



The power of community

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2024 Annual Power of Community Report

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2024 Annual Power of Community Report



Message from Our Chief Executive Officer



CHPW navigated challenges both familiar and new in working to improve access to quality health care for all of Washington's communities. CEO Leanne Berge reflects on a year of growth, resilience, and inspiration.

[Read message](#)

Year in Review

From impactful community partnerships and transformative care initiatives to expanded member support, explore a timeline of defining moments that shaped CHPW in 2024.

[Hide Timeline](#)

2024

January



January 4

CEO Leanne Berge delivers opening keynote at the 2024 Washington State of Reform Health Policy Conference, discussing how different organizations in the health sector can partner and collaborate to improve the health of Washingtonians.

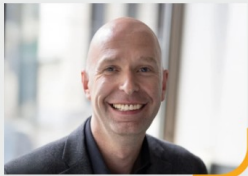
February



February 22

CHPW staff members participated in the 2024 Western Forum for Migrant and Community Health in Seattle. This annual conference brings together health professionals from migrant and Community Health Centers, in addition to allied organizations. Our staff members shared helpful resources and information, engaged in collaborative workshops, and strengthened our partnerships with mission-driven organizations.

April



April 8

Stuart Battersby, a certified public accountant (CPA) with more than 15 years of experience in health care, joins CHPW as its new Chief Financial Officer. He replaces Stacy Kessel, who retired from CHPW after 16 years.

June



June 20

Health Care Authority (HCA) begins enrolling applicants in **Apple Health Expansion**, a new program that provides Medicaid-like health coverage to uninsured adults who do not meet the immigration requirements for federal assistance. CHPW is among the Managed Care Organizations (MCOs) chosen by the state to offer Expansion coverage.

July



July 9

CHPW signs memorandum of understanding (MOU) as part of the **Washington Multi-payer Collaborative**, continuing its partnership with the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) to explore collective approaches to improve access to high-quality primary care for Washington residents.

August



August 4

CHPW joins its 21 partner Community Health Centers in celebrating **National Health Center Week**. The annual celebration aims to raise awareness about the mission and accomplishments of CHCs, which serve more than a million people a year in Washington State alone.

August 16

CHPW honors two students in Washington State's Migrant Education Program as part of the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI)'s **Art of Belonging** summer conference. The students were recognized for their dedication to learning, commitment to their communities, and their perseverance. The awards align with our holistic approach to supporting communities through equitable health care, influenced by social factors such as education.

October



October 8

CHPW staff attend ribbon-cutting ceremony for **The Way Station**, a state-of-the-art health and hygiene facility in Bellingham serving individuals experiencing homelessness. CHPW and one of our Community Health Centers, **Unity Care NW**, were among the longtime advocates and supporters of the project.

November



November 4

CHPW names Betsy Jones as new Chief Strategy Officer. Jones brings more than 25 years of health care and human services experience including deep expertise in public health and health delivery systems.

December



December 5

CHPW sponsors the 19th Annual Latino Health Forum, presented by Sea Mar Community Health Centers. The event brings together health care experts and advocates to exchange innovative ideas and best practices for advancing the health of the Latino community in the Pacific Northwest.

The Power of Community in Action



Supporting Access to Youth Health and Education

CHPW and our parent organization, Community Health Network of Washington, deepened key partnerships across the state and participated in initiatives that address social factors affecting the long-term health of youth.

[Read story](#)



Empowering Our Health Care Providers Through Education, Dialogue, Training

CHPW brought in trusted experts to lead educational training sessions on caring for immigrants and refugees and supported our network of primary care providers by expanding access to specialist consultations.

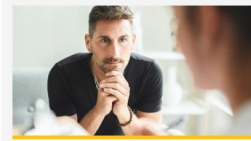
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Prioritizing Maternal Health Care

In addition to receiving state recognition for best practices in Perinatal Behavioral Health, CHPW participated in several initiatives and partnerships within communities to improve access to pregnancy and maternal health care.

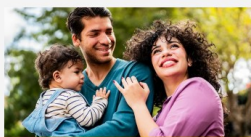
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Whole-Person Care: Championing Holistic Approaches to SUD Treatment and Support

As a passionate advocate of integrated whole-person care, CHPW supported several community initiatives to expand access to comprehensive health services for individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs).

[Read story](#)



Improving the Member Experience

Across the organization, and in alliance with our community members and partners, we worked to improve our members' experiences in accessing care and support. This included an expanded presence of our Community Health Workers, who are often the face of CHPW in the community.

[Read story](#)



Improving Health Outcomes for Our Communities

CHPW worked with community partners in Anacortes to launch a pilot program to connect families experiencing homelessness to health coverage and primary care services. We also participated in a national collaborative to support not-for-profit health plans in improving the well-being of communities that experience poorer health outcomes.

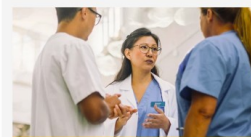
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Strengthening Bonds: CHPW's Support for Tribal Health and Sovereignty

American Indian and Alaska Native communities face numerous health disparities compared with other populations. As an organization dedicated to addressing health outcomes for all populations, CHPW supported Tribal initiatives to improve health care access and services.

[Read story](#)



Leveraging Bree Collaborative Guidelines to Drive Quality and Accountability

CHPW earned 19 Bree Collaborative awards from the state. The awards recognize health care organizations and individuals for their contributions to improving the quality, safety, and value of care through collaborative efforts.

[Read story](#)

Staff in the Spotlight



Stuart Battersby

Stuart Battersby, a certified public accountant with more than 15 years of experience in health care, has joined CHPW as its new Chief Financial Officer, overseeing all budgetary and fiscal responsibilities.



Betsy Jones

Betsy Jones joined CHPW in 2024 as its new Chief Strategy Officer, but she is no stranger to the organization. While new to her position, Jones previously worked for CHPW/CHNW more than a decade ago.

[Read more](#)

Engaging with the Community



Our outreach team attended events across Washington State to share information about coverage options. We connected with community members at health clinics, health and resource fairs, and at community baby showers.

[Read more](#)

Honors and Accolades



Several CHPW staff members were recognized across the state for their contributions to the health care sector.

[Read more](#)

2024 Executive Leadership Team

Leanne Berge, Esq.
Chief Executive Officer

Demetria Malloy, MD, MSHS
Chief Medical Officer/Chief Health Officer

Stuart Battersby
Chief Financial Officer
(joined April 2024)

Betsy Jones, MSW, MBA
Chief Strategy Officer
(joined November 2024)

Alan Lederman
Chief Operating Officer

Stacy Kessel
Chief Finance and Strategy Officer
(retired April 2024)

Kelli Houston, MBA
Chief Equity Officer

Barbara Westlake
Senior Executive Assistant & Board Administrator

2024 Board of Directors

Joe Vessey
Board Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Center of Snohomish County

Rhonda Hauff
Board Vice Chair
President/Chief Executive Officer
Yakima Neighborhood Health Services

Aaron Wilson
Board Treasurer
Chief Executive Officer
CHAS Health

Angela Gonzalez
Board Secretary
Chief Executive Officer
Community Health of Central Washington

Sheila Berschauer
Immediate Past Board Chair
Chief Executive Officer
Moses Lake Community Health Center

Jim Coffee
Chief Executive Officer
Cowlitz Family Health Center

Jesús Hernández
Chief Executive Officer
Family Health Centers

Lisa Yohalem
Chief Executive Officer
HealthPoint

Kelli Nomura
Chief Executive Officer
International Community Health Services

Rashad Collins
Chief Executive Officer
Neighborcare Health

Desiree Sweeney
Chief Executive Officer
NEW Health

Mary Bartolo
Executive Vice President
(appointed December 2024)
Sea Mar Community Health Centers

Jeffrey Gibbs, MD
QI Medical Director
(Former; to December 2024)
Sea Mar Community Health Centers

Kristy Needham
Chief Executive Officer
Tri-Cities Community Health

Jodi Joyce
Chief Executive Officer
Unity Care NW

Gaelon Spradley
Chief Executive Officer
Valley View Health Center

Christy Trotter

Manuel Navarro
Chief Executive Officer
Columbia Valley Community Health

David Flentge
President/Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Care

Brandy Taylor
Chief Executive Officer
Seattle Roots Community Health

Michael Maxwell, MD
Chief Executive Officer
North Olympic Healthcare Network

Jennifer Kreidler-Moss, PharmD
Chief Executive Officer
Peninsula Community Health Services

Regina Bonnevie Rogers, MD
Board Medical Director Representative
Chief Medical Officer
Peninsula Community Health Services

Chief Executive Officer
Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic

Carla M. DewBerry
Independent Director

William Dowling
Independent Director

Stephen Tarnoff, MD
Independent Director

The Power of Community

We are committed to serving our Washington communities by uniting people and resources to help our members achieve their healthiest lives. True to the vision of our founding Community Health Centers (CHCs), which still govern us today, we collaborate with CHCs, affiliate providers, community organizations, government stakeholders, industry partners, and our members to identify needs, eliminate barriers, and ensure quality care. No CHPW member is ever alone; we are here every step of the way. That's the power of community.

[Learn more about CHPW](#)



Land Acknowledgment

As we bring you this Annual Power of Community Report, we respectfully acknowledge that, wherever we are, we are on traditional territories of many Indigenous Tribes.

Our daily lives take place on the lands of Indigenous people. They cared for this land for thousands of years before it was stolen from them. Yet, Indigenous people survive and thrive today and are a model of courage, resilience, and community.

We recognize that CHPW's headquarters in Seattle is on the traditional lands of the Coast Salish People, specifically the Duwamish People, who are the original stewards of the land, past and present.

We further acknowledge that the treaties signed by Tribal leaders under duress almost 200 years ago include the promise of health care. Therefore, CHPW's work is not only a service, but a responsibility.

We pledge to support our American Indian and Alaska Native neighbors as we work together for healthier communities.

