



STATE OF WASHINGTON
HEALTH CARE AUTHORITY

626 8th Avenue, SE • P.O. Box 45502 • Olympia, Washington 98504-5502

January 17, 2025

Dear Tribal Leader:

SUBJECT: Listening Session and Request of Feedback on the Implementation of School-based Guidance and Grant Impacts on School-based Medicaid Programs

In accordance with chapter 43.376 RCW and the Washington State Centennial Accord of 1989 regarding collaboration with Indian tribes in the development of policies, agreements, and program implementation that directly affect Indian tribes and the Tribal Consultation and Communication Policy of the Health Care Authority (HCA), the HCA, in partnership with the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), seeks your input and partnership to advance initiatives impacting Tribal communities.

Purpose

The HCA and OSPI invites you to participate in a listening session to share and request feedback on the implementation of the new Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) school-based guidance and grant impacts on school-based Medicaid programs.

Meeting Details

- Listening Session: February 12, 2025, following the Monthly Tribal Meeting - <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85485918897>

Background

In May 2023, CMS issued [Delivering Services in School-Based Settings: A Comprehensive Guide to Medicaid Services and Administrative Claiming](#). This CMS guidance for state Medicaid agencies offers flexibilities that reduce administrative burden, making it easier for all schools, including Tribal Compact schools to receive payment for delivering Medicaid and CHIP covered services and related administrative activities associated with these services. To assist in exploring required and optional improvements for [HCA's school-based services programs](#), HCA contracted with ForHealth Consulting at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School to evaluate the existing Medicaid school-based services programs and develop initial recommendations for improvements.

In July 2024, Washington was one of 18 states selected and awarded the “Implementation, Enhancement, and Expansion of Medicaid and CHIP School-Based Services” grant funding. HCA will receive \$2.5 million over 3 years. Grant funding will provide HCA with the needed infrastructure to expand outreach, assessment, and engagement activities and help strengthen cross-agency collaboration and coordination between HCA, OSPI, Tribes, and schools.

HCA, OSPI, and ForHealth Consulting plan to conduct extensive community engagement activities of the initial recommendations and then develop and prepare final implementation recommendations, supported through community engagement activities, that remove or reduce administrative burdens when billing for Medicaid services and administrative activities. Expected outcomes for school districts, Educational Service Districts, Charter, and Tribal schools may include:

- Program simplification to include removing TPL (third party liability, i.e., private insurance) requirements and consider the potential benefits of carving out all school-based services from managed care to create one comprehensive school-based program.
- Expansion of covered services to include preventative and screening activities.
- Expansion of qualified school providers to include school counselors, social workers, and psychologists.
- Expansion beyond special education to include all Medicaid and CHIP eligible students.
- Training, outreach, and support to facilitate clear dissemination of information.

Anticipated Impact on Tribal Compact Schools

HCA anticipates the final recommendations for school-based services implementation will improve access to services for students and Tribal Compact Schools may be interested in participating in Medicaid school-based services programs.

Comments and Questions

HCA would appreciate any input or concerns that representatives of Tribal governments wish to share regarding school-based services. To return any comments, please contact HCA School Based Services by email at hcasbs@hca.wa.gov.

Please contact Aren Sparck, Tribal Affairs Administrator, via email at aren.sparck@hca.wa.gov if you have tribal affairs-related questions.

Please forward this information to any interested party.

Sincerely,



Charissa Fotinos, MD, MSc
Medicaid and Behavioral Health Medical Director

cc: Willard Bill Jr., Assistant Director, Office of Native Education, OSPI
Rebecca Purser, Native Educator Cultivation Program Supervisor, OSPI
Aren Sparck, Tribal Affairs Administrator, OTA, HCA
Lucilla Mendoza, Tribal Behavioral Health Administrator, OTA, HCA
Todd Slettvet, Community Services Manager, MPD, HCA
Stacey Bushaw, Family Healthcare Services Supervisor, MPD, HCA