Link to Care WA Program Overview

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Today's Agenda

- **Who are CHNW and CHPW?**

- **The Digital Divide & Digital Navigation**

- **Link to Care WA Program**

- **Success Stories**

- **Next Steps**

Link to care WA

Get Connected, Stay Healthy

About CHNW

- The Community Health Network of Washington (CHNW) represents 21 federally qualified health centers across the state of Washington.

- These community health centers (CHCs) provide primary care services to underserved communities, particularly Medicaid patients.

- Over 1,000,000 Washington residents receive care at hundreds of CHC sites across the state.

- CHNW is the delivery system for Community Health Plan of Washington (CHPW).

About CHPW

- CHPW is one of 5 managed cared organizations (MCOs) serving Medicaid in Washington and is the only not-for-profit health plan in the state.

- The missions of CHPW and CHNW are aligned to support equitable access to care for all patients in Washington, including telehealth services and programs.

- A major barrier to equitable access to healthcare is the Digital Divide and challenges with digital navigation.

The Digital Divide & Digital Navigation

The Digital Divide

The Digital Divide - the gulf between those who have ready access to computers and the internet, and those who do not.

Washington State[1]:

- **13%** of households do not have a smartphone
- **10%** of households do not have an internet subscription
- **5%** of households do not have a computer

Nationally[2]:

- **31%** of rural areas lack access to high-speed broadband
- **Only 46%** of patients utilize telehealth services

[1]U.S. Census 2020 https://www.census.gov/data.html
Total WA state households in 2020: 2,905,822

[2]Telehealth Equity Council https://www.telehealthequitycoalition.org/

The Digital Divide in Washington State

- Counties with a high digital divide index are more rural

- Populations most impacted by the digital divide are often poorer, older, and less educated than those living in low digital divide areas
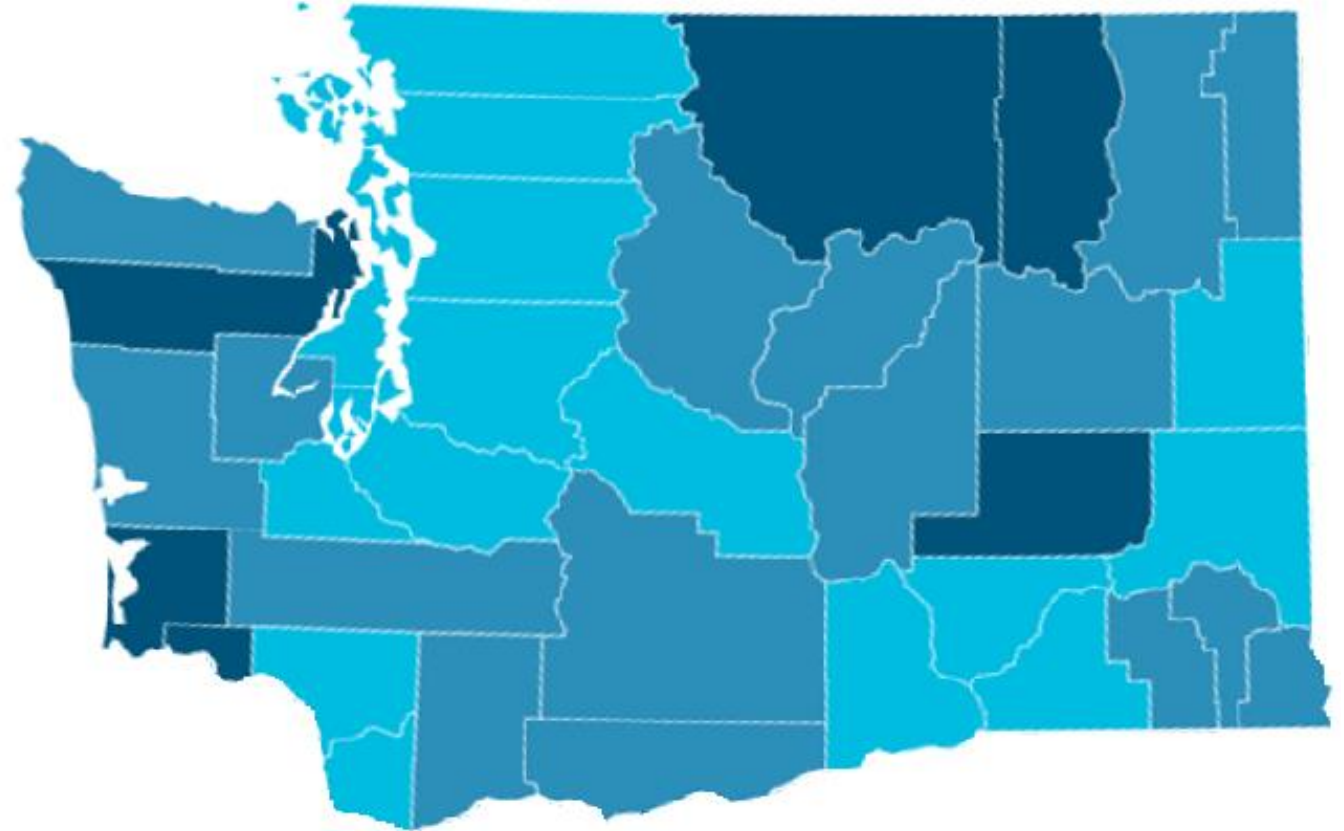
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2020 Digital Divide Index