May this acknowledgment also demonstrate CHPW's commitment to dismantling ongoing legacies of oppression and inequities and maintaining a diverse and inclusive environment with respect, understanding, and appreciation of all.



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Message from Our Chief Executive Officer

Dear friends and colleagues,

As I reflect on 2024, I am filled with gratitude for the significant strides we've taken together in advancing equitable access to compassionate, whole-person health care that supports the well-being of Washington's diverse communities.

This past year has been one of growth, resilience, and renewed commitment as we navigated challenges both familiar and new.

We stayed true to our principles amid the year's shifting political landscape, which will continue to directly impact health policy and the work in which we are engaged.

Despite these challenges, our work remains focused, in collaboration with our partners, on building a more just, accessible, and responsive health care system for the people we serve. Together, we are well-equipped to navigate the changes and strengthen our communities by recognizing the complexity and humanity of the individuals relying on us each day.

We have continued to support access to needed health care in our communities through our Community Health Center clinics, our broader provider network, and even in members' homes. We strengthened our partnerships with social service organizations and schools. We collaborated with leading community partners such as the Doulas for All coalition to advocate for expanded maternal health care services and Skagit County's Population Health Trust advisory committee to support crisis care for individuals with substance use disorders.

CHPW facilitated education and training sessions on trauma-informed care and culturally responsive care for our staff and providers, and we expanded our staff of Community Health Workers to reach members and support their needs wherever they may be and in all corners of the state.

I firmly believe our efforts demonstrate Community Health Plan of Washington's distinctive role in Washington's health care ecosystem as a collaborative and positive change agent for those most in need.

The road ahead will likely be more tumultuous, but with our collaborative efforts and joint commitment, we will sustain the gains we have achieved and continue to make progress for the well-being of our members and our communities. By supporting each other and working toward our common goals, our work can and will make all the difference for those we serve.

Warmly,



Leanne

Leanne Berge, Esq.

Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Plan of Washington/
Community Health Network of Washington

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Supporting Access to Youth Health and Education

Access to health care, education, stable housing, and nutritious food significantly impact the health and well-being of all people, but especially young people as they are developing. In 2024, CHPW and our parent organization, Community Health Network of Washington (CHNW), deepened key partnerships across the state and participated in initiatives that directly address social factors affecting the long-term health of youth.

Strengthening ties to support migratory youth

CHPW's partnership with the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI) made major strides in 2024 as we expanded our work together to support migratory students. As the primary agency charged with overseeing public K-12 education in Washington State, OSPI works primarily through its nine regional Educational Service Districts (ESD) to provide funding and resources to the state's schools and students, including four that serve approximately 14,000 migratory students annually through the Migrant Education Program (MEP).

As part of CHPW's strategic initiatives with its network of Community Health Centers (CHCs) to improve support for youth and families, we have recognized the unique needs of migratory families and supported opportunities for students to achieve their fullest potential despite the challenges they face. Many of the families and youth that MEP serves move to these districts to obtain work in the agricultural or fishing industries. Due to the migratory nature of these jobs, youth often are unable to receive continuous, high-quality educational services. Aside from moving between school districts and states, cultural and language barriers, social isolation, disconnection from health care systems, and the lack of resources in areas where they live and work, are all barriers to wellness that migratory youth and families can face.

In 2024, our partnership with MEP expanded from working with one ESD to engaging with all four who serve these students and families. CHPW's community-based outreach and K-12-focused teams have worked to develop their relationships with MEP, and engage directly with schools and families to ensure they have information and resources about accessing primary care, health insurance coverage, and educational supports. We've also worked at the state level to identify social and systemic challenges that interfere with these students' healthy development and to advocate for addressing these barriers. Daniel Smith, Senior Regional Manager, overseeing our partnerships with the K-12 education and housing sectors explains, "We are grateful to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction as well as our network of providers for their strong commitment to improving access to health care services for those students and families who too often miss out on critical services, because of systemic barriers that we can together alleviate."



CHPW's Josh Guajardo, Chelsea Stone, and Daniel Smith with Armando Isais-Garcia, MEP's Associate Director for Migrant Health and Out-of-School Youth, and award recipient Raquel at the Art of Belonging Conference.



“ We are grateful to the Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction as well as our network of providers for their strong commitment to improving access to health care services for those students and families who too often miss out on critical services, because of systemic barriers that we can together alleviate.”

Daniel Smith
CHPW Senior Regional Manager

Collaborating with students and families



Chelsea Stone, Program Manager of our K-12 Strategy and Opportunity team, and Josh Guajardo, a Senior Account Manager for CHPW's outreach team, were invited to present at the 2024 OSPI Migrant & Arts Education Programs State Conference, "Art of Belonging", a result of their relationship-building with the school districts and communities MEP serves. CHPW was the first managed care organization to participate in the conference.

When asked how he and Stone came to speak at the conference, Guajardo said, "Through our work with migratory families, we heard there was a need to share our work with other people supporting them. It was an honor to be there, to directly answer questions that were relevant to their school districts, and to the families that they serve." Participating in this conference serves as a milestone in CHPW's partnership with MEP and their services offered across Washington State and demonstrates our commitment to being a trusted resource for Washington communities.

Stone and Guajardo's session covered CHPW's work with our CHCs in partnering with MEP statewide, strategies on engaging MEP students and families in discussions about health care, and the services, benefits, and support CHPW health plans offer families to live healthy lives. This annual conference is attended by a diverse group of individuals dedicated to supporting migratory students and their families, including educators, administrators, advocates, health professionals, and community partners.

Honoring excellence

Recognizing the challenges migratory students can face in engaging with the education system, CHPW was pleased to present several awards at the conference to honor two outstanding students and a school nurse from Washington State's Migrant Education Program (MEP), at the OSPI Art of Belonging Conference.

Power of Community Perseverance Student Awards

CHPW's *Power of Community Perseverance Awards* celebrate students' remarkable dedication to learning, commitment to their communities, and persistence in overcoming challenges. We presented this award to two students at the conference.

The first award went to a standout student for his commitment to education and positive influence on his peers despite experiencing many obstacles. A \$1,000 scholarship was awarded to celebrate the student's devotion to pursuing future endeavors that will positively impact his community and his continued learning. After returning to the U.S. from Mexico for his senior year, the student faced the challenge of reintegrating into the American school system while being separated from his immediate family. Still, he maintained a 3.3 GPA, participated in varsity soccer, and engaged actively in his community. The student's perseverance in finishing high school, determination to succeed, and involvement in extracurricular activities have made him a role model among his peers.

The second award honored a student's determination to return to school while facing significant obstacles. A new laptop computer was awarded to support her goals to succeed in academics and prepare for her future. Prior to beginning school in Washington, she had been out of school for two years and did not speak English. Upon returning to school, this awardee earned the "Student of the Year" award at her high school and multiple "Student of the Month" awards. She actively participates in MEP-sponsored events and is committed to making up her credits and learning English. While she is preparing for her post-secondary education, she is determined to graduate and attend college.

"We are honored to hand out these awards to students who have exemplified perseverance and a commitment to learning, which in turn are emblematic of our work supporting social drivers of health, removing barriers to health, and keeping students engaged," said Smith.



CHPW's Daniel Smith presenting the *Power of Community Awards* at the OSPI Art of Belonging Conference.



CHPW's Daniel Smith and Chelsea Stone with award recipient Raquel and OSPI MEP partner Sylvia Reyna, Director of Migrant Education.

Power of Community Nurse Recognition Award

The efforts of Raquel, a registered nurse, were recognized with the Power of Community Nurse Recognition Award. Raquel demonstrated exceptional leadership within the Migrant Education Health Program by significantly expanding the reach of support, services, and resources for MEP-eligible youth and families across multiple districts—reaching beyond her own region. As a strong advocate for student and family needs, she also played a key role in onboarding new nurses, demonstrating her advocacy methods, and sharing innovative ways to utilize MEP funds. This nurse modeled collaboration with basic educational nursing services and leveraged supplemental funds to introduce new initiatives, including mental health resources, which have now been replicated statewide. Smith, also in attendance at the conference, helped to present the awards.

Joining forces for health and wellness at school

In an effort to improve health and wellness innovations in the school systems, through school-based health centers (SBHCs) to remove barriers to routine care for families and K-12 students, we joined a new coalition formally established in the summer of 2024. Made up of CHPW, Community Health Centers (CHCs), the Washington School-Based Health Alliance (WA SBHA), Public Health-Seattle & King County, and the Washington Association for Community Health, the coalition aims to combine expertise, resources, and advocacy efforts to enhance training, technical assistance, and public policy across the state to improve school-based health and wellness programs.

SBHCs provide essential services at over 70 schools across the state. SBHCs conduct more than 12,000 visits across the state annually, offering services like sports physicals and well-child visits, behavioral health and substance use disorder treatment and support, specialty referrals and care coordination, dental care, insurance enrollment assistance, and parent engagement and education.



70 schools
across the state
with SBHCs



12,000+
health visits conducted
by SBHCs annually

In its pilot year, the coalition collaborated on establishing a collective strategy to address under-resourced agencies and allocate additional resources as needed. The coalition also continued to reduce overlapping legislative efforts and align efforts to support SBHCs across the state.

Additionally, we worked with WA SBHA to identify capital and operational funding requests that were fully funded in the 2024 legislative session. This allowed eight SBHC projects to begin with eight different CHCs, and it allowed Washington State's Department of Health (DOH) to continue their grant program to SBHCs across the state. The coalition will have an opportunity to share their work at the 2025 National School-Based Health Alliance conference in Washington D.C.



CHPW visits CHAS school-based health clinic located in Shadle High School, in Spokane, WA.

An SBHC and school team up to support a student in crisis

School-based health centers (SBHCs) can profoundly impact a student's health and educational outcomes. Here is a story from a network Community Health Center (CHC) about the impact of teamwork between a school and their health center during a student health crisis.

