

Frequently Asked Questions

Washington Community Information Exchange (WA CIE)

What is a Community Information Exchange (CIE) and why is it useful?

In Washington, we think of CIE as:

- **A care coordination infrastructure.** It connects existing health care and social service systems through interoperable data sharing. It builds on and strengthens what already exists in the community. It isn't a single technology, standalone platform, one-size-fits-all approach, or narrowly focused solution.
- **A set of tools that equips community-based care coordinators with meaningful, timely information.** This allows them to listen more effectively and honor individuals' goals and strengths as they navigate complex care systems. Depending on a community's needs and readiness to use WA CIE, this may include:
 - Client management
 - Resource directories
 - Referral functionality
 - Multidirectional communication
 - Longitudinal client records
- **Built on shared governance.** It enables health care and social service partners to equitably share responsibility for meeting community needs while centering the person seeking care, protecting privacy, and maintaining dignity. It's driven by the collective needs of community. It emphasizes privacy, consent, and ethical handling of data.

What will CIE do in Washington?

WA CIE will make it easier for Washingtonians to be connected to critical health-related social needs (HRSN) services like food, housing, and transportation by community-based care coordinators. It will also connect partners and providers within and across sectors, making support faster and more coordinated and strengthening health outcomes statewide. The vision for WA CIE is that it will be an infrastructure investment that will evolve over time based on needs and capacity.

It will be able to provide partners with information such as:

- Client demographic and contact information to support communication and determining program eligibility
- Family and household information
- History of past and current referrals and services
- Program eligibility screenings
- Strengths and needs assessments
- Clients' goals and action plans
- Organizations that are currently providing services to the client
- Changes to a client's situation that may call for timely outreach and tailored interventions

The information available for each client will be based on client consent and privacy considerations.

Who will use WA CIE?

WA CIE will be available to health and social service providers, community care hubs, and a number of cross-sector partners.

How will WA CIE help my organization?

WA CIE will benefit individual organizations by making it easier to coordinate care, reduce duplication, and strengthen referral networks. Key features include:

- Improved care coordination across agencies: Organizations will be able to see whether a client is already receiving services elsewhere and coordinate referrals more effectively. This will reduce fragmented care and improve follow-through.
- Reduced duplication of work: Organizations will be able to spend less time on multiple systems, assessments, and client records.
- Stronger referral networks: Increased visibility of services can help organizations better connect with each other, improve capacity transparency, and highlight gaps in resources.

How will WA CIE help my clients?

WA CIE will help care coordinators' clients by providing better person-centered care in a more timely manner. Goals of this person-centered approach include:

- Improved outcomes: Timely information means faster access to services and whole-person care.
- Trauma-informed approach: Clients won't have to repeatedly explain their situation to multiple agencies because participating organizations can securely share relevant information.
- "No wrong door" entry to care: Clients can be connected to food assistance, housing support, transportation, childcare, employment services, mental health care, and more through one coordinated network.
- Improved equity: WA CIE will help identify underserved populations and their needs. This will make it easier for communities to direct resources where they are most needed.

Will WA CIE replace the technology my organization is already using?

No. Every organization and program has unique needs. Those unique needs often require a variety of technological solutions. WA CIE will prioritize interoperability and connection of various systems to improve information sharing, care coordination, and ultimately service delivery. While the statewide implementation of WA CIE will provide some common capabilities, organizations may want to retain their existing systems and only exchange data through WA CIE or access some of its shared capabilities.

When will WA CIE be available for use?

We expect the initial launch of WA CIE technology in summer 2027.

How will information be protected?

Because WA CIE will connect health care providers, nonprofits, and social service agencies, protecting sensitive information is one of its most important responsibilities.

The overall goal is to support coordinated care while still protecting individuals' privacy, dignity, and control over their information. WA CIE will protect health information by combining strong privacy policies, secure technology, legal compliance, and controlled data-sharing practices. This includes:

- Consent management
- Access controls
- Minimum necessary data sharing

How is community defined in this context?

Community means different things to different people, and the meaning may depend on the situation. We define community as a person or organization that has an interest in WA CIE or a person who may be served by WA CIE. This includes the cross-sector social care partners that will be actively engaged in the operations and use of WA CIE. As we plan community engagement activities, we strive to offer a variety of opportunities for involvement that further the design and maintenance of WA CIE, share these opportunities and their results transparently, and maintain a virtual open door for ongoing feedback.

Who is influencing and directing how WA CIE will function?

Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) is the sponsor and funder of WA CIE and maintains ultimate accountability for it.

Comagine Health is the Lead Organization (LO), contracted to support HCA in carrying out the design and implementation of WA CIE. The LO is responsible for collaborating with HCA and community partners to plan, design, govern, implement, and maintain WA CIE.

Two interim advisory groups are co-designing a permanent governance structure:

- The Interim Advisory Committee (IAC)
- The Interim Data and Technical Advisory (IDATA) Workgroup

They are made up of community members with first-hand knowledge of and experience in Washington's health and social service and care coordination landscape.

The Interim Policy Workgroup (IPW) will be established in August 2026. It will focus on co-design activities around policies and operations of WA CIE.

How can I give my input and be involved with WA CIE?

We want to hear from you! We want to know your needs, concerns, recommendations, advice, and feedback. Please contact us!

- Email: WACIE@comagine.org
- Sign up for our mailing list: forms.cloud.microsoft/r/ME05fkDKBa

There are many ways for you to take part. You can find information about these activities on the WA CIE website at hca.wa.gov/cie. You can learn about our engagement framework and plans for public participation opportunities in the Community Engagement Plan, which is also available on the WA CIE website.