equitable access to quality, whole-person care.

About our purchasing strategy

The Health Care Authority (HCA) purchases health care for more than a third of people in Washington, amounting to nearly 2.9 million people from every corner of the state. Our work includes three core pillars:

- **Leading Washington's delivery of behavioral health services.** HCA's behavioral health treatment resources are a safety net for people with Medicaid and those who do not have private insurance to pay for critical treatment services. In fiscal year 2024, nearly half a million individuals received mental health services through Washington's behavioral health delivery system. Roughly 92,000 of those individuals received substance use disorder services.
- **Operating the Apple Health (Medicaid) program.** Apple Health provides free or low-cost health coverage for nearly two million people across our state, including children, adults, pregnant individuals, those 65 years of age or older, and people with disabilities.
- **Designing and offering insurance coverage for another 800,000 people** across these programs:
    - Public Employees Benefits Board (PEBB)
    - School Employees Benefits Board (SEBB)
    - Cascade Select (individual market public option)

We strive to make health care accessible, affordable, and high quality for every Washingtonian.

Advancing our purchasing strategy

As HCA looks to advance its vision and mission, new federal policies threaten Washingtonians' eligibility for health care coverage. That will impact residents' health and health care providers' ability to deliver care. Those impacts are further exacerbated in a fragmented health care system that is not incentivized to keep people healthy. To address these new and ongoing challenges, the agency has begun a process to refine our purchasing strategy and seeks to improve the delivery of health care in Washington state by firming up our foundation for the next two to five years.

We've identified **four areas of focus** for improving our purchasing efforts:

Focus area	Example goals	Example strategies
Enhance customer experience and improve access to care	• Mitigate insurance coverage losses • Support clients to access the right level of behavioral health care	• Create a cross-agency platform for clients to apply for and access benefits • Enforce network adequacy standards

Focus area	Example goals	Example strategies
Enhance provider experience and reduce administrative burden	• Reduce provider burnout • Address barriers to participating in insurance networks	• Standardize provider credentialing process across insurance carriers • Enforce claims processing and grievance/appeals standards
Improve quality of care and compliance	• Identify and target opportunities to improve health through evidence-based interventions	• Implement customer-facing performance report cards • Incentivize shared quality goals across payers and providers
Reduce cost and increase affordability	• Slow the rate of health care cost growth	• Ensure successful implementation of reference-based pricing within PEBB and SEBB • Strengthen public option program (Cascade Select) • Increase price transparency

We want to hear from you

HCA invites partners, Tribes, stakeholders, and clients from across the state and in every sector of our health care delivery system to review these draft focus areas, goals, and preliminary strategies. HCA recognizes the importance of collaboration to meet the needs of Washingtonians and values your input as we develop our purchasing strategy, agency operations, and legislative engagement. We look forward to your involvement and engagement in helping HCA strengthen our health care delivery system across Washington.

Attend our webinar on September 25

You are invited to attend our purchasing strategies webinar. We'll cover our draft focus areas, goals, and preliminary strategies. We'll also share what feedback we are hoping to collect via our survey. Both the survey and the webinar recording will be posted on HCA's website.

HCA Purchasing Strategy
10:30–11:30 a.m.
Friday, September 25
Attend the webinar on Microsoft Teams.