This map shows counties and their digital divide level: low, moderate, or high.

Low | Moderate | High

Source: The State of the Digital Divide in the United States, Purdue University, 2022

Digital Navigation

What are digital navigation services?

Digital navigation services include ongoing assistance with affordable internet access, device acquisition, technical skills, and application support. - *National Digital Inclusion Alliance (NDIA)*

What does digital navigation look like in a healthcare setting?

- Patients learn how to use technology tools to access and connect to all available healthcare resources:
  - Downloading and using CHC patient portals and applications
  - Scheduling appointments and receiving appointment reminder calls and texts
  - Refilling prescriptions and receiving test results via a patient portal
  - Texting and emailing their provider or clinics
  - Receiving healthcare via a virtual telehealth visit
- When patients are connected to technology resources, health clinic operations can prioritize other clinical needs

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Get Connected, Stay Healthy

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Statewide resources for community health centers (CHC) patients

Grant awarded to CHNW for Jan. 2022 - June 2022 from the Washington State Department of Commerce, Office of Broadband & extended through June 2023

Hotline
Launched Feb 1

- Live Connection to State and Federal Resources
- Live Technical Assistance
- Personalized Education about Telehealth Services

Website
Launched Mar 1

- Self-Service Connection to State and Federal Resources
- Education about Telehealth Services
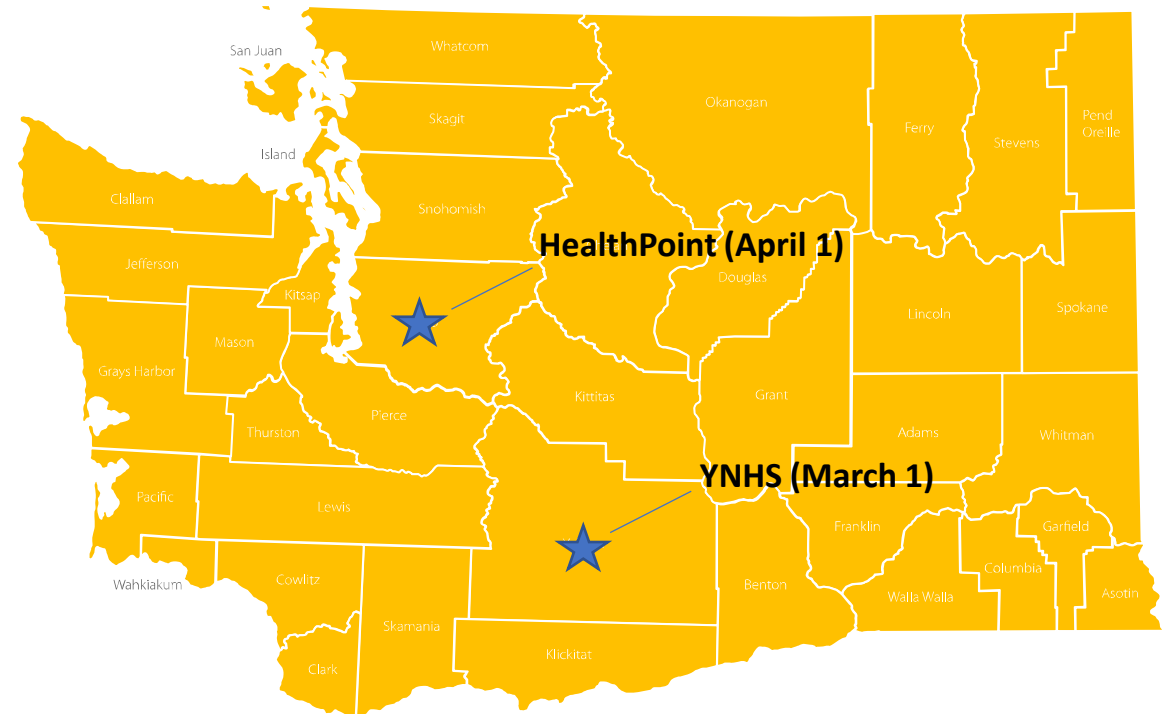- Education about Types of Technology

CHC Sites
YNHS & HealthPoint

- In-Person Support and Education
- Device Distribution
- Connection to Other Program Resources

www.LinktoCareWA.org

HealthPoint (April 1)

YNHS (March 1)

Nearly **800 smartphones** activated as of September 2022
Over **600 patient calls** to the Hotline
Over **3,000 website views** during the initial grant period

Hotline

Our Dedicated Call Center Team:

- Supports all community health center (CHC) callers – not just Medicaid patients, and serves patients of all health plans

- Offers technical assistance with technology access and use