A student, "Billy", was navigating significant challenges at home and struggling with mental health issues. While at school one day, he attempted suicide. Once alerted by staff, the school's SBHC team responded immediately. The on-site behavioral health provider worked with Billy to de-escalate the situation and ensured his safety until emergency services arrived.

This coordinated response by the school and SBHC staff, including school nurse and SBHC counselor, were crucial in connecting Billy to timely support.

After receiving the care he needed in the days that followed, Billy returned to school and began regular appointments with both the school-based health center's behavioral health provider and primary care provider. With ongoing support, Billy got back on track to graduate. He now has a desire to become a health care worker to support other young people facing similar challenges.

This story highlights the importance of strong partnerships between schools and SBHCs, and the difference this collaboration has on student health and education.

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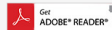
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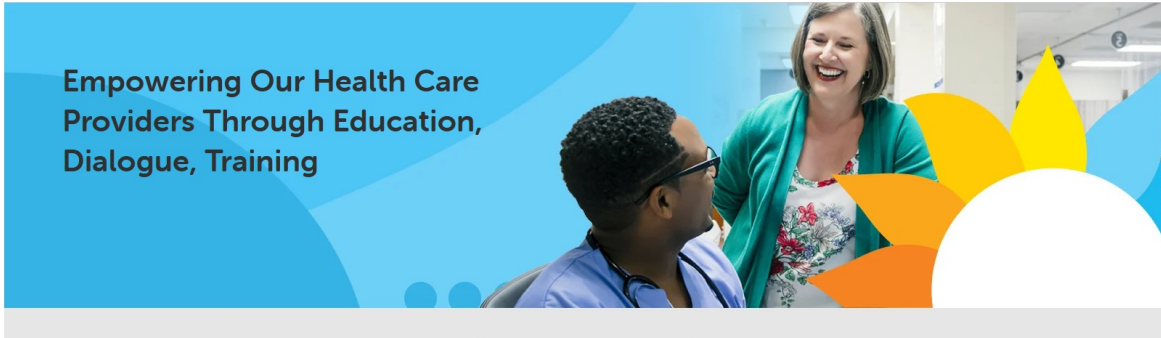
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Empowering Our Health Care Providers Through Education, Dialogue, Training

In 2024, Washington State launched a new state program called Apple Health Expansion. This program provides Medicaid-like health insurance coverage to low-income adults who are ineligible for other Apple Health programs due to immigration status. Washingtonians with undocumented status also became eligible for the first time to buy private health plans through Washington Healthplanfinder, the state's health insurance marketplace. CHPW was among the managed care organizations (MCOs) approved by the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) to offer Apple Health Expansion to enrollees.

Recognizing that health care providers directly shape health outcomes and are a critical ally in CHPW's mission to improve health outcomes, CHPW is equipping them with vital resources, training, and support so they can deliver personalized care to diverse communities more effectively.

CHPW brought in several trusted experts to lead educational training sessions for providers and staff ahead of the Apple Health Expansion launch.

Taking an informed approach

CHPW collaborated with the International Rescue Committee (IRC) to host two webinars on "Understanding Forced Displacement and Trauma-Informed Approaches." IRC is a humanitarian organization that provides aid to refugees and those who have been forced to leave their homes due to conflict, violence, or other causes. These individuals and families come to the U.S. with a variety of unique needs due to past traumatic experiences, pressured adaptation, complex systems, and, for some, lack of permanency due to immigration status, said IRC's Beth Farmer, the main presenter.

"Immigration status type and migration history introduce many, many risk factors that we as service providers may not normally consider," said Farmer, who is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker with more than three decades of experience in providing services to people who have experienced trauma.



Leveraging expertise

Connie Mom-Chhing, CHPW Senior Director of Regional Systems Integration, said the intent of the webinar trainings was to help CHPW providers offer care that embodies compassion, cultural sensitivity, and understanding in every interaction.

"We wanted to equip our provider networks and staff with crucial knowledge and skills to deliver the highest quality of care for the immigrant and refugee populations," said Mom-Chhing.

"It was also an opportunity for CHPW to leverage the expertise of one of our community-based partners, the IRC, to deliver this training, as they are on the ground providing services to this population."

Each session was attended by more than 100 participants. In addition to Community Health Center (CHC) staff and other providers, attendees included representatives from community organizations, school districts, and public health agencies.



“We wanted to equip our provider networks and staff with crucial knowledge and skills to deliver the highest quality of care for the immigrant and refugee populations.”

Connie Mom-Chhing
CHPW Senior Director of Regional Systems Integration

The importance of culturally responsive care

CHPW also engaged Gino Aisenberg, Ph.D., M.S.W., an associate professor at the University of Washington School of Social Work and a bilingual/bicultural Latino mental health researcher, to talk to providers and CHPW staff about the importance of understanding different cultures, backgrounds, and traditions when delivering care to immigrant and refugee populations.

Aisenberg, who is also the founding co-director of the Latino Center for Health at UW, conducted his webinars in English and Spanish.

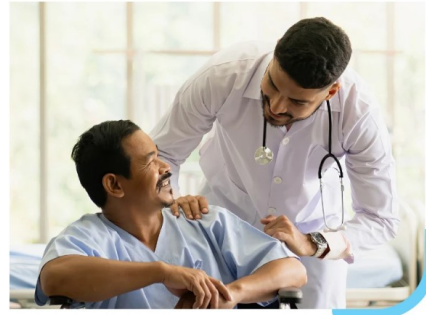
Understanding 'cultural context'

The U.S. health care system is complex for most of us but can be especially daunting for someone who hasn't grown up in this country, Aisenberg told providers.

He stressed that health care workers must strive to understand both the culture of the individual's country of origin and the immigrant or refugee experience.

In medicine, "evidence-based practices historically have been standardized and normed with white, non-Latino adult populations, void of cultural context and realities," Aisenberg said.

"We have this model that we sweepingly apply to all people, regardless of their history, their race, ethnicity, their environmental contexts. That doesn't appear to me to be good practice."



"We have this model that we sweepingly apply to all people, regardless of their history, their race, ethnicity, their environmental contexts. That doesn't appear to me to be good practice."

Gino Aisenberg, Ph.D., M.S.W.
University of Washington School of Social Work Associate Professor

Broadening access to expert knowledge

CHPW also supported its network of primary care providers by expanding access to specialist consultations.

We deepened our collaboration with MAVEN (Medical Alumni Volunteer Expert Network) Project, a nonprofit organization that focuses on providing accessible, high-quality health care services to underserved communities. Through MAVEN Project, CHC providers connect with volunteer specialist physicians via telehealth for consultations, mentoring, and education.

CHPW made MAVEN Project available to 10 more CHC sites in 2024, bringing the total to 63.

CHPW also integrated a second eConsult network, ConferMED, in 2024, following the recommendations of three CHCs who have used them. ConferMED electronically connects primary care providers to a national network of board-certified specialists from more than 70 medical areas.



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2024 Annual Power of Community Report

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Prioritizing Maternal Health Care

Ensuring that individuals receive proper care and support during their pregnancy journey is essential for the health and well-being of both parent and child. CHPW participated in several initiatives and partnerships within the community to improve access to quality pregnancy and maternal health care, while remaining flexible and responsive to the needs of CHPW members.

Expanding community awareness of midwifery care

CHPW's Erin Hafer, Senior Vice President of Delivery & Health Systems Innovation, and Shanna Widener, Senior Director of Care Management, were part of a Washington State-based Medicaid and Midwifery Learning Collaborative team that demonstrated how state agencies and health plans can partner in support of midwifery efforts. In August 2024, the case study detailing the collaborative was published online by the Institute for Medicaid Innovation (IMI), a national 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides innovative Medicaid solutions.



Washington State-based Medicaid and Midwifery Learning Collaborative team

The National Medicaid and Midwifery Learning Collaborative was a three-year initiative to advance midwifery-led care for Medicaid members, ending in 2024. Five state-based teams, selected through a competitive application process, received technical assistance and guidance from the IMI and a dedicated national advisory committee to develop sustainable initiatives to advance midwifery-led models of care.

Team Washington included CHPW, Washington-practicing midwives, and the Washington Health Care Authority (HCA) among others. Through the collaborative, the group worked to create strategies to educate and engage Medicaid members in midwifery services. After identifying that midwives had limited resources to promote and educate about their services, the team designed a social media toolkit for midwives to use.

Taking learnings from the collaborative, CHPW also reviewed its current contracts with midwife groups and birth centers and added new providers to its network as well as providing resources to raise awareness around midwifery care. To support the effort, CHPW added information about midwifery care to its Apple Health (Medicaid) website, and educational materials were developed for CHPW's Maternal Child Health Case Managers to use when connecting members to midwives.

Deepening partnerships with maternal health leaders in the community

Over the course of the collaborative, Hafer and Widener had the chance to deepen their relationship with Faisa Farole, licensed midwife, and founder of two organizations in Washington that care for families: the Federal Way Birth Center and Global Perinatal Services (GPS).

Federal Way Birth Center

Farole was part of the Learning Collaborative and coordinated a site visit for Hafer and CHPW's Maternal Child Health Case Managers to tour the newly established birth center.

The Federal Way Birth Center is the only Black midwife-owned birth center in Washington State, representing Farole's commitment to breaking down barriers to care for marginalized communities.



With support from CHPW Case Managers offering referrals, the Federal Way Birth Center achieved the following milestones from May (when they received their license) through the end of 2024:

- 78 new clients served with personalized, culturally-centered care
- 320 appointments providing prenatal, birth, and postpartum care
- 12 deliveries in a serene and welcoming birth center environment

When sharing their achievements, Farole expressed to Hafer and community partners, "Each appointment, consultation, and delivery is a testament to your belief in equitable and compassionate care."

Global Perinatal Services

In addition to the Federal Way Birth Center, CHPW had a chance to learn more about the community-based organization, Global Perinatal Services (GPS).

