

You are not alone

That is what Community Health Plan of Washington (CHPW) is proving every day during the COVID-19 pandemic.

In these unprecedented times, CHPW is reaching across Washington to our Medicaid and Medicare Advantage members, our providers, our staff, and to communities with a supportive voice and a helping hand.

Members

Connecting with Our Members to Ensure They're OK

- Our staff have called more than 40,000 CHPW members to ensure their essential needs are being met during the crisis—from food and safe shelter to over-the-counter supplies. For many isolated members, we have been their only connection during the stay-at-home order.
- CHPW's Care Management staff touched base with more than 1,200 members in April alone to coordinate medical care, pharmacy deliveries, and behavioral health services. Staff continue to go the extra mile—one care manager helped a senior member living alone get her cable service turned back on. The member shared that because of this help, she could now get herself out of bed and take charge of her day!
- Our Community Programs team is following up on members' needs with housing, food, utilities, peer support, unemployment benefits, and available financial support for those who have lost income.
- We are connecting with families who have lost loved ones to COVID-19 and offering grief and pastoral support resources in addition to social supports.
- Our Transitions of Care team works with each member who has been discharged from a hospital or other facility to ensure they have a safe place to recover and avoid readmission.
- We have expanded text messaging to all our members in multiple languages to inform them of CHPW's Nurse Advice Line, telehealth services, access to cellphone benefits, and additional social service resources.
- We're assisting members with COVID-19 symptoms to locate test sites and, for those with acute symptoms, working with emergency departments to prepare for their arrival. We executed a targeted text campaign with one of our Community Health Centers to notify community members of the availability of on-site testing.
- CHPW extended all previously approved authorizations for medical services until the end of the year, so that members do not have any barriers to care delivery when services become available.



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Eliminating Cost-Sharing for Medicare Members

- CHPW is waiving Medicare member cost-sharing (copays, deductibles, and coinsurance) for COVID-19 related tests and treatments through the end of the year.

Connecting Members with Resources They Need

- CHPW contracted with Teladoc, the largest telemedicine company in the U.S., to provide 24/7 virtual access to doctors, when needed, for our members.
- We created and distributed a resource guide specifically for immigrants and refugees needing support during the pandemic.
- CHPW's Pharmacy team is helping members with expanded prescription delivery options. Members can get a 90-day supply for many of the medicines they need most.
- CHPW provides access to free cellphones with extended minutes so members can access telehealth services from their care providers.
- CHPW expanded meal delivery services for members in need and who are in quarantine due to Covid-19.
- CHPW continues to provide updated information and resources about COVID-19-related topics on our member website and through social media – including information on mental health services, telehealth options, and wellness self-care.

Providers

Supporting Providers Financially to Support Health Care Delivery:

- **CHPW has advanced \$25 million in additional payments to Community Health Centers and behavioral health providers to ensure they can continue delivering care to Washington's most underserved communities.**
- We are working closely with providers to ensure timely payments and avoid any delays. We are ensuring that there is uninterrupted cash flow for providers who are dependent on steady revenue.
- Even as our staff are working remotely, CHPW is maintaining its high standards for claims processing of 85% claims paid within 14 calendar days.
- We have eased or lifted providers' credentialing and pre-authorization notification requirements and expedited credentialing temporary providers.
- CHPW has eased prior authorization requirements for durable medical equipment, hospital transfers, home health and respiratory care, and for skilled nursing/long-term care and inpatient rehabilitation.
- We've expanded our staffing coverage seven days a week to support hospitals with timely discharge planning.
- To help free hospital beds, CHPW is allowing an initial 10-day approval for members' post-acute hospital placements with skilled nursing facilities.



Leading Outreach and Communication Efforts to Share Best Practices

- CHPW convenes multiple forums for providers, including Community Health Center medical directors and network behavioral health providers, to share resources, best practices, and promote solutions to address challenges facing their patients.
- We issue regular bulletins for providers including information on telehealth access and billing, authorization changes, and services for specific populations, including support for immigrants and refugees.
- CHPW created and distributed resource documents specifically for behavioral health providers with guidance on billing/policy changes, telehealth, funding resources, and facility-closure updates, as well as information on member behavioral health resources. CHPW also hosted a telehealth forum for behavioral health providers.
- Our staff regularly meets with Community Health Center clinical leadership to support and coordinate with their patient outreach activities and to follow up on identified needs. This has led to expanding coverage for home devices, customized member communications, and joint care management support for individual cases.

Supporting Providers in Delivering Telehealth

- CHPW has experienced a significant increase in Telehealth claims in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. During the month of March, CHPW recorded a 1,000% increase in telehealth claims when compared to the two prior months.
- CHPW is a leading participant in the Behavioral Health Institute (BHI) telehealth initiative with the HCA. We are supporting the implementation of the statewide efforts in training, and in the development of infrastructure supports for BH providers so they can successfully increase needed access to mental health services.
- CHPW was one of the first health plans to create a flexible telehealth billing policy—essentially, a “no wrong way”—to process and pay claims easily as providers were scrambling to move to a virtual health delivery environment.
- CHPW co-hosted a webinar with the Washington Association for Community Health in late March to provide needed information on telehealth billing requirements and share best practices for moving services quickly to telehealth.
- CHPW hosted a second forum in April specifically for CHC Chief Medical Officers and Chief Operating Officers to share best practices around increasing access for well-visits and chronic care management and to address issues around telehealth.
- To further help providers in adopting telehealth, CHPW is sponsoring a training for the Washington Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WCAAP) in effective behavioral health interventions via telemedicine.

CHPW Is Part of the Community We Serve

- CHPW staff have been out in Yakima helping at food bank distribution events alongside our friends at Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic and the Washington National Guard.
- Our employee food drive is benefitting Northwest Harvest, Food Lifeline, and Second Harvest—three organizations that supply food to every food bank in Washington.
- At CHPW, volunteering is a part of who we are, with 40 hours of paid community service available to all full-time staff. During this pandemic, some staff have used these hours to make cloth face masks for organizations. One of our Member Retention Specialists used her time to produce 115 cloth face masks for the US Navy personnel stationed in Bremerton.
- CHPW has been providing topical tips to help people during the stay home order. Chief Medical Officer Dr. Paul Sherman has appeared in numerous media outlets across the state talking about how to use telehealth effectively, and CHPW Senior Behavioral Health Medical Director Terry Lee has provided coping strategies to help with positive mental health.
- Our talented team created a flyer for school administrators in Southwest Washington to use to remind students and parents that school counselors are still available to talk by phone or video, even though school is closed.

CHPW Is Taking Care of Its Staff

- Staff were sent home to work and accommodated with computers, screens, telephonic equipment, and in some cases, WiFi hotspots. These arrangements enabled our employees to “Stay Home, Stay Healthy.”
- Staff were provided with 168 hours of time off, if needed, for COVID–related illness for themselves or to care for a family member. This is in addition to any accrued Personal Time Off balances.
- COVID-19 testing and all copays, deductibles, and coinsurance that result from a COVID–19 diagnosis are covered for employees and their dependents under the CHPW medical plans.
- CHPW is offering its staff access to 98point6, a telemedicine provider that provides remote clinical services through text-based primary care.



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