- Connects eligible callers to federal and state programs for subsidized smartphones and broadband internet

- Helps patients prepare for telehealth visits

- Shares resources and provides great customer service

- **Includes bi-lingual staff and free interpretation services**

The hotline provides follow up call assistance for each caller.

Call **866-757-1832** (TTY: 711) M - F, 8 AM to 5 PM

Website

www.LinktoCareWA.org

Success Stories

Program Success Stories

Who has benefited from….?

Engaging with a CHC site

- Migrant farm workers
- Recently-arrived refugees
- Single-parent families
- People with complex medical and social needs
- People with mental and behavioral health needs
- MOUD individuals
- People experiencing a housing insecurity

Calling the Hotline

- Geographically and socially isolated individuals
- People with limited mobility
- People without reliable transportation
- People with ongoing digital navigation & education needs
- People needing connection to subsidized broadband or device programs
- People wanting to learn about technology and telehealth services

What support did they receive?

- Digital navigation support & digital literacy skills education
- Connection to other Link to Care WA program and community resources
- At a CHC site, a free smartphone with hotspot capability & pre-paid service for 12 months

Program Success Stories

There are also many unanticipated benefits of this program, including:

- Better connections to community and society
- Identification of other needs such as housing or employment
- Helps build relationships with other community partners
- Tool to attract and re-engage patients at CHCs

Next Steps for the Program

Next Steps: Program Expansion

- Digital Navigation Learning Collaborative in Fall 2022 will convene a group of at least 4 CHCs across the state

- Meeting with CHCs across the state to discuss how the program can benefit their patients

- CHCs are advertising the Hotline and website to their patients via promotional materials (available in 17 languages)

- Pursuing additional partnerships with organizations committed to addressing the Digital Divide and providing digital navigation services

- Continuing to advocate for the program and demonstrate its success

For more information about the program please email: Jamie.Robbins@chpw.org