

## Waiver Project Proposal Recommendation

Approved by the Governing Body on February 12, 2016

### Framing this document:

The North Sound Accountable Community of Health offers these comments to the Health Care Authority's Medicaid Transformation Team as they accept public comment on the 177 waiver project proposals submitted. We join Better Health Together and Cascade Pacific Action Alliance in reviewing proposed projects and offering our regional perspective.

The North Sound Accountable Community of Health (ACH) consists of individuals, organizations, and stakeholders committed to transforming our health systems to improve health, improve the experience of care, increase access, and lower costs for all residents in the North Sound Region. The North Sound ACH serves 5 counties in northwest Washington: Snohomish, Skagit, Island, San Juan and Whatcom. We share Healthier Washington's ambitions to transform health by: building stronger prevention and health promotion systems; focusing on community health; promoting the integration of physical, behavioral, and public health systems; and transitioning to performance-based strategies for health care payment.

As ACHs are the hub of innovation and health transformation activities, the North Sound ACH submitted 6 waiver project proposals that align with our regional priorities (62, 63, 64, 65, 95 and 99). We also reviewed proposals that aim to serve our region or may have alignment with other ACHs. We received 18 applications prior to our deadline and also reviewed 41 other projects submitted or endorsed by other ACHs or reviewed by partner organizations. We used the tool developed by our Interim Operations Work Group to evaluate these proposals.<sup>1</sup> While we realized that we could only examine a small portion of the proposals, it quickly became clear that organizations across the state submitted projects to address similar challenges or that utilize analogous approaches. This convergent evolution points to the benefits of strategically aligning efforts across the state.

The Medicaid Transformation waiver offers a unique opportunity to **systematically approach health transformation with an integrated approach**. Given the problems we currently face with silo-ed programs, practices and services, transformation efforts should learn from the past and begin with a strategic direction that leverages existing efforts and supports integration across sectors that influence health. Coordinating Entities, as indicated by their name, have the potential to strengthen regional efforts to improve health by harmonizing efforts.

For example, our review of projects identified at least 11 projects that focus on Care Coordination, at least 4 of which increase prenatal care coordination (27, 42, 84, and 158), one that builds on an existing state program (137) and others that aim to help patients navigate the complexities in current system (115, 124, 125, and 152). Within our region, Behavioral Health Integration (153, 2, and 55), End of Life Planning (114, 83, and 94), and Value Based Purchasing (54 and 85), and Housing (30, 38, 78, 147, 173, and 174) were also themes that aligned with our health priorities. While we lack the resources to conduct a thorough review of all proposals submitted to HCA, as you conduct your analysis we expect more themes to emerge.

To maximize the success of the DSRIP projects under the Medicaid waiver, the North Sound ACH encourages the Medicaid Transformation Team to prioritize projects that:

- foster connections between sectors

<sup>1</sup> North Sound ACH DRAFT Portfolio, pg. 48-53.

- align with regional priorities<sup>2</sup>
- address population health<sup>3</sup>
- build on each other to create momentum
- allow flexibility for local innovation
- integrate the silos of the traditional medical delivery system to support whole person health<sup>4</sup>
- create savings that can be reinvested outside of the delivery system<sup>5</sup>
- support a strategic plan for health improvement

Transforming the medical system to improve health requires both a strategic direction and an understanding of the potential alignment of energy from across the state. A well thought out framework with clear priorities are essential to improving quality and lowering the cost of care performance. We encourage the HCA to partner with ACHs to create clear criteria that aligns health transformation efforts across Washington.

The North Sound ACH applauds the HCA's open call for Medicaid Transformation project ideas from communities and individuals across Washington. As the HCA moves forward in waiver project selection, the North Sound ACH encourages the HCA to authentically engage with not only organizations from the Medicaid delivery sector but also with ACHs as potential coordinating entities that may be responsible for overseeing waiver projects<sup>6</sup> and with those who are served by Medicaid. We are happy to share additional thoughts and support the progress of this vital effort to create a healthier Washington.

The North Sound ACH Governing Body approved submission of this memo to the Washington Health Care Authority at the February 12, 2016 Governing Body meeting.

*For questions pertaining to this memo or other ACH matters please contact the North Sound ACH Project Manager: Lee Che Leong, [lpleong@hinet.org](mailto:lpleong@hinet.org). For more information about the North Sound ACH please go to [www.NorthSoundACH.org](http://www.NorthSoundACH.org).*

<sup>2</sup> North Sound ACH [initial](#) priorities from Regional Health Needs Inventory:

- Behavioral Health Integration and Access
- Care Coordination
- Addressing Health Disparities
- Dental & Primary Care Access
- Prevention
- Housing

Please see CCHE ACH report for priorities from other ACHs.

<sup>3</sup> [Medicaid Transformation Fact Sheet](#): "four key goals:

- Reduce avoidable use of intensive services and settings
- Improve population health on specific measures
- Accelerate the transition to value-based purchasing
- Ensure that Medicaid cost growth is two percentage points below national trends.

<sup>4</sup> Medicaid Transformation Application draft Pg. 4 and 29: "Washington expects that the ACHs' activities will reflect a more balanced focus leading to a richer set of community-based resources and tools that achieve whole person health."

<sup>5</sup> Please see [North Sound ACH Sustainability Recommendation](#) pages 84-86 for additional details.

<sup>6</sup> [Medicaid Transformation Waiver FAQ](#), pg. 5