

Foundational Community Supports - Supportive Housing

Background

Addressing the issue of homelessness involves much more than providing a place to live. Foundational Community Supports (FCS) addresses this by offering benefits for supportive housing for Apple Health-eligible individuals with complex medical and behavioral health needs.

The FCS program provides two targeted Medicaid benefits under the 1115 Medicaid Transformation Project waiver that assist eligible individuals with complex health needs obtain and maintain stable housing and employment. These may include:

- Coaching
- Advocacy
- Information and referrals
- Linking and coordinating
- Ongoing supports

Supportive Housing services integrate supports including behavioral health services, substance use treatment, healthcare, and other community resources. This individualized and coordinated approach is required in order for beneficiaries to receive the full benefits of their housing.

Supportive housing services

These services identify people in need, help them obtain safe and affordable housing, and provide support so they can maintain housing. They do not replace services that are currently available, and they do not pay for room and board.

The goal is to match people to independent housing that meets their needs and provide them with services to keep housing long-term.

Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

Evidence Based Practice

Supportive housing helps people live healthier lives by addressing their housing needs. Using evidence-based programs increases the likelihood of successful reductions in homelessness and use of

higher cost care. It also facilitates measurable outcomes and data-informed decision making.

The Health Care Authority's Division of Behavioral Health and Recovery (DBHR) housing models are evidence-based. The programs use quality improvement tools called fidelity scales to track performance against model standards. The goal is to improve services and achieve better housing.

Quality improvement efforts include incentivizing fidelity reviews and asking partners to participate in our cross-site learning collaborative. The standards ensure consistent, updated, quality expectations for permanent supportive housing services while providing guidance and pathways for improvement.

SAMHSA's Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) toolkit outlines the essential components for supportive housing services and programs for people living with behavioral health obstacles. The toolkit discusses how to develop and integrate evidence-based programs in mental health systems. SAMHSA's EBP is based on seven (7) dimensions of permanent supportive housing:

- Choice of housing
- Separation of housing and services
- Decent, safe, and affordable
- Housing integration
- Rights of tenancy
- Access to housing
- Flexible, voluntary, services

Housing first: What it is and why is it important?

Housing first is an approach that prioritizes providing permanent housing to people experiencing homelessness. This model recognizes that housing is a necessity for survival and does not mandate participation in any services in order to find housing or living independently. Having this basic need met allows individuals the opportunity to pursue their goals and improve their well-being and quality of life.

Supportive housing programs serve people with specific needs, including those who have been staying in residential care facilities and those who have experienced homelessness.

Why we choose evidence-based practices

In 2013, SB 5732 and HB 1519 were passed which directed the state to use evidence-based practices to ensure that interventions and policies are founded on concrete data and research, maximizing return on investment for both clients and providers. This led DBHR to participate in two nationally recognized policy academies which guided many of our activities to implement evidence-based practices.

Authority, extension, and renewal

Washington State and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) entered an agreement for a five-year plan which includes the FCS Supported Employment and Supportive Housing program under an 1115 waiver. The program aims to strengthen state efforts to improve healthcare for Washington families and reduce health care costs by addressing the social determinants of health. The state has negotiated with CMS for a 5-year renewal of the waiver, also known as [MTP 2.0](#).

Administration

The state contracted with Amerigroup as the Third-Party Administrator (TPA) to select, qualify, and contract with employment and housing providers. The TPA also determines individual eligibility, authorizes FCS services, and reimburses providers.

Phone: 844-451-2828

Email: FCSTPA@amerigroup.com

[Amerigroup TPA website](#)

[FCS provider map](#)

DBHR training opportunities

The DBHR training team is available for trainings and technical assistance for supportive housing.

These trainings include individual agency training, regional events and monthly webinars covering a variety of topics, aiming to empower staff and providers through skill-building. These resources help providers learn more about Permanent Supportive Housing, the importance of implementing continuous quality improvement strategies, how to prepare for fidelity reviews, and provide higher quality services overall.

- To receive regular updates and announcements for upcoming housing training events please email Kimberly.castle@hca.wa.gov
- You can receive information about Foundational Community supports through our [newsletter](#).
- You can find continuing education and resources for Supportive Housing Providers can be found [on our webpage](#)

For more waiver information

- Visit the [Medicaid Transformation page](#) or email questions and comments to medicaidtransformation@hca.wa.gov.

DBHR FCS Supportive Housing contact

- **Jackie Velasco**, Jacklyn.Velasco@hca.wa.gov – Western Washington
- **Anessa Boyer**, Anessa.Boyer@hca.wa.gov – Eastern Washington