Located on the same property as the Federal Way Birth Center, GPS offers free services to low-income immigrant and refugee families, including doula services in more than 15 languages, lactation support, and mental health care, in addition to classes and resources for families. They also run the Easy Access Clinic in the same location, that provides wraparound services with walk-in access for prenatal and postpartum care.

Forming authentic relationships like this with local providers who can best respond to the unique needs of community members throughout Washington, is vital for CHPW to remove health care barriers and prioritize care for individuals and newborns throughout pregnancy, childbirth, and parenthood.

CHPW celebrated the organization's work to remove health care barriers by awarding them a grant of \$10,000, in unrestricted funds, as part of an annual community investment fund.

78

New clients served with personalized, culturally-centered care

320

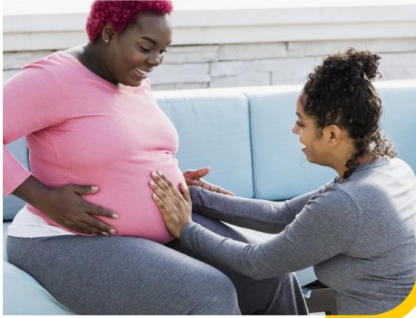
Appointments providing prenatal, birth, and postpartum care

12

Deliveries in a serene and welcoming birth center environment

*Federal Way Birth Center achieved these milestones from May (when they received their license) through the end of 2024

Following the community's lead in providing doula coverage



There is strong evidence that birth doula services are associated with improved perinatal and birth outcomes, which is why CHPW is following Doulas for All coalition's lead in their work to make doula coverage available to Apple Health (Medicaid) members. In May 2024, the coalition secured legislative funding from Washington State for a birth doula benefit at the highest reimbursement rate in the nation. The benefit became available January 1, 2025.

As a result of the Doulas for All coalition's grassroots efforts during the 2024 legislative session, the Health Care Authority (HCA), the state agency who oversees Apple Health (Medicaid) in Washington, was authorized to implement a doula benefit for Apple Health clients, allocating funding for doula reimbursement and a statewide doula referral system.

The coalition is now helping doulas to earn state Department of Health credentials.

One of CHPW's 2024 legislative priorities was to make sure Medicaid reimbursement for birth doula services and the referral hub were fully funded. Reimbursement from the state's funding for Apple Health was approved as a Fee-for-Service benefit in its early years, transitioning to a managed care organization (MCO)-covered benefit in the future.

CHPW was the first MCO to participate in the coalition's meetings, represented by CHPW Public Policy Analyst, Hawa Elias, who had two primary goals: listen and learn to how we can best support birthworkers, and be present with the community as we design a system to better care for members.

Elias explains, "Attending coalition meetings to learn from doulas is foundational, keeping us grounded in the needs of the community, as we build programs to improve maternal health. It's important for CHPW to follow the lead of such birthworkers, who have historically supported birthing people throughout the prenatal, delivery, and postpartum periods. They know best how to provide culturally competent care, and to improve maternal health outcomes."



“It's important for CHPW to follow the lead of BIPOC birthworkers, who have historically supported birthing people throughout the prenatal, delivery, and postpartum periods. They know best how to provide culturally competent care, and to improve maternal health outcomes.”

Hawa Elias
CHPW Public Policy Analyst

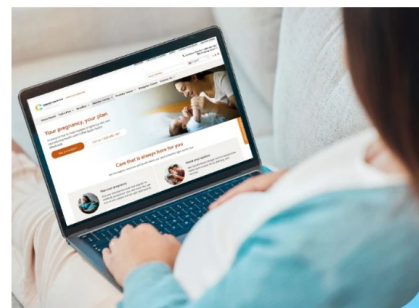
New pregnancy care website

To improve awareness of and access to CHPW pregnancy health care benefits and services, we created an online guide for CHPW Apple Health members. The CHPW site went live in October 2024.

Dubbed the Pregnancy Care Resource Hub, the new web experience quickly established itself as a trusted resource for members to access health information for every stage of pregnancy and the postpartum period including newborn health, alongside benefit and services information.

The online resource center prioritized insights from CHPW teams working directly with members who provided feedback about navigating pregnancy care benefits with Apple Health.

Additionally, Maternal Health Case Managers and Behavioral Health Directors supported efforts to write a blog series on pregnancy care topics, shared across our social media channels, with community partners, and directly to members to increase awareness around pregnancy care resources, benefits, and midwifery care.





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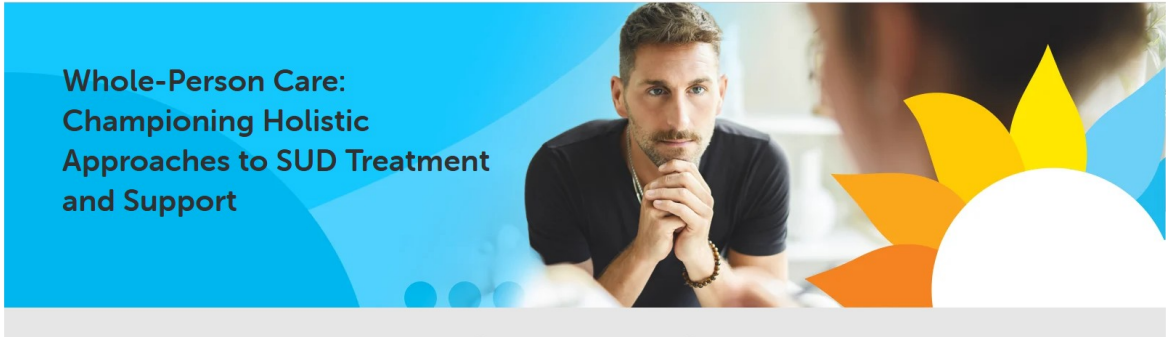


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Whole-Person Care: Championing Holistic Approaches to SUD Treatment and Support

As a passionate advocate of integrated whole-person care, CHPW is committed to providing community members with access to comprehensive health services that address physical and mental health as well as social factors like housing and food security.

This commitment includes support for expanded access to prevention, treatment, and recovery services for individuals with substance use disorders (SUDs).

The need is apparent, as Washington is among the states that have been significantly impacted by the opioid epidemic. From 2019 to 2021, the number of opioid drug overdose deaths in the state nearly doubled, to more than 1,600, according to data from the state Department of Health.

Recognizing the severity of this public health crisis, our team partnered with local providers and community organizations to support the construction of the Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center, a 48-bed facility being built in Sedro-Wooley adjacent to an existing Evaluation and Treatment Center.



Groundbreaking of the Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center



“The groundbreaking of the Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center is an important milestone for our community. It reflects CHPW’s commitment to whole-person care, ensuring that individuals facing mental health and substance use challenges have access to comprehensive services that meet their needs.”

Marci Bloomquist
CHPW Senior Regional Manager

Closing the care gaps

Marci Bloomquist, CHPW Senior Regional Manager for the North Sound Region, advocated for the project through her involvement with Population Health Trust, a Skagit County advisory committee that identifies strategies and actions to improve the overall health of all community members.

“Collaborating with local stakeholders, I worked to highlight the gaps in care for individuals experiencing mental health and substance use crises, which the center is uniquely positioned to address,” Bloomquist said. The gaps included a shortage of facilities in the North Sound that provide short-term residential spaces where these individuals can receive immediate care, treatment, stabilization, and around-the-clock support, she said.

The Crisis Center broke ground in August 2024 and is expected to open in late 2025. It aims to divert people experiencing mental health or substance use crises away from jails or emergency rooms, offering them appropriate, holistic care in a more suitable, safe, and supportive setting. The facility is consciously designed to be a healing environment, with calming spaces and outdoor healing gardens.

Making an impact

Bloomquist and CHPW Community Health Worker Adrian Lane attended the facility’s groundbreaking along with county officials, local legislators, health care providers, and other community members.

“The groundbreaking of the Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center is an important milestone for our community. It reflects CHPW’s commitment to whole-person care, ensuring that individuals facing mental health and substance use challenges have access to comprehensive services that meet their needs,” Bloomquist said.

“We are proud to support this initiative, which will make a significant impact in supporting recovery and long-term well-being.”



CHPW’s Marci Bloomquist and Adrian Lane at Skagit County Crisis Stabilization Center groundbreaking.



Watch the Tacoma-Pierce County Opioid Summit

Supporting those in need in Pierce County

In Pierce County, CHPW Regional Manager Joe Contris, who co-chairs the Tacoma-Pierce County Opioid Task Force’s Access to Treatment subcommittee, was among the presenters at the Opioid Summit in Puyallup in March. The event featured an anti-stigma panel discussion, state and local opioid settlement funds updates, task force committee reports, among other presentations.





Contris also played a key role in organizing the SUD Roundtable in October, which brought together representatives of leading local inpatient and outpatient SUD providers. The participants agreed to work to identify at least three opportunities to improve patient care through direct collaboration of provider agencies, and to follow up on those efforts.

“As a leader in the pursuit of integrated whole-person care, CHPW partners with SUD providers, health care leaders, and community stakeholders, as well as persons with ‘lived experience’ to offer services that address substance use disorders with the goal to help our members achieve long-term and sustained recovery,” Contris said.

“The roundtable created a unified, collaborative approach moving forward in offering, as close as possible, a seamless continuum of care for our community.”


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Collaborating with community to address disparities in diabetes care



Learning about members' specific needs is an important step in removing barriers to quality care. CHPW's Regional Care Teams (RCTs) address health inequities across Washington State, region by region, specific to the member communities where RCTs live and work to identify and reduce region-specific disparities, engage community, and develop projects and interventions appropriate to that area.

The North Central RCT (Chelan, Douglas, Grant, and Okanogan counties) identified that in A1C blood levels, a key measurement in diabetes management, were not as good in the Hispanic and Latine community in North Central Washington as other populations. After collaborating with Hispanic and Latine community partners and leaders in diabetes management in the region, the North Central RCT developed a survey to gather direct feedback from community members about what supports would help to manage their diabetes.

