Washington State’s Oral Health Connections Pilot Project

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Washington’s Apple Health Program

• Serve 1.8 million Washingtonians.

• Contract with 5 medical Managed Care Organizations.

• Effective January 1, 2019 will contract with Managed Dental Organizations.
Washington’s Apple Health Program and the Healthier Washington Medicaid Transformation

• In 2017, Washington was awarded a federal waiver to undertake a five-year Medicaid transformation project.
• Organized into ten regional service areas; each is served by a lead organization called an Accountable Community of Health (ACH). (Cascade Pacific Action Alliance oversees two RSAs)
• ACHs choose and are funded for projects that further transformation in their regions.

Medicaid Transformation and Dental Health

• From a list of eight possible transformation projects, ACHs selected four to eight projects that would best serve their regions.

• Of the eight projects, two were mandatory: 1. Behavioral health integration 2. Opioid use disorder.

• The dental category (Access to Oral Health Services) was selected by two ACHs.
The Medicaid Transformation and Dental Health (continued)

• Simultaneously, the state’s budget provided for an Oral Health Connections Pilot Project to be conducted in three counties, none of which are within the ACH regions who chose a dental project category.

• The selection of counties for this pilot was based on readiness to participate, and the number of eligible clients.

2017 Budget Proviso Language

$500,000 of the general fund—state appropriation for fiscal year 2019 and $500,000 of the general fund—federal appropriation are provided solely for the authority to implement the oral health connections pilot project...the authority shall work in collaboration with Washington Dental Service Foundation (now ARCORA) to jointly develop and implement the program. **The purpose of the three-year pilot is to test the effect that enhanced dental benefits for adult Medicaid clients with diabetes and pregnant women have on access to dental care, health outcomes, and medical care costs. The authority must model the pilot on the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry program.** The pilot program must include enhanced reimbursement rates for participating dental providers, and an increase in the allowable number of periodontal treatments to up to four per calendar year. Diabetic or pregnant adult Medicaid clients who are receiving dental care within the pilot region(s), regardless of location of the service within the pilot region(s), are eligible for the increased number of periodontal treatments. The Washington Dental Service Foundation (now ARCORA) shall partner with the Authority and provide wraparound services to link patients to care. The authority and Washington Dental Service Foundation shall jointly develop the program.
Context of the Proviso

- “Enhanced benefits”
  - Four periodontal visits per year, standard benefit is one per year.
  - Enhanced benefits available if provided in one of three pilot counties.
  - DentistLink Referral Tool.

- ABCD Program
  - Developed in the early 1990s with WA Dental Foundation, now known as ARCORA, for Apple Health clients ages 0 – 5.
  - Providers (both physician and dental) trained in infant oral health receive enhanced reimbursement.
  - Outreach services provided by community organization.
  - Dental Champions identified and supported.

Design of the Pilot

Dentists:
- Are trained and receive certification. Designation is loaded into payment system.
- Receive higher payment for pregnant women, adult patients with diabetes insured by Apple Health.

Referral System:
- Medical Provider
- Dental MCO Referral System
- DentistLink
- Patient
- Medical Provider
Progress to Date

• Established HCA/ARCORA partnership and work group.

• Program design, communications and launch activities.

• Engaged partners – an Aging and Long Term Services organization (ALTCEW of Spokane County), Spokane Regional Health District (SRHD), and a local community health collaboration (CHOICE serving Thurston, Cowlitz Counties.)

Progress to Date cont.

• Engaged MCOs, partner health care delivery systems, clinical advisory workgroup on outreach and education.

• Designed provider training partnering with the University of Washington.

• Secured an evaluator for the pilot, outlined scope of work.

• Conducted dental provider outreach (ongoing.)
Launch and Evaluation

• Launch date: January 1, 2019.

• A three year duration.

• Goals: Test the effect enhanced dental benefits have on: access to dental care, health outcomes, and medical costs.

Launch and Evaluation cont.

• Evaluator: Research Data and Analysis (RDA) Division within Washington’s Department of Health and Human Services.

• Design: will utilize Medicaid medical and dental utilization, expenditure data.

• Additional (qualitative) evaluation conducted by Spokane Regional Health District.
Next Steps

• Continued work on outreach, design and policy.

• CR101 in process to develop rules.

• Beginning development of the billing guide.

• Progressing with the State Plan Amendment (SPA) for CMS.

• Drafting report to the legislature.

Questions?