



Community Health Plan of Washington Granting \$750,000 to Advance Health Equity Programs in Washington's Community Health Centers

Funds bring CHPW's overall investment to \$1 million in 2021 to advance equity in communities across the State

SEATTLE – August 17, 2021 – 15 Federally Qualified Community Health Centers (CHCs) in Washington are receiving a total of \$750,000 – \$50,000 to each CHC – to fund projects aimed at removing barriers and increasing access to healthcare services across the State. [Community Health Plan of Washington \(CHPW\)](#), Washington's local not-for-profit Medicaid (Apple Health) and Medicare managed health plan, is collaborating with member CHCs as part of an Equity Learning Collaborative Grant Program designed to pilot approaches to care that are sustainable and address health disparities.

Each CHC applied for the grants to support the unique needs of its community, within the scope of health equity and whole-person care (physical, behavioral and Social Determinants of Health like housing, food and employment). The projects all fall within four categories of equitable care: member experience and access, pregnancy care, depression management, and other chronic condition management. A key component of the health equity grant program is a peer-based learning collaborative in which participating community health centers meet in cohorts designed around the topic areas to share learnings and best practices over the course of a year.

"I'm inspired by the work being done through this program to develop targeted interventions that address the unique needs of each health center's local community," said Leanne Berge, CEO of Community Health Plan of Washington and Community Health Network of Washington. "We went through a rigorous process of creating a grant program that empowers each health center to assess its own community's barriers to equitable health outcomes and to identify opportunities for impactful interventions, using techniques that can be deployed long after this pilot program ends."

The 15 CHCs and their equity project focus areas are:

- Advancing Pregnancy Care
 - [Moses Lake Community Health Center](#) (serves Grant County)
 - [Neighborcare Health](#) (serves King County)

- Depression Management
 - [CHAS Health](#) (serves Spokane County)
 - [Country Doctor Community Health Centers](#) (serves King County)
 - [International Community Health Services](#) (serves King County)
 - [Yakima Neighborhood Health Centers](#) (serves Yakima County)

- Chronic Conditions' Management
 - [Community Health Care](#) (serves Pierce County)



- [Sea Mar](#) (serves Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Franklin, Grays Harbor, Island, King, Pierce, Skagit, Snohomish, Thurston and Whatcom counties)
- [Tri-Cities Community Health](#) (serves Benton and Franklin counties)
- Enhancing Member Experience and Access
 - [Family Health Centers](#) (serves Okanogan County)
 - [HealthPoint](#) (serves King, Pierce and Snohomish counties)
 - [Peninsula Community Health Services](#) (serves Kitsap County)
 - [Unity Care NW](#) (serves Whatcom County)
 - [Valley View Health Center](#) (serves Lewis, Thurston, Pacific counties)
 - [Yakima Valley Farm Workers](#) (serves Benton, Franklin, Spokane, Whitman, and Yakima counties)

“According to the [U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development](#), last year nearly 29% of homeless individuals in Washington State were identified as being severely mentally ill,” said Rhonda Hauff, President/CEO at Yakima Neighborhood Health Services. “With the money we are receiving from CHPW, our team plans to help our patients experiencing homelessness obtain a smartphone through government programs and teach them to use it to schedule appointments, access telehealth, communicate with providers, order prescription refills, and more. We believe this will increase follow-up appointment rates and get the individuals the support they need to treat and prevent mental health issues from escalating.”

“At Unity Care NW, we work with patients with many different backgrounds and who speak many languages,” said Jodi Joyce, CEO at Unity Care NW. “The inspiration for our equity project was the brainchild of one of our staff members who ran the front desk. She noted that those who need interpretation services had to book longer appointments and wait longer for these times. The grant funds that we receive from CHPW will help decrease wait times for these patients by providing better interpretation services.”

“HealthPoint’s mission is to strengthen communities, improve people’s health and break down barriers,” said Lisa Yohalem, CEO at HealthPoint. “Our work with CHPW and this funding is helping us listen to our Hawaiian and Pacific Islander community, patients and staff about how we can adjust our health care approaches to be a better partner in their overall health. We do our best work when we work in partnership with the community. This investment is focused on improving the health of the broader community; starting with the Hawaiian and Pacific Islander communities in South King County.”

CHPW’s initiative is part of the work it is doing in a national cohort called the [Advancing Health Equity: Leading Care, Payment, and Systems Transformation \(AHE\) program](#). In partnership with the Washington Health Care Authority (HCA) and CHPW’s parent Community Health Network of Washington (CHNW), CHPW is part of one of the seven state teams leading this initiative. This learning collaborative is building a culture of equity by looking at changes in care delivery as one of its focus areas.



The funding for the Equity Learning Collaborative Grant Program brings CHPW's investment in Washington's community partners advancing equity work to a total of \$1 million in 2021, following [\\$250,000 in grants to 25 community-based organizations \(CBOs\)](#) in June.

To learn more about CHPW and how it serves Washington's communities, visit chpw.org.

About CHPW

Founded in 1992 by a network of community and migrant health centers (CHCs) in Washington State, Community Health Plan of Washington is a community-governed, not-for-profit health plan formed to help coordinate care and advocate for people who were not being served by traditional insurance companies. The mission of CHPW is to deliver accessible managed care services that meet the needs and improve the health of Washington communities and to make managed care participation beneficial for community-responsive providers. CHPW serves approximately 250,000 members through Medicaid (income-based program called Apple Health in WA) and Medicare (age and disability-based program) across the State. CHPW connects members to various physical, behavioral and social support services, and reinvests its profit back into the CHCs to help them deliver better care to all people. CHPW also seeks to identify and address health disparities and inequities, while coordinating services within a broader population health framework. Its parent, Community Health Network of Washington, serves nearly one million individuals across Washington through its CHC network sites. To learn more, visit chpw.org or connect on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [Instagram](#), or [LinkedIn](#).

###

Media Contact:

media@chpw.org