In September, the North Central RCT conducted the survey in person at *Fiestas Mexicanas*, one of the largest celebrations during Hispanic Heritage Month in the Wenatchee Valley. CHPW staff who live locally, know the community, and speak both Spanish and English, attended the event. Mayra Casique, Account Manager on our outreach team, Guadalupe Carpio and Richard Navarro, Community Health Workers, and Gerardo Perez-Guerrero, RCT Regional Manager, worked together to facilitate the survey, engage with community members, and report findings, gathering a total of 95 completed and validated surveys.

The results identified that community members want us to expand culturally-responsive diabetes care management approaches for our Hispanic and Latine members.

"A simple yet powerful belief drove our work on this survey—when communities are heard, they can be empowered. By understanding the realities of diabetes within Hispanic and Latine families, we can advocate for solutions that truly make a difference," said Perez-Guerrero.

Perez-Guerrero and Victoria Gersch, a CHPW Program Manager on the Quality team, presented the survey findings and recommendations at the 2024 *Latino Health Forum* presented by Sea Mar Community Health Centers, where CHPW was also an event sponsor, in December.

In its 19th year, the *Latino Health Forum* brings together practitioners, researchers, and community activists doing work with the Latine community across the state. "The *Latino Health Forum* is a great opportunity to connect with and learn from other leaders in the space, as well as exchange resources and best practices. The findings from the survey were valuable to share with the community at large, to get feedback, and identify directions we could go for future work," said Gersch.



“The *Latino Health Forum* is a great opportunity to connect with and learn from other leaders in the space, as well as exchange resources and best practices. The findings from the survey were valuable to share with the community at large, to get feedback, and identify directions we could go for future work.

Victoria Gersch
Program Manager

Incorporating member feedback



CHPW's Member Advisory Council (MAC) members

CHPW's Member Advisory Council (MAC) program took several key steps to increase representation and opportunity for our members to share their ideas, experiences, and concerns directly with us. Led by CHPW's Abha Puri, Member Experience Supervisor, Coraima Newkirk, Health Improvement Program Manager, Fathiya Abdi, Quality Program Manager, and Ugbad Hassan, Quality Program Manager, the MAC team established a robust feedback loop to move member insights into action and implemented several member recruitment and engagement activities to grow participation and community representation. Through cross-departmental collaboration and active engagement with CHPW's member-facing teams, the team successfully expanded the program from two councils to four by the end of the year.

The two new Member Advisory Councils expanded representation for our Medicare Advantage Dual Special Needs Plan (D-SNP), which provides coverage through both Medicare and Medicaid, to include those who speak Spanish and those who reside in urban areas of the state. These are in addition to the two existing MACs created in 2023: D-SNP members living in rural areas, and members on our Apple Health (Medicaid) plan. Across the four MACs, topics discussed at the quarterly meetings included navigating the health plan and benefits, CHPW's new Care Management team structure and care advocate roles, digital navigation, desired functionality of a potential mobile application, access to wellness and prevention, and access to mental health services.

Acting on the valuable learnings from these forums, CHPW gained key insights, leading to changes in 2024 and planned initiatives in 2025. Improvements in the year included changes in CHPW's Care Team structure, access to prior authorization information, and communication processes to better serve our members.

Looking ahead, CHPW will continue to prioritize member and community voices within organizational decisions and program structures. In 2025, we will be implementing a Community Advisory Council (CAC) program to further support our member and community engagement strategy and deepen our relationships with the communities we serve.

Medicare care model rollout

A new care model was launched in July 2024 to better support the needs of our Medicare Advantage and Dual Special Needs (D-SNP) members, those who are eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid coverage. The two-pronged Care Management program aligns care from the Member's Community Health Center (CHC) and CHPW's care teams through in-home visits, and multi-disciplinary care teams, allowing the teams to integrate programs and develop workflows to best serve the member's health needs.

Yakima Neighborhood Health Services, Columbia Valley Community Health (CVCH), and CHAS Health engaged in the first year of the program. The model was customized to the needs of each CHC. Yakima Neighborhood Health Services leveraged an employed medical assistant and provider to complete the in-home visits, while CVCH and CHAS Health utilized CHPW Community Health Workers (CHWs) to complete the in-home visits and facilitate a member's telehealth visits with their providers. CHPW also leveraged our CHWs to conduct in-home visits for new D-SNP and high-risk Medicare members who receive care at Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinics. The CHPW team is monitoring the program's outcomes as it expands and makes adjustments across the network throughout 2025.



Supporting D-SNP members in-person

In September 2024, a new D-SNP member, a 70-year-old woman living alone in the Yakima area, met CHW Paula Barraza in her home as a part of the Medicare CHC in-home visit program with Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic. The member had established care with a primary care physician and was taking her medications but was struggling with a new diabetes diagnosis after a recent liver transplant. She also needed help to access care for cardiac issues as well as knee replacement surgery. Additionally, the member needed assistance managing her housing bills and maintaining her power services.

Barraza assisted the member with scheduling a cardiologist appointment and followed up with the member's providers about the knee replacement surgery. She also worked with the member to ensure her needs at home were taken care of, including working with the power company to keep services on and assisting with low-income housing applications for several community support organizations.

Over several months, Barraza continued to provide coordination assistance with the different community support service providers and connected the member to CHPW's Diabetes Care Program and a Health Coach. As a result, the member completed vital post-transplant care appointments and established ongoing care management services across her health needs.

"In-home visits allow us to provide a deeper level of care, ensuring members feel heard and supported in their own environment, providing an opportunity to identify health and social needs that may go unnoticed in a clinical setting," said Barraza.

The presence of CHWs, and practice of in-home visits, in partnership with primary care providers, allow CHPW to work directly with members to best identify their needs and address barriers to health.



"In-home visits allow us to provide a deeper level of care, ensuring members feel heard and supported in their own environment, providing an opportunity to identify health and social needs that may go unnoticed in a clinical setting."

Paula Barraza
CHPW Community Health Worker

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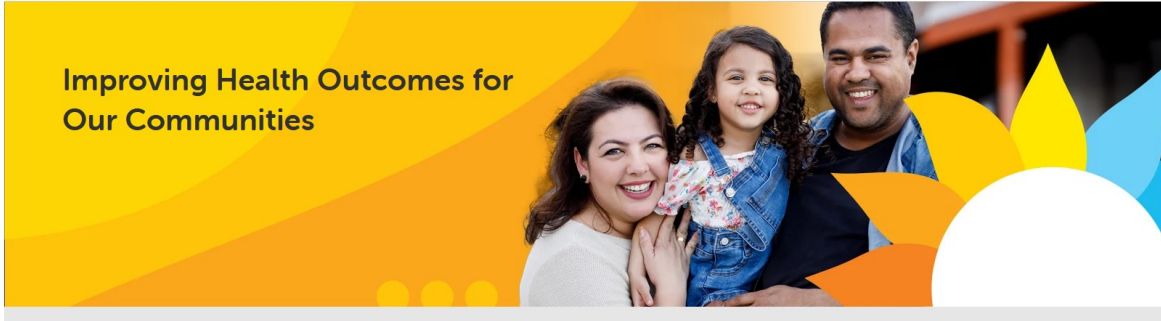
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Improving Health Outcomes for Our Communities

As a local health plan founded by Community Health Centers (CHCs) across the state, we work with community partners to ensure that all people—regardless of race, ethnicity, immigrant status, disability, age, gender orientation, or income—have a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible. Our work in 2024 demonstrated our recognition that improving health outcomes takes dedication and effort across all segments of our communities.

Extending access to quality care

CHPW was among four managed care organizations competitively selected by Washington State to offer Apple Health Expansion (AHE), a program to provide Medicaid-like health coverage to uninsured adults who do not qualify for federal health care due to their immigration status. As an early advocate for universal health coverage, CHPW staff partnered with community-based organizations (CBOs) and health care providers across the state to help community members learn about and apply to the program. The Apple Health Expansion coverage was launched on July 1, 2024, with limited funding to cover about 13,000 people. As a result of our work with community organizations and providers, more than 4,000 individuals enrolled with CHPW.

Our outreach and integrated care team members who are based in every region we serve, as well as CHPW's Immigrant and Refugee Health Program Manager, Kush Doshi, engaged CBOs and provider partners in preparation for this expanded coverage and served as a trusted resource, setting the foundation for ongoing support for immigrant and refugees' health care needs in Washington State.

Throughout the year, we provided 58 trainings with these partners and collaborated with 20 new community organizations serving immigrants and refugees in Washington. CHPW teams shared information about the new AHE program as it was being developed, and more broadly provided information on issues relating to immigrant and refugee wellness, health insurance, and resources for providers relating to culturally appropriate care.

We also teamed up with several CBOs to learn from their experience and understand the unique needs of their respective communities, including Central Washington Justice for Our Neighbors, African Community Housing & Development, Asian & Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington, and Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center.

Moreover, CHPW and the Immigrant and Refugee Health Alliance, which we helped to found several years ago, have enhanced our partnerships with several coalitions, including the Washington Immigrant Solidarity Network, Northwest Health Law Advocates, Protecting Immigrant Families coalition, and the Coalition for Healthcare and Language Access.

"Our work at CHPW will continue to support and advocate for immigrant and refugee lives throughout Washington State, creating pathways for opportunities to live a healthy and safe life," Doshi said, looking ahead.



CHPW's Connie Mam-Ching, Kush Doshi, Gerardo Perez, Cindy Heredia, Sandra Romero, and Hawa Elias with Dr. Someireh Amirfaiz of the New Americans Alliance for Policy and Research at the 2024 Refugee Community Building Conference.



“Our work at CHPW will continue to support and advocate for immigrant and refugee lives regardless of citizenship status throughout Washington State, creating pathways for opportunities to live a healthy and safe life.”

Kush Doshi
CHPW Immigrant and Refugee Health Program Manager

Triaging to improve health access for families in need



CHPW's Marci Bloomquist, our North Sound Community Support Services team, and Cindy Heredia touring AFC with CEO, Dustin Johnson.

