




Building Changes is working to build cross-sector partnerships between housing and homelessness focused communities and health focused communities. This glossary is meant to assist housing and homelessness agencies to participate in conversations about health reform in Washington State.

ACA – Affordable Care Act: complete name is Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. Public Law 111-148 enacted March 23, 2010; also referred to as national health care reform or Obamacare.

 **ACH – Accountable Community of Health:** a regionally governed, public-private collaborative tailored by the region to align actions and initiatives of a diverse coalition of participants to achieve healthy communities and populations. Nine ACHs are in the planning phase.

ACO – Accountable Care Organization: a group of health care providers that provides coordinated care to an assigned population of patients; characterized by a payment and care delivery model that seeks to tie provider reimbursements to quality metrics and reductions in the total cost of care.

 **Apple Health:** the name of Medicaid in Washington State.

Behavioral Health: mental health and/or substance abuse prevention, treatment and recovery services.

Commercial Insurance: unsubsidized insurance, i.e. employer sponsored. Typically provides higher reimbursement rates to providers than Medicaid or Medicare.

Community Health Center: see FQHC.

Community Health Worker: a frontline public health worker who is a trusted member of and/or has an unusually close understanding of the community served. This trusting relationship enables the CHW to serve as a liaison/link/intermediary between health/social services and the community to facilitate access to services and improve the quality and cultural competence of service delivery¹. Also known as community health advisor, outreach worker,

community health representative, promotor/a/promotores de salud, patient navigator, peer counselor, lay health advisor, peer health advisor, and peer leader.

CMS – Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services: agency within U.S. Department of Health & Human Services responsible for administration of Medicare, Medicaid, and Children’s Health Insurance Programs.


 **DOH – Department of Health:** state agency responsible for public health functions.

ED – Emergency Department: aka Emergency Room. ED is widely used in the health care delivery system.

EHB – Essential Health Benefits: 10 benefit categories established in the Affordable Care Act that must be covered by Medicaid and qualified health plans sold on the exchange starting in 2014.


Fee-for-Service: a method in which doctors and other health care providers are paid for each service performed. This model is sometimes thought to promote volume of care over quality.

FQHC – Federally Qualified Health Center: federally funded nonprofit health centers or clinics that serve medically underserved areas and populations; also known as Community Health Centers (CHC). They receive funds through HRSA.

 **HBE – Washington Health Benefits Exchange:** the independent entity that manages Washington’s health insurance exchange and online portal, wahealthplanfinder.org.

 **HCA – Health Care Authority:** state agency that administers Apple Health.

¹ American Public Health Association

 = Washington specific

Health Care Delivery System: organizations that provide direct patient care including hospitals, community health centers, nursing homes, physician groups, etc. Used to distinguish this field from the public health field.

Health Insurance or Benefit Exchange: an online marketplace where individuals, families and small businesses can compare and purchase health insurance and access premium subsidies and public programs such as Medicaid. Washington manages its own exchange, wahealthplanfinder.org, but other states use the federal exchange, healthcare.gov.

HRSA – Health Resources and Services

Administration: agency of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services responsible for improving access to health care and strengthening the health care workforce.

In-Person Assister: also called navigators; typically employed by community based organizations to assist individuals to enroll in health insurance. You can find one on wahealthplanfinder.org.

Managed Care: A health delivery system that seeks to control access to and utilization of health care services both to limit health care costs and to improve the quality of the care provided. Managed care arrangements typically rely on primary care physicians to act as “gatekeepers” and manage the care their patients receive.

MCO – Managed Care Organization: the private or non-profit insurance companies that operate Medicaid under contract with the Health Care Authority. They receive a monthly payment per member and are required to manage their care. Current MCOs are Molina, Community Health Plan of Washington, Coordinated Care, United, Columbia United Providers, and Amerigroup.

Medicaid: state-administered health insurance program for low-income families and children, pregnant women, the elderly, people with disabilities, and other adults. The federal government provides a portion of the funding for Medicaid and sets guidelines for the program. Called Apple Health in Washington.

Medicaid Expansion: an option for states to expand the eligibility of Medicaid. Because Washington has taken advantage of this expansion, families or individuals with income at or below 138% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL) are now eligible.

Medicare: a federal health insurance program for people who are age 65 or older and certain younger people with disabilities.

Primary Care: health care services that cover prevention, wellness, and treatment for common illnesses.


Public Health: a field that seeks to improve lives and the health of communities through the prevention and treatment of disease and the promotion of healthy behaviors such as healthy eating and exercise.

QHP – Qualified Health Plan: health plan certified as meeting all state and federal requirements to offer health insurance on a health insurance exchange.

 **SHCIP – State Health Care Innovation Plan:** state plan for health reform, titled Healthier Washington.

SIM – State Innovation Model: \$65 million grant from CMS to implement Healthier Washington plan.

Waiver: a vehicle states can use to test new or existing ways to deliver and pay for health care services in Medicaid and the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP).

 **Washington Healthplanfinder:** official name of Washington's health insurance exchange, www.wahealthplanfinder.org.

Helpful links

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Kaiser Family Foundation Health Reform Glossary:
<http://kff.org/glossary/health-reform-glossary>

HealthCare.gov Glossary:
<https://www.healthcare.gov/glossary/>

To read other briefs in the “*Connecting the Dots*” series, see:

<http://buildingchanges.org/library-type/reports/item/755-connecting-the-dots-between-housing-homelessness-and-health-care>