

# Health and early childhood home visiting initiative

Health Care Authority (HCA) and Department of Children, Youth, and Families (DCYF) are working together to align and support coordinated, responsive, and client-centered care during pregnancy, infancy, and throughout early childhood. Health and early childhood home visiting services help ensure that every child receives needed medical services and enters kindergarten with a solid foundation for success in school and life.

## Benefits of partnering across health and early childhood services

Both nationally and locally, there is strong interest in aligning health and early childhood services to address social determinants of health, remove barriers to accessing services, and use resources better. Coordination and alignment can help families get connected to the right service at the right time, based on their individual interests and needs. Although Washington is rich in cross-agency and community partnerships to improve maternal child health and early childhood outcomes, there is work to do in connecting our services and programs.

## How are we doing this work?

HCA and DCYF are working together to develop sustainable Medicaid financing strategies to support early childhood home visiting, and are identifying ways to better coordinate Medicaid and early childhood services, taking into account:

- HCA and DCYF initiatives currently underway regionally and statewide.
- Complex funding and policies impact on braided funds and coordinated services.
- Limitations associated with Medicaid funding and early childhood home visiting.
- Lessons learned from other states engaged in similar work.
- Culturally relevant services that reflect the interests and needs of the community.

## Medicaid financing and home visiting: what's possible and what's not possible

There are regulatory limits to what Medicaid will reimburse, and limits to which home visiting services meet Medicaid requirements for reimbursement. Federal regulations do not authorize payment in full for proprietary home visiting models. However, some medically necessary services provided within a model may be allowed. In a 2016 joint bulletin, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) and Health Resources & Services Administration (HRSA) encouraged states to look for ways to pair Medicaid, state dollars, and private resources to create and fund a home visiting benefit package.

## Next steps for Washington

HCA and DCYF started researching Medicaid financing options for home visiting early in 2016. With strong legislative interest and support, the agencies conducted statewide stakeholder workshops in September 2018. Based on community input and discussion, HCA and DCYF are moving forward with next steps to fund allowable home visiting services, including:

- Determining fiscal impacts for Medicaid federal financial participation (FFP).
- Developing a Medicaid State Plan Amendment (SPA) under Targeted Case Management.
- Conducting Tribal Roundtables and Formal Tribal Consultations.
- Working with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for SPA approval.
- Identifying state funding match options to draw down Medicaid FFP, which may include a joint agency funding proposal to the Washington State legislature in 2021.

## Learn more

- Email: [shannon.blood@hca.wa.gov](mailto:shannon.blood@hca.wa.gov)
- Email: [laura.alfani@dcyf.wa.gov](mailto:laura.alfani@dcyf.wa.gov)

