

Medicaid transformation: Foundational Community Supports program talking points

Background: The Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) and the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services have finalized an agreement for a five-year Medicaid transformation demonstration that will strengthen state efforts to improve health care for Washington families. Medicaid Transformation Initiative 3, or the Foundational Community Supports (FCS) program, creates two new targeted benefits that include services that help our most vulnerable beneficiaries obtain and keep stable housing and employment in support of their broader health needs.

What is FCS?

What it is: Targeted Medicaid benefits that help eligible clients with complex health needs obtain and maintain housing and employment stability.

- **Supportive housing services:**
 - **Community support services** provide ongoing services and supports to help eligible individuals obtain and maintain stable housing.
- **Supported employment services:**
 - Individual placement and supports help eligible individuals obtain and maintain stable employment.

FCS is not:

- Ongoing payments for housing, rent, or room and board costs.
- Wages or wage enhancements for clients.
- An entitlement.

Supportive housing services

Supportive housing services are ongoing supports to help eligible Medicaid clients find and keep stable, independent housing. Services include:

- Housing assessments.
- Identifying housing resources.
- Support obtaining a lease.
- Independent living skills development.
- Landlord relations.
- Crisis management.

The supportive housing benefit will not supplant existing services currently available to eligible populations.

Who is eligible for supportive housing services?

FCS seeks to demonstrate the impact supportive housing services have on populations with the greatest and most immediate needs, including:

- Individuals experiencing chronic homelessness as defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.
- Those dependent on costly institutional care.
- Those dependent on more restrictive adult residential care/treatment settings.
- In-home care recipients with complex needs.
- Those at highest risk for expensive care and negative outcomes.

In order to be eligible for these services, individuals must be Medicaid-eligible, complete a needs assessment and fall into at least one of the groups described above.

Supported employment services

FCS will help Medicaid enrollees who are eligible for this service obtain and keep a job. Supported employment includes:

- Vocational/job-related discovery or assessment.
- Planning for employment.
- Job placement, development and coaching.
- Skills-building for negotiating with prospective employers.

The supported employment benefit will not cover or supplement a client's wages.

Who is eligible for supported employment services?

These services have proven especially effective for certain populations with complex needs. These include:

- Individuals enrolled in the Aged, Blind or Disabled program:
 - <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/aged-blind-or-disabled-cash-assistance-program>
- Individuals enrolled in the Housing and Essential Needs program:
 - <https://www.dshs.wa.gov/esa/community-services-offices/housing-and-essential-needs>
- Individuals diagnosed with a severe and persistent mental illness, substance use disorder (SUD), or co-occurring mental illness and SUD.
- People who are receiving long-term services and supports.
- Vulnerable youth age 16 and older with a behavioral health condition.

Like the supportive housing benefit, referral to these services must be the result of a needs assessment.

How will providers be reimbursed for these services?

Supportive housing and supported employment services under FCS are managed by a single statewide third-party administrator (TPA) contracted by HCA — Wellpoint Providers of FCS services contract with the TPA and are reimbursed on a fee-for-service basis. For additional information or updates, see the Medicaid transformation FCS webpage at

<https://www.hca.wa.gov/about-hca/healthier-washington/initiative-3-supportive-housing-and-supported-employment>.

What should associates do?

Wellpoint members who receive the above mailings or calls may contact the FCS with questions about the program or the above communication at **844-451-2828**.