

Coverage of Doulas

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WE NEED TO SOLVE? Improving perinatal outcomes.

Although WA ranks well in perinatal outcomes such as preterm birth, low birth weight, infant and maternal mortality, and exclusive breastfeeding there are geographic and demographic areas that have outcomes below the national average and Healthy People 2020 goals. A statewide advisory committee under the auspices of the Washington State Perinatal Collaborative identified several priority strategies to improve perinatal outcomes. These strategies are evidenced based and have the potential to affect high-risk populations.

WHAT IS THE PROPOSED SOLUTION? Cover doula services as part of a maternity bundle.

Doula services are part of a comprehensive perinatal services approach that includes evidenced based strategies such as group prenatal care, lactation consultation, case management, birth center delivery, and home visiting. Coverage for doula services must consider prenatal, labor, and postpartum services. Doulas will be integrated into the perinatal care team.

AS AN ALTERNATIVE, IS THERE A SCALED DOWN SOLUTION? Yes.

Only cover doula services during labor and delivery. Do not include doulas as part of a perinatal package. This solution does not meet the goals of HCA's major initiatives discussed below.

WHAT STAFF and/or FUNDING ARE NEEDED TO EXECUTE THE SOLUTION? None.

No additional staff or funding needed to research and analyze data to investigate reimbursement methodologies that meet CMS guidelines and rules and to implement the final solution. Administrative and technical support provided to the current program managers will make the process go quicker.

DOES THIS ALIGN WITH THE AGENCY'S EIGHT STRATEGIC INITIATIVES? Yes.

The **Medicaid Transformation Project** has performance measures related to reproductive health that encourage ACHs and providers to improve perinatal outcomes. The solution meets Transformation goals of rewarding quality of care and improving health equity by assuring that clients receive perinatal care that improves outcomes, especially in high risk communities and populations. Doula services are community based and integrate with the health care system meeting the goal of Healthier Washington to impact communities social and health well-being.

The **Value-Based Purchasing Roadmap** seeks to achieve the triple aim of better health, better care, and lower costs. Creating a maternity bundle that includes a variety of evidenced based strategies to improve perinatal outcomes uses reimbursement incentives to achieve these goals. Including doula services in a maternity bundle that integrates and coordinates with other services and programs currently covered (i.e. MSS, ICM, CHWs, HV) encourages providers to work together to improve quality of care and address poor outcomes.

FISCAL SUMMARY

Fiscal analysis and forecast has not yet begun.