

THW billing guidance for CCOs



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Oregon Rural Practice-based
Research Network
www.OHSU.edu/orprn

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Agenda

- Background
- New traditional health worker (THW) billing guidance document review
 - THW Billing Guidance
 - Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit
- Eastern Oregon Coordinated Care Organization's (EOCCO's) THW program
- Good Shepherd's ConneXions THW program
- Questions

THW Billing Guidance document

Document contents

- **About traditional health workers:** training and certification, requirements for billing
- **Overview of Medicaid billing:** requirements, processes
- **THW billing:** approved billing codes for THW services
- **Payment models and Medicaid spending flexibilities:** Fee-for-service, value-based payment, in lieu of services, health-related services

THW Billing Guidance Document

Oregon Health Authority
Transformation Center
April 2025



THW Billing Guidance document: About THWs

- THWs are trusted individuals from their communities who may also share socioeconomic ties and lived experiences with health plan members. THWs provide person- and community-centered care by bridging communities and the health systems that serve them.
- **Traditional health workers (THWs) include:**
 - Community health workers (CHWs)
 - Birth doulas
 - Personal health navigators (PHNs)
 - Peers: Peer wellness specialists (PWSs) and peer support specialists (PSSs)
PSSs can be specific to families, youth, adult addictions or adult mental health
 - Tribal health workers

THW Billing Guidance document: Training and Certification

- Training and certification are required to be recognized as a THW in Oregon.
- To become a THW in Oregon, THWs must:
 1. Complete an **OHA-approved training**, qualify under the **legacy clause** or **receive reciprocity**
 2. Complete an OHA-approved **oral health training**
 3. Create an account and apply through **Oregon's Health Workforce Registry**
 4. Complete a **background check**
- Additional steps are required for THWs to bill Medicaid for covered services.

THW Billing Guidance document: Requirements for billing

THW requirements:

- Obtain a **National Provider Identifier (NPI)**
- **Enroll as a Medicaid provider** with the Oregon Health Plan
- **Enroll as a provider with your CCO**
- Arrange **clinical supervision** by a licensed health care provider

Health care service organization (for example, community-based organization or clinic) requirements:

- **Enroll as a billing provider** with the Oregon Health Authority
- Enter into an **agreement with a CCO** to provide THW services
- Offer **supervision by a licensed health care provider**

CCO requirements:

- **Receive, review and pay claims** for covered services provided by credentialed THWs
- Designate a **THW liaison**
- Submit regular **deliverables** to OHA on THW integration, utilization and payment
- Meet additional requirements for **THW networks and service provision**

THW Billing Guidance document:

Billing process

1. Health care provider provides service(s) to an Oregon Health Plan member.
2. Health care provider creates a claim for the services provided using billing codes to indicate the service(s) provided.
3. Health care provider sends the claim to the member's CCO or to OHA.
4. CCO or OHA reviews claim to ensure the services provided are covered for the individual.
5. CCO or OHA **approves** or **denies** the claim.
 - a. Approves: CCO or OHA sends payment to provider.
 - b. Denies: CCO or OHA notifies health care provider of denial. Health care provider can submit adjustment.

THW Billing Guidance document:

Payment models

Fee-for-service (FFS)

- CCO or OHA pays a set amount for individual covered services provided to an OHP member

Flexible services (FS)

- Medicaid spending program for non-covered services that complement covered services
- **Member-level:** cost-effective services provided to a member
 - Example: Post-partum doula visits beyond the number included as a covered benefit to improve health outcomes for parent and baby.
- **Community-level:** interventions to improve population health
 - Example: CBO provides non-covered THW services community wide to houseless individuals in a safe living environment.

Value-based payment (VBP)

- Range of payment models that incentivize high-value health care provision
- Typically relies on encounters rather than claims

In lieu of services (ILOS)

- Pre-approved, cost effective and medically appropriate substitutes to covered services
- Ability to provide services in alternative or non-clinical settings
- **Examples:** Peer providing skills training for managing mental health concerns in a community setting. CHW providing education for patient self-management of HIV diagnosis

Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit

- Document contents
 - **About traditional health workers:** scope of practice, THW integration, statewide THW efforts
 - **Potential funding sources for THWs:** Medicaid and Medicare, grants, fundraising
 - **Case studies:** EOCCO's THW program, Bridges to Health billing hub
 - **Resources:** Links to OHA and external resources, job description template, program cost structure template, documentation and billing templates

Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit

Oregon Health Authority
Transformation Center
April 2025



Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit:

Statewide THW efforts

- **OHA Equity and Inclusion Division:** Home to the THW program, which manages THW training, certification, THW resources and other requirements.
- **THW Commission:** Managed by the THW program, the THW Commission promotes the THW workforce. Advises and makes recommendations to OHA to ensure the program is responsive to consumer and community needs.
- **OHA Transformation Center:** OHA's hub for innovation and quality improvement, including spending programs and alternative payment models.
- **Oregon Health Plan (OHP):** Oregon's Medicaid program, administered by OHA's Medicaid Division.
- **Coordinated Care Organizations (CCOs):** Local health plans that manage benefits for most OHP members. Each CCO is required to have a THW liaison to support and advance the THW workforce.

Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit:

Potential funding sources

Medicaid and Medicare

- Government-run health insurance programs for specific populations.
- Oregon Health Plan (OHP) is Oregon's Medicaid program.

Grants

Flexible source of funds often available from private foundations, governments, businesses or health care organizations.

Fundraising

Non-profit organizations can raise funds from individual donors for meaningful work.

Braiding funding brings together multiple sources of funding to fund an overall program or service.

Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit:

Case studies

EOCCO's THW program

Key elements of EOCCO's THW program include:

- Guidance documents
- Policies
- Newsletters
- Meetings
- Trainings
- Convenings
- Targeted technical assistance
- Grants

Bridges to Health billing hub

Using PacificSource's programmatic payment model, the Columbia Gorge Health Council created Bridges to Health, a billing hub for CHW services across their community.

Billing hubs offer centralized approach to contracting and billing activities to reduce the administrative burden on service delivery organizations.

Sustainable THW Payment Models Toolkit: Resources

Links to OHA and external resources

Resources related to THW requirements, funding opportunities, and professional THW associations

THW job description template

Template job description with sample points for various THW positions

THW program budget estimator

- Excel document to estimate THW program costs and revenues
- Includes approved THW billing codes and fee-for-service rates to estimate potential program revenue

Documentation and billing templates

- Excel template for collecting data about THW services provided
- Sample claim form



eoocco

EASTERN OREGON
COORDINATED CARE
ORGANIZATION

EOCCO THW Billing

Hannah Briggs, MPH; EOCCO THW Liaison

EOCCO THW Billing Overview

THW Program Snapshot

Traditional Health Worker type	# in EOCCO network
Community Health Workers	128
Birth Doulas	17
Peer Support Specialists	152
Peer Wellness Specialists	5
Personal Health Navigators	2
Total	304

