

Behavioral Health Organization Fact Sheet

What are Behavioral Health Organizations?

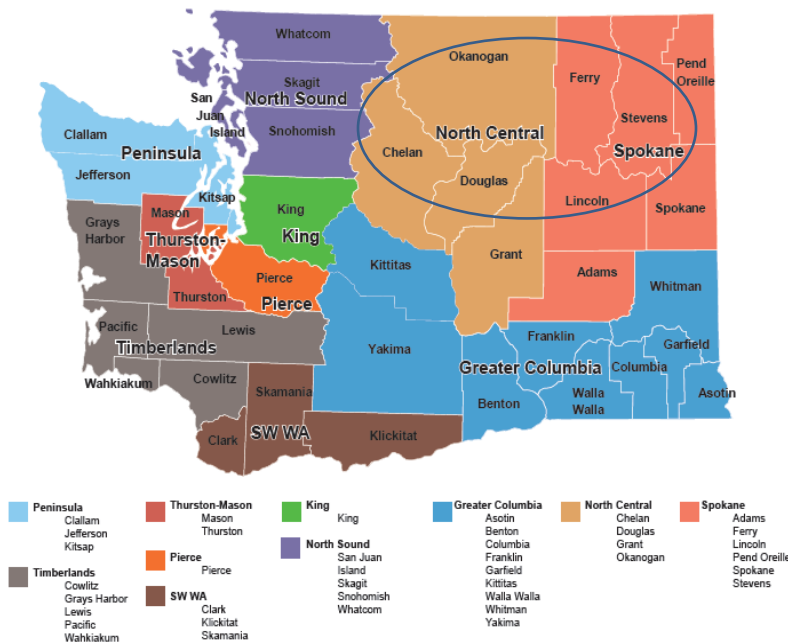
State law created Behavioral Health Organizations (BHOs) to purchase and administer public mental health and substance use disorder services under managed care. BHOs are single, local entities that assume responsibility and financial risk for providing substance use disorder treatment, and the mental health services previously overseen by the Regional Service Networks (RSNs) including inpatient and outpatient treatment, involuntary treatment and crisis services, jail proviso services, and services funded by the federal block grants. DSHS will begin the contracting process in 2015 for services starting April 2016.

Where are BHOs located?

BHOs will be located within newly formed Regional Service Areas. For the most part, there will be one BHO per Regional Service Area. One exception will be in Eastern Washington, where North Central and Spokane RSAs will constitute one BHO.

What Are Regional Service Areas and where will they be located?

Regional Service Areas (RSAs) define new geographical boundaries for the state to purchase behavioral and physical health care through managed care contracts. RSAs are geographic regions; they are NOT administrative authorities in themselves. RSAs were authorized in 2014 legislation and they include contiguous counties, contain at least 60,000 people on Medicaid, possess an adequate number of health care providers, and reflect natural and behavioral health service referral patterns. The Department of Social and Health Services and the Health Care Authority jointly designated them in November, 2014. Health Care Authority will contract with managed care health plans to provide physical healthcare within these regions.



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What does the state hope to accomplish with BHOs and RSAs?

- To increase access to appropriate and effective mental health services and substance use disorder treatment for people with Medicaid and of all ages
- To help behavioral and physical healthcare better meet the needs of the “whole person” and to remove barriers between the disciplines
- To improve how financial resources are managed

Are there other ways that the state may change how behavioral and physical health care are delivered?

Yes. While most RSAs will offer services through BHOs, a couple of RSAs may choose to have the state contract with managed care health plans to purchase and administer mental health, substance use disorder, and physical healthcare in a combined benefit. These areas are referred to as “Early Adopters”. In these regions there will be no BHO and no RSN. The Health Care Authority will hold the contracts with the managed care health plans- not the Department of Social and Health Services. More information about this model is available at the links below.

Where can I get more information?

BHO Development Webpage:

<https://www.dshs.wa.gov/bhsia/division-behavioral-health-and-recovery/developing-behavioral-health-organizations>

BHO Questions Mailbox:

BHOtransition@dshs.wa.gov

Health Care Authority’s Integrated Behavioral and Physical Health Purchasing:

http://www.hca.wa.gov/hw/Pages/integrated_purchasing.aspx

HCA Early Adopter Questions Mailbox:

EarlyAdopterQuestion@hca.wa.gov