The Anacortes Family Center (AFC), in partnership with CHPW, launched a pilot program to help families in need to enroll in a health plan and access health care services. The AFC provides shelter for women, children, and families experiencing homelessness, in addition to comprehensive services to achieve self-sufficiency.

In 2024, AFC approached Marci Bloomquist, CHPW Senior Regional Manager, to support two primary goals they had to reduce financial barriers to care for families in economic hardship:

- Connect families to health coverage and ongoing primary care
- Reduce reliance on costly emergency rooms and urgent care

CHPW's Cindy Heredia, Senior Account Manager on our outreach team, attended AFC's Life Skills classes each quarter where she provided information about CHPW Apple Health (Medicaid) benefits. She also worked directly with AFC clients to help them enroll in a health plan or answer questions about their current health plan coverage.

Heredia shared, "I am incredibly proud of this partnership. Working alongside such a dedicated team, we've been able to provide families in crisis with the health care they need and deserve. The most fulfilling part of this collaboration is knowing that by offering clear guidance and personalized support, we've been able to alleviate the frustration and stress that so many families face when navigating complex systems."

By partnering with organizations community members know and trust, we can better address health needs promptly and compassionately. For example, when one client was able to get immediate health insurance coverage and schedule a life-saving oncology appointment the following week, it showed just how crucial this partnership is in bridging gaps in care.

From enrolling individuals in health insurance to connecting them with primary care providers, this partnership has been a lifeline for many, giving them the stability they need to focus on their families and long-term health."

In 2024, 82 families were referred to the AFC/CHPW program, and more than 50 actively participated. Because of the program, participants had the opportunity to obtain health coverage, better understand their health benefits, and establish a relationship with a trusted medical provider, many for the first time in their lives.



“The most fulfilling part of this collaboration is knowing that by offering clear guidance and personalized support, we've been able to alleviate the frustration and stress that so many families face when navigating complex systems.”

Cindy Heredia
CHPW Senior Account Manager

Sharing insights nationally

Not-for-profit Safety Net Health Plans (SNHPs), like CHPW, play a critical role in providing health care for historically marginalized communities while recognizing and addressing the many obstacles that can stand in the way of accessing quality care.

CHPW was pleased to join the Association for Community Affiliated Plans (ACAP) in partnering with the Center for Health Care Strategies (CHCS) as they launched the second phase of the national Health Equity Learning Collaborative.

Focused on strengthening strategic planning based on local assets, context, and needs, and enhancing responsiveness to community and member needs with state agency priorities, the collaborative provides ongoing learning about best practices from health plans across the country.

The second phase kicked off in September and CHPW was among 10 health plans selected from a competitive applicant pool to participate. Ugbad Hassan, Quality Program Manager, Fathiya Abdi, Quality Program Manager, Coraima Newkirk, Health Improvement Program Manager, and Abha Puri, Member Experience Supervisor, represented CHPW to gather actionable insights from health plans across the country through the learning collaborative, and strengthen equity integration across organizational policies, programs, and practices.



CHPW's Abha Puri, Ugbad Hassan, Fathiya Abdi, and Coraima Newkirk at the ACAP Health Equity Learning Collaborative kick off.



"By centering accessibility in health care delivery, this collaborative effort represented a shared commitment to create more inclusive systems that can best serve all communities," Hassan said.

We brought two initiatives to the second phase to solicit peer feedback and guidance:

- Community engagement and implementation of Community Advisory Councils
- Enhancing care for immigrant and refugee members

The program provided structured guidance on navigating the Safety Net Health Plan Equity Assessment, a comprehensive tool designed to evaluate and benchmark current equity practices. Through this rigorous assessment process, the team identified key gaps and opportunities for improvement, laying the foundation for data-driven strategies that promote sustainable change.

Additionally, the CHPW team shared several valuable learnings with the group from CHPW's successes and opportunities in identifying and implementing equity-focused initiatives internally, addressing health disparities for our communities, and improving health outcomes for Washingtonians. CHPW had previously participated as one of 15 health plans in the first phase of the collaborative from July 2022 to June 2024.

By leveraging the strength of our peers, we can better serve our own communities. In sharing knowledge and resources, we're able to support efforts well beyond Washington State.

Reaching milestones in supporting CBOs

In its fifth year, CHPW surpassed the \$1 million milestone in grants awarded to community-based organizations (CBOs) that support historically underserved communities across Washington State.

In 2024, 25 CBOs were each awarded a \$10,000 grant totaling \$250,000 for the year. With the addition of this year's grants, CHPW has provided more than \$1.2 million to 81 CBOs across Washington State since 2020.



\$250,000
awarded to 25 CBOs by CHPW

\$1.2 million
to 81 CBOs across Washington State since 2020



Established to support CBO partners that provide critical and responsive social services to people from communities who often experience the greatest health disparities, each year grants are given to organizations working to improve health outcomes for individuals through a broad range of services. CHPW collaborates with these CBOs and others, as well as community resources to coordinate assistance to meet an individual or family's needs.

"Community-based organizations are vital in providing critical supports that contribute to the health of families and communities across Washington State, and we're grateful for the relationships we have with these remarkable groups," said Leanne Berge, CEO of CHPW and our parent organization, Community Health Network of Washington (CHNW).

"Advancing whole-person health is a mission that can only be achieved through collective efforts, and these grants are intended to support community partners providing needed services in tandem with medical care. We're grateful to these organizations for their dedication, perseverance, and their unwavering commitment to ensuring that all individuals across the state have the opportunity to live their healthiest lives."

CHPW Health Systems Innovations Program Manager Rachel Briegel (right) with Mockingbird Society Executive Director Natalie Lente at the 2024 Mockingbird Society Block Party fundraising event on October 10. The Mockingbird Society was a 2024 recipient of a community investment grant.



“Community-based organizations are vital in providing critical supports that contribute to the health of families and communities across Washington State, and we're grateful for the relationships we have with these remarkable groups.

Leanne Berge, Esq.
Chief Executive Officer
Community Health Plan of Washington/
Community Health Network of Washington

Robert Wood Johnson/U Chicago Sponsored Learning Collaborative

In September, CHPW, CHNW, and Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA) representatives met in Chicago for the Advancing Health Equity (AHE) Learning Collaborative Fall Convening as part of a 12-state learning collaborative. At the convening, members of the collaborative discussed the future of reducing disparities through care delivery and incentive programs. CHPW's team also shared lessons learned and insights from CHPW's Community Transformation Learning Collaborative Program, that was developed in 2021 as a part of this collaborative.



CHPW's Collen Haller, Victoria Gersch, and Kayla Salazar Poncet at the Advancing Health Equity Learning Collaborative in Chicago.

Programming to transform communities' health across CHCs

2024 was CHPW's first year of implementing the Community Transformation Incentive, a restructured continuation of the Learning Collaborative program, a pivotal program to improve communities' disparate health measures through partnership with Community Health Centers (CHCs).

Through CHPW's membership with the national AHE Collaborative, which brought together the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA), CHPW, and participating CHC partners working together to reduce health disparities, we created the Equity Learning Collaborative (ELC) program in 2021. This program provided upfront capacity funds to CHCs to support the goals of the program.

In 2024, CHPW's Quality team launched the redesigned and renamed program marking a significant shift from capacity building to action aimed to incentivize improved health outcomes. Nineteen CHCs participated, an increase from the previous 15 who had participated in the earlier iteration of the program. As a part of the program, each CHC attended three learning sessions that covered key equity topics, met with cohorts comprised of CHPW staff and CHC peers, and completed three cultural responsiveness assessment reports, covering language assistance, equity data, and disparities analysis.

Each CHC received \$50,000 in funding to use towards projects to reduce disparities and improve health outcomes more universally for their underserved populations. Of the many accomplishments made by participating CHCs in 2024, notable efforts included:

- Improving access to bilingual staff
- Implementing a patient navigator program
- Launching an in-house legal program
- Hiring and training Community Health Workers (CHWs)
- Supporting the opening of The Way Station's Hygiene Center

"This program was a powerful way to bring CHCs together to collaborate, share resources and lessons learned, and strengthen our knowledge and ability to improve the health of our diverse communities." Victoria Gersch, Quality Program Manager, explained.

As members of the collaborative driving programs like the Community Transformation Incentive Program, CHPW, CHCs, and the HCA are developing the next generation of Medicaid models to reduce health disparities in all communities across the state. This work is an integral part of CHPW's broad quality improvement program designed to improve the health of all its members.



“This program was a powerful way to bring CHCs together to collaborate, share resources, and lessons learned, and strengthen our knowledge and ability to improve the health of our diverse communities.

Victoria Gersch
Program Manager



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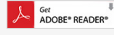
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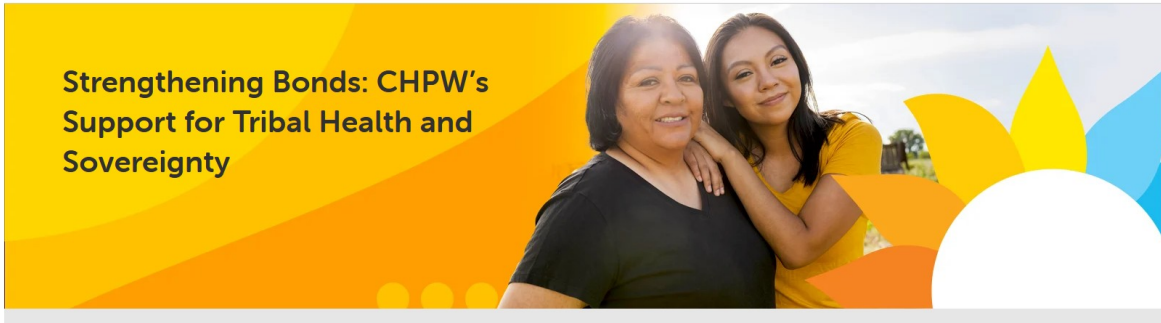
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Strengthening Bonds: CHPW's Support for Tribal Health and Sovereignty

American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) communities face numerous health disparities compared with other populations, including higher rates of chronic diseases, lower life expectancy, and limited access to health care services.

