



**Washington Health Benefit Exchange
Navigator & Certified Application Counselors Technical Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 17, 2024
2:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.
Teleconference and Webinar**

NAV CAC TAC Members Present:

Bang-Tam Nguyen
Sara Abbott

Brenda Kelek
Tim Smolen

NAV CAC TAC Members Absent:

Carmen Olvera
Callista Kennedy

Ariel Pyrtek
Molly Morris

Washington Health Benefit Exchange (WAHBE) Staff Present:

Kelly Aaron, Navigator Support Manager Kristin Phillips, Senior Navigator Program Specialist
Alex Jonson, Senior Navigator Program Specialist

Roll Call – Kelly Aaron, Navigator Support Manager

Kelly Aaron began the meeting at 2:32.

Open Enrollment 11 Updates – Kelly Aaron, Navigator Support Manager

Kelly Aaron provided an overview of some open enrollment numbers including a new historic enrollment high of 272,000 customers enrolled in a Qualified Health Plan. The number of new customers enrolling through Washington Healthplanfinder is around 40% higher than in 2023 and more customers are benefiting from subsidies (tax credits and Cascade Care Savings) than ever before.

Kelly reviewed open enrollment direct email communications sent by the Exchange Communications team directly to customers. Kelly discussed reports that were made available to Navigators this open enrollment, including two new reports for Navigators to conduct outreach to their partnered clients. Kelly asked the committee if they felt these reports were adequate and if the Exchange could provide any additional reports to help Navigators connect and assist with their clients. Sara Abbott, stated the new November and December Enrollment report was helpful and that reports are worked by Navigators and Organizations that have the capacity to do so. Brenda Kelek also noted this report was helpful.

Immigrant Health Coverage Updates – Kelly Aaron, Navigator Support Manager

Kelly shared some preliminary enrollment numbers for individuals that are undocumented noting that the Exchange legislature and policy teams are working on creating a one-pager with updated



numbers to share externally. Kelly updated the committee on new Immigrant Health Coverage resources – PowerPoint Presentation for Community Events, Social Media Images and Poster in new languages, and Navigator Videos in five Latin American Indigenous Oral Languages.

Additional Updates – Kelly Aaron, Navigator Support Manager

Kelly shared the Exchange has onboarded a new Exchange Board Chair, Dr. Monica McLemore and a new Chief of Equity and Community Partnerships starting February 1, Manny Santiago.

Kelly gave the committee a preview of draft language cards and Language Identification Tool one-pager. Once finalized, resources will be shared with the Navigator Network. Kelly alerted the committee the Navigator Open Enrollment 11 Assister Survey has been released and some information will be shared with the committee in April.

Kelly noted for Winter quarterly training, Qualifying Life Events and Special Enrollments Periods, Conditional Eligibility Verification, and Taxes and Washington Healthplanfinder have been updated and compressed to offer refresher training. Full training decks will be available on LMS as a resource for Navigators.

Kelly discussed priorities for the 2024 Supplemental Session: Maintain *Washington Healthplanfinder*, Support Continuous Coverage, Make Equity Gains, Simply Plan Choice, Drive Affordability. Kelly let the committee know the Exchange has submitted HB 2361, a move to only offer standardized plans by 2027, to allow better plan comparison for consumers.

Standard plans are the highest value plans available to Exchange customers. Over 70% of customers are in standard plans.

- Deductibles are significantly lower than non-standard plans (average nearly \$1,000 lower).
- Coverage with a low copay for more services before the deductible is met – including primary care visits, mental health services and generic prescriptions.
- Allow customers to maximize available federal and state subsidies to make coverage more affordable.

Kelly opened the floor to the committee to ask if members wanted to share any thoughts or concerns if the Exchange were to only offer standard plans. Sara Abbott noted that most complaints stem from the public option plans having an inadequate network that accepts public option. Sara also stated there is provider confusion when they accept Cascade Care standard plans on not select plans (public option) – providers will turn away patients who are enrolled in a Cascade Care standard plan, the customer reaches out to their insurance carrier who states the plan is in network, so they are put in a frustrating loop.

Kelly opened the meeting for public comment and additional questions from the committee.

Adjournment – Kelly Aaron, Navigator Support Manager

Kelly adjourned the meeting at 2:56pm.