



**Washington Health Benefit Exchange
Policy Committee Meeting Minutes
May 20, 2025 | 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

Policy Committee Members Present:

Hiroshi Nakano, Chair

Policy Committee Members Absent:

Len Sorrin

Karen Keiser

Washington Health Benefit Exchange Staff Present:

Spencer Budd, Senior Policy Analyst

Christine Gibert, Director of Policy & Market Strategy

Leah Hole-Marshall, General Counsel & Chief Strategist

Tara Lee, Chief Communications Officer Strategist

Julia Nestor, Policy Analyst

Kristin Villas, Senior Policy Analyst

Welcome and Introductions

Policy Committee Chair, Hiroshi Nakano, called the meeting to order at 11:00 a.m.

Approval of Meeting Minutes

The March 18, 2025 meeting minutes were deferred until the next meeting.

Public Comment

No public comment was provided.

Federal Responsiveness Planning – Leah Hole-Marshall, General Counsel & Chief Strategist

Leah Hole-Marshall presented on recent federal developments and their potential impact on the Exchange. She highlighted the risk of losing enhanced premium tax credits, which could significantly reduce enrollment. Leah emphasized the Exchange’s role in market stewardship, including efforts to eliminate tobacco rating and pursue other strategies to manage premium increases. She also noted the potential impact of federal proposals that could raise out-of-pocket costs for customers. Leah further addressed the immigrant health program and the possible expiration of the 1332 waiver, she stressed the need for state-level solutions and subsidies to maintain coverage.

Plan Certification Refresher – Christine Gibert, Director of Policy & Market Strategy, Kristin Villas, Senior Policy Analyst



Christine Gibert discussed the plan certification process, emphasizing its importance as a market stewardship tool for the exchange board. She highlighted the board's authority to certify plans based on specific criteria, including cascade care and customer shopping experience. Christine noted the upcoming timeline for plan certification, with discussions and preparations leading to the final certification in September. She also pointed out the potential to enhance quality requirements within the certification criteria to ensure customers have access to high-quality and affordable plans.

Kristin Villas detailed the quality aspects of plan certification, emphasizing the exchange's efforts to enhance preventive screenings and chronic condition management through quality improvement strategies and enrollee satisfaction surveys. She highlighted the alignment with state partners and the introduction of performance standards for measures like cervical cancer screening and antidepressant medication management. Kristin also discussed the importance of stratifying data by demographics to address healthcare disparities and the multi-year effort to collect race and ethnicity data from carriers.

Additionally, Kristin explored potential areas for expanding the quality program, including setting performance floors, leveraging financial incentives, and conditioning marketplace participation on quality performance. She drew inspiration from Covered California's model, suggesting that incorporating financial stakes and stricter quality requirements could drive significant improvements in the marketplace.

Adjourn

Hiroshi Nakano, Chair, adjourned the meeting at 12:05 p.m.