As an organization dedicated to improving health outcomes for all populations, CHPW is committed to supporting the health care delivery systems for Washington State's 29 federally recognized Tribes.

Rooted in a deep respect for the history, traditions, and self-determination of Indigenous peoples, CHPW aims to foster culturally responsive care and improve access to health services in AI/AN communities by partnering with Tribal and community organizations.

"CHPW's steadfast support for Tribal health care is a fundamental aspect of our overarching mission to deliver accessible and high-quality health care services. We prioritize meeting our members in their own environments, ensuring that health care is not only available but also culturally relevant and responsive to their needs," said Theresa Hattori, CHPW's Tribal Affairs Administrator and an enrolled citizen of the Muscogee Nation.

"For those who identify as Native American or Alaska Native, we offer comprehensive coverage for their health care services, whether they choose to visit a Tribal Health provider or one of our other extensive network providers," Hattori said.



Addressing health disparities

In the Greater Columbia region, CHPW's regionally based care team worked on an initiative to address health disparities among Apple Health (Medicaid) recipients who identify as American Indians or Alaska Natives.

The project sought to understand why our health care system has not been effective in supporting AI/AN members with controlling their A1C levels, which are a key indicator of blood glucose (sugar) levels and a crucial test for diagnosing and managing diabetes.

The team reviewed existing programs and resources and met with staff from Yakima Valley Farm Workers Clinic, which is one of CHPW's partner Community Health Centers, to better understand potential barriers to care.

Importance of 'culturally inclusive' materials

The team identified opportunities to leverage culturally inclusive educational materials, clinical trainings, and local community resources available through the Indian Health Service, the federal agency providing health care services to Native American and Alaska Native people, as well as other partners.

The team also developed an educational toolkit for internal and external providers to use when working with American Indian and Alaska Native communities.

"We learned that utilizing culturally inclusive educational material with the American Indian and Alaska Native population plays a key role in improving health outcomes," said Damaris Warfield, then-CHPW Regional Case Manager for the Greater Columbia Region, who was the lead for the project.

"This initiative also highlighted the importance of addressing whole-person care to support our American Indian and Alaska Native members."



"We learned that utilizing culturally inclusive educational material with the American Indian and Alaska Native population plays a key role in improving health outcomes."

Damaris Warfield
Former CHPW Regional Case Manager



Investing in communities

CHPW also partnered with several Tribal and community organizations to support their events, programs, and services as a sponsor:

- **Seattle Indian Health Board**
 - Adeline Garcia Community Service Awards
 - Indigenous Peoples Festival
 - SpiritWalk & Warrior Run
- **Unkitawa**

- Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & People - Family Gathering
- Re-entry Support Services
- Veterans Luncheon

- **Yakama Nation Health Heart Powwow**

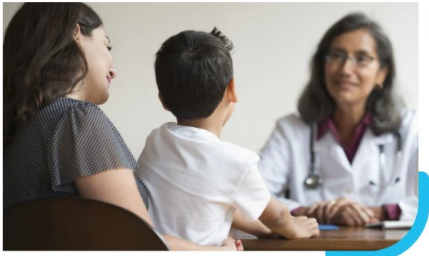
We also awarded \$10,000 grants, provided to community organizations serving historically marginalized populations, to each of four Tribal-affiliated organizations in recognition of their work and impact on reducing barriers to care:

- Tahoma Indian Center
- Unkitawa
- United Indians of All Tribes
- Urban Native Education Alliance



“ We truly appreciate CHPW’s commitment to helping organizations like ours continue making a positive impact on our communities. Your continued partnership means the world to us.

Edna Wyena
Wanapum/Yakama
Unkitawa Executive Director



Enhancing knowledge and skill

Other initiatives we undertook in 2024 as part of our commitment to upholding Tribal sovereignty and collaborating with Tribal communities to improve health outcomes:

Partnering with our Community Health Centers (CHCs): We offered trainings to CHC staff to enhance their understanding of Tribal sovereignty, the structure of Tribal government, traditional Indian medicine, and the unique challenges and strengths of the Indian health care system.

Provider orientation: We created a provider orientation presentation tailored specifically for Indian health care providers and staff, highlighting the various health plans, benefits, and services offered by CHPW. This presentation was delivered in person at several Tribal clinics to ensure direct engagement and understanding.

Improved billing process: We implemented an updated Tribal Billing Guide and we improved Tribal access to claims resources. This resulted in a dramatic reduction in the backlog of claims and better overall efficiency in our billing practices.

Staff training: We provided training for all our staff focusing on community, cultural awareness, Tribal sovereignty, Tribal government operations in Washington State, and the Indian Health Care System.

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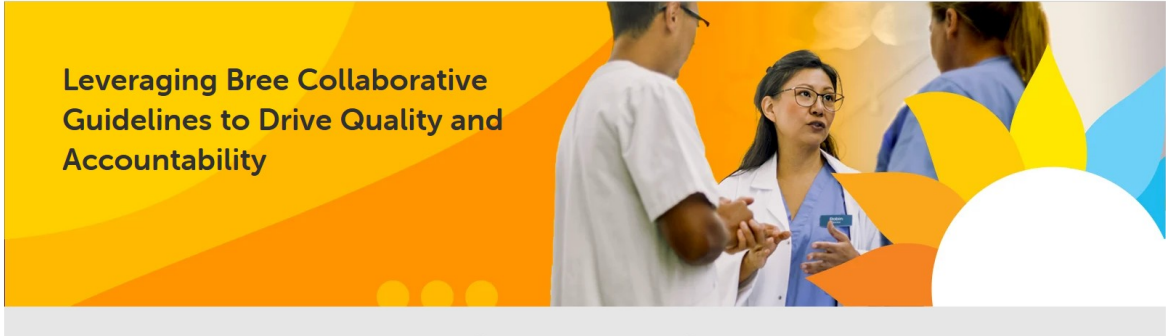
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Leveraging Bree Collaborative Guidelines to Drive Quality and Accountability

CHPW earned a total of 19 Bree Collaborative awards from the State of Washington for our work to implement best practices and advance health equity across health services and programs. The Dr. Robert Bree Collaborative was established in 2011 by the Washington State Legislature to provide a mechanism through which public and private health care stakeholders could work together to improve quality, health outcomes, and cost-effectiveness of care in Washington State, while reducing unnecessary variation in care delivery. CHPW has participated with the Bree Collaborative since its founding.

CHPW Senior Medical Director, LuAnn Chen, M.D., collaborated with teams across the organization to lead CHPW's clinical services self-assessment and implementation of Bree Guidelines, which are service-specific best practice recommendations defined by Bree Collaborative workgroups, made up of health care providers and health plans. Participating organizations are awarded for progress on implementing guidelines (Pathfinder Award) and for meeting benchmarks that demonstrate use of best practices (Trailblazer Award) each year.



CHPW earns 19 awards

As a result of cumulative efforts between 2020 and 2024, CHPW's 17 awards grew to 19 following the release of two newly established Bree Guidelines in 2024:

- Diabetes Care – Trailblazer Award
- Perinatal Behavioral Health – Pathfinder Award

Additional 2024 recognition included Trailblazer Awards in Primary Care, Reproductive and Sexual Health, Behavioral Health Integration, Colorectal Cancer Screening, Prostate Cancer Screening, LGBTQ Health Care, Opioid Use Disorder Treatment, and Suicide Care, among many others.

Dr. Chen and CHPW continue to actively promote Bree Collaborative standards among network physicians, providing quarterly outreach about CHPW Clinical Practice Guidelines and resources available for providers, which prominently feature the Bree Guideline recommendations.

By systematically promoting and holding ourselves accountable to high-quality, evidence-based guidelines, we can better support our members and providers in achieving improved quality of care.



“Grading ourselves against multiple Bree Guidelines, paying strict attention to evidence-based recommendations, and actively working to put these best practices into operation are important steps for us as a health plan to advance quality health care, and ensure our members get the best care possible.”

LuAnn Chen, M.D.
CHPW Senior Medical Director

Leveraging expertise

In recognition of the multiple Bree Collaborative awards earned in 2024, Chief Equity Officer Kelli Houston was invited to participate in the well-received Equity Panel at the virtual Washington Patient Safety Coalition Annual Patient Safety Conference held on October 15, 2024, hosting over 500 attendees from around the world.

The conference theme was “Safe Patient Care: It Takes All of Us” with a focus on what patients and providers can do together to improve safety, quality, and outcomes. Houston participated as a part of the Foundation for Health Care Quality Award Winners Round Table.



Kelli Houston
CHPW Chief Equity Officer

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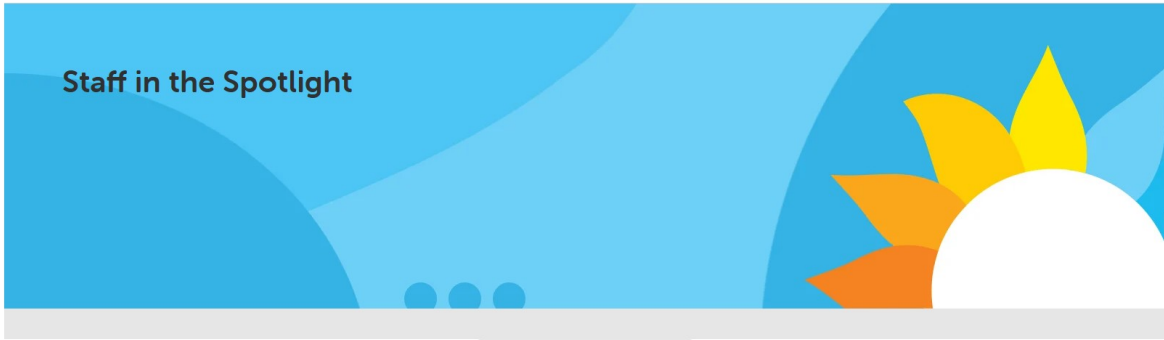
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Staff in the Spotlight



Stuart Battersby, Chief Financial Officer

Stuart Battersby, a certified public accountant with more than 15 years of experience in health care, joined CHPW in April as its new Chief Financial Officer, overseeing all budgetary and fiscal responsibilities.

Battersby brings his proven financial and operational abilities and leadership developed in many health care settings, including physician groups, health care startups, and a national Medicaid health plan. He succeeds Stacy Kessel, who retired after almost 17 years with CHPW.

What led you to join CHPW?

I want to feel good about the work that I do. For a finance professional, working with public health programs provides me with the opportunity to use my background, training, and expertise to drive financial results, while directly benefiting those people in our community who need help the most. I've worked in Washington State programs for more than a decade and always admired the CHPW model that, unlike any of the other health insurers, emphasizes support for community-responsive providers in care of its members.

CHPW collaborates with the members it serves to identify their specific needs, remove barriers, and ensure affordable care. In your experience, what opportunity do you see for making health care more affordable?

I think the biggest opportunity is encouraging people to engage with their insurance and health care providers, to take action, and to seek preventive care before conditions become chronic or more severe. The health of our members is our top priority, and I believe we can keep it a top priority while also employing strategies that modernize how we work with the health care delivery system. Our work with our Community Health Centers and other providers, state agencies, and community partners to improve access to affordable, community-based health care is leading to healthier and happier lives for historically underserved populations.

CHPW is a not-for-profit health plan that is governed by its Community Health Centers. What does that mean to you in your role as Chief Financial Officer?

Unlike commercial health plans, we are not incentivized to generate earnings per share, but by doing what is in the best interest of our members. Our work is governed by our Board of Community Health Center leaders to support the CHCs in delivering whole-person care to all those who need services, regardless of income or coverage. Our profits are reinvested into the CHCs for better care for all they serve. Ultimately, we are stewards of public funds, and our goal is to partner with providers to manage care delivery responsibly while improving the health outcomes for those we serve.

Do you have any favorite pastimes that you feel have helped shape who you are today?

In recent years I have been shaped by my children's experiences, especially by their interest in basketball. Basketball has provided me with a community in which I feel a sense of belonging. It reinforces that you get out what you put in, that hard work can beat talent, and that consistency and perseverance in the face of injustice can break down barriers and yield rewards.

Battersby served as Chief Operations Officer and Chief Financial Officer for Amerigroup Washington, Anthem, and ended his tenure as President and CEO of their Medicaid Health Plan in 2019. While there, he successfully managed several procurement strategies for Medicaid in Washington. Before joining CHPW, Battersby most recently served as CFO for Firefly Health, a virtual advanced primary care services company.

Battersby received his CPA certification from the Washington Board of Accountancy. He received his MBA from the University of Denver, and his B.S. in Economics from the University of Wales, Cardiff.



Betsy Jones, Chief Strategy Officer

Betsy Jones joined CHPW in November 2024 as its new Chief Strategy Officer, but she is no stranger to the organization.

Jones previously worked for CHPW/CHNW over a decade ago, integrating behavioral and primary care services, and in strategic planning and performance improvement.

In her new role, Jones leads strategic growth initiatives, opportunities for innovation, and collaborations with local, state, and national partners to advance equitable whole-person health care for communities in Washington State. Those critical partners include Community Health Centers (CHCs) and other providers, state policymakers and regulators, county and local governments, advocacy organizations, and community-based organizations (CBOs).

You previously worked for CHPW/CHNW over a decade ago. What led you to come back to CHPW in this executive role?

In the time I was away from CHPW, I had the opportunity to deepen my relationships and skills in the public and private sectors, while continuing to focus on mission-aligned work. I continued to interact with people here at CHPW; we were often at the same tables! And I consistently heard from community partners and state agencies about the value of the work CHPW does. When the opportunity arose to come back to CHPW as Chief Strategy Officer, I was ready to apply my experience to the important work we do here.

How has CHPW changed since you were last here?

The orientation to our mission and the dedication to our CHC member centers and the people we serve remain the same. What has changed? Some faces, of course, and the way we have grown and matured as an organization to adapt to an ever-changing environment.

Why is it important for CHPW to collaborate with external partners—CHCs, CBOs, state policymakers, local government, etc.—in our daily work?

CHPW is of the community, for the community. Our mission and history distinguish us from other managed care organizations in Washington State. Our position as the only not-for-profit health plan in Washington to provide managed care to Apple Health (Medicaid) members comes with a lot of responsibility—to be responsive partners, working closely with our CHCs, community-based organizations, and state and local government partners to amplify our collective work serving Washingtonians.

How do you see your role and skillsets as a leader at CHPW?

Our work to improve health outcomes and whole-person care for communities across Washington can only be successful through trusted collaboration with our external partners and others who have a key role in the health and well-being of our communities. I hope to play a leading role in strengthening these collaborative relationships and cultivating innovative programs to meet the future of health care in partnership with these stakeholders.

I hope my experience, relationships, and perspective from decades of work across the health care continuum can promote strategic decision-making, and an environment to create the opportunities and the collaborative partnerships we need to continue our work today and tomorrow.



Before returning to CHPW, Jones served as the Managing Principal at Health Management Associates for their Seattle-based consultants where she was responsible for supporting clients on large-scale projects that required diverse stakeholder engagement and cross-sector collaboration. Prior to that, she served as the Health and Human Services Policy Advisor in the King County Executive's Office and for the county government. She also worked at Sea Mar Community Health Center in Washington and in other nonprofit organizations.

Jones holds a Master of Social Work (MSW) from the University of Washington, and a Master of Business Administration (MBA) from the American Graduate School of International Management.

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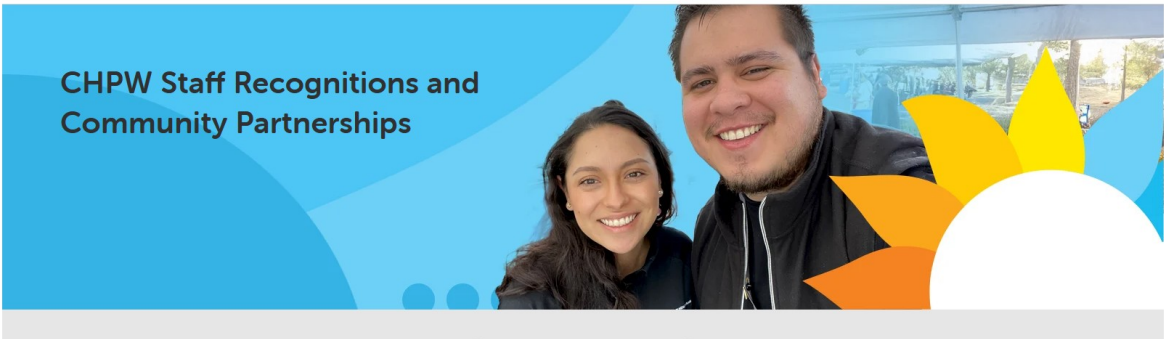


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CHPW Staff Recognitions and Community Partnerships

2024 Staff Recognitions

Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP), which provides a wide range of services to low-income individuals and families, nominated CHPW's **Bekah Bennett** and team for its 2024 Mission in Action award. SNAP recognizes local organizations, businesses, volunteers, and individuals who have gone the extra mile to help it continue its mission to provide opportunities for people in need.

Chief Executive Officer **Leanne Berge** delivered the opening keynote in January at the 2024 Washington State of Reform Health Policy Conference, in Seattle. The annual conference focuses on bridging the gap between health policy and political reality. Berge discussed how different organizations in the health sector can partner and collaborate to improve the health of all Washingtonians.



“CHPW isn't after the fanfare or the attention. They're truly doing this work because they care about the community and want to do what they can to better serve them.”

Spokane Neighborhood Action Partners (SNAP)



CHPW Business Development and Sales Director Jordan Strobeck with Business Development Manager Bekah Bennett at SNAP's 2024 Partner Appreciation Awards, on December 4, where CHPW and Bennett were presented with the Mission in Action Award.



CHPW's Victoria Gersch and Kayla Salazar Poncet presenting at the CMS Health Equity Conference in Maryland.

Kayla Salazar Poncet and **Victoria Gersch** presented on “Lessons from the Community Health Plan of Washington: Designing an Equity-Focused Payment Model to Support Capacity Building, Community Needs, and Accountability,” at the CMS (Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services) Health Equity Conference in Bethesda, Maryland. Their presentation was selected from over 600 applicants and showcased the multi-year collaboration between Community Health Centers (CHCs), CHPW, and the Washington State Health Care Authority to advance equity and address health disparities through equitable care practices. From 2021 to 2024, CHPW has invested \$3.2 million to support the CHCs in devising and implementing 65 equity-focused projects aimed at improving access and care for underserved communities, with a commitment to continue the program through 2026.

CHPW obtained **Health Plan Accreditation** from the National Committee for Quality Assurance (NCQA) for Cascade Select and now has accreditation for all three lines of business—Apple Health, Individual & Family Plans (Cascade Select), and Medicare Advantage. NCQA accreditation is a mark of distinction that indicates a health plan is dedicated to maintaining high standards of quality and service.

Community Partnerships

CHPW's Community-Based Organization (CBO) and Community Health Center (CHC) outreach team live and work in the regions they serve and engage directly with the community to help individuals understand their health insurance options and access care. Their close partnerships with local CBOs and CHCs, and their connection to the places they call home, provide ongoing opportunities for connections to our members, providers, and partners.

In 2024 our outreach team attended events across Washington State to share coverage information, setting up tables in health clinics, at health or resource fairs, and community baby showers.



CHPW Account Manager Tatiana Rebellion sharing information with community members at a February health fair in King County.



65 sponsored events with CBOs, CHCs and professional partners



2,862 total CBO and CHC events attended

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