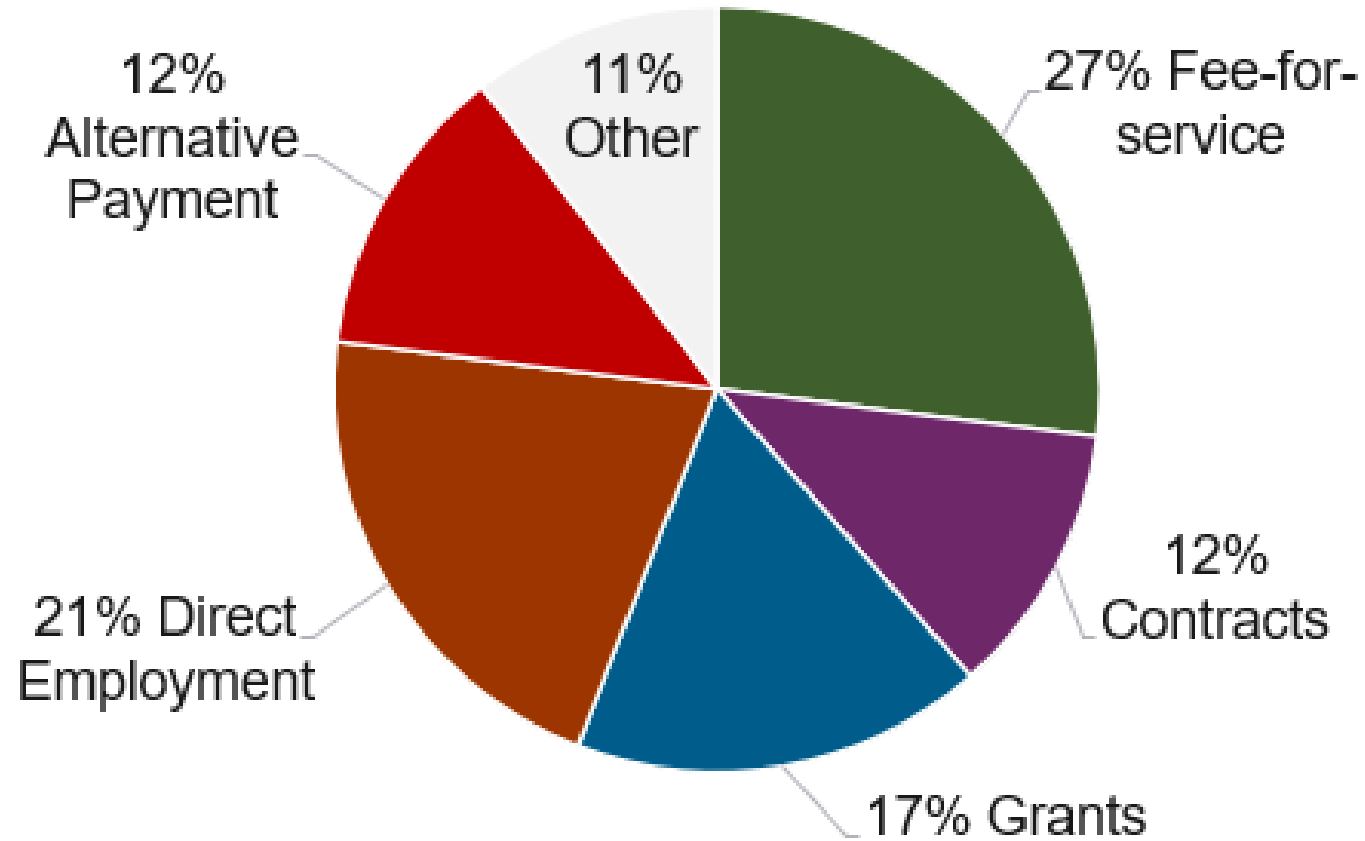
Encounter Data

- Over 84,000 encounters in 2024
- 342% claim increase during contract period
- 7.7% increase YOY (2023)

Network Expansion

- 304 THWs serving EOCCO
- 31% increase in THW network YOY (2023)

Primary THW Funding Source



68.5% CHWs
billing FFS

EOCCO's FFS Methodology

- THWs do not have to be contracted with EOCCO to bill for rendered services.
 - Must have OHA certification, DMAP enrollment.
- Provide concierge service.
 - Step-by-step guides and TA to support individual THWs, organizations in billing.
 - Guides developed to needs.
- Outreach and engagement is key.
 - Build partnerships with THWs, expand THW network.
 - Create new paths/opportunities for engagement.

Program Development

Rooted in community engagement and innovation

What are the billing requirements? Supervision requirements?

Who can bill? How?

What mechanisms can we use to make the process easier?

How do we work with non-clinical THWs?

“If I were a THW/THW employer, what would I want to know?”

- Billing for non-clinical services
- Utilization of THWs in clinic & community spaces
- Defining CPT codes, focus on “upstream”
- Providing 1:1 and group TA
- Other payment mechanisms (FS, ILOS)

Relationship Development

CCO: Supporting THWs as an integral part of a members' care team

- THW Liaison
- QI Team
- Health Equity Administrator
- PR Rep
- Claims
- Case management



OHA: Collaborating to guide next steps, support programs

- THW Program
- THW Commission
- Innovator Agent
- CPOP and ROC teams
- Transformation Center

THWs/Employers: Building to support sustainability, capacity

- THWs
- Supervisors
- Clinic managers, CEOs
- Coders/billers
- CBOs

Supporting THWs



Develop Guidance

- THW Quick-Start and Billing Guide
- On-demand recordings
- Regular webinars
- Clinic meetings



Create Informative Policies

- THW Integration Policy
- CHW Billing Policy, Enrollment & Reimbursement Instructions
- Doula Billing Policy, Enrollment Policy



Provide Engagement Opportunities

- THW Monthly Collaborative, Peer/Supervisor bi-weekly meeting
- Monthly EOCCO THW Newsletter
- Technical assistance
- CEUs/webinars

Key Learnings

1. Requires a comprehensive approach. Leadership must support involvement of teams/resources.
2. Relationship-building is the best investment.
3. This is time-intensive, and it needs to be.
4. Consistent outreach is necessary.



CONNEXIONS

PROGRAM

ABOUT CONNEXIONS

ConneXions is a FREE service provided by Good Shepherd Health Care System in Hermiston, OR to bridge the gap between health care and social needs for patients.

ConneXions consists of 6 certified Community Health Workers (CHWs) with nurse oversight.



SERVICES

Services that ConneXions offers include:

- Finding a PCP
- Transportation needs
- Assistance with housing
- Food resources
- Medication management
- Health education and classes
- Mental Health/Peer support
- Doula services
- OHP assistance
- Medical interpreting
- Work on several various grants



CARE COORDINATION

between patients and health care providers, social services, and other agencies.



ADVOCACY

includes coordinating support services provided, as well as visits with the PCP, CHW, mental and behavioral health services, and the patient / family / caregivers



PATIENT NAVIGATION

of health care systems, insurance, finding a PCP or specialist, and more

OUR CHW SPECIALTIES

In addition to their CHW certifications, ConneXions CHWs also specialize in many other areas.

Current specialties:

- 2 Doulas
- 2 PWS
- 3 End of Life Doulas
- 2 Lactation Counselors
- 2 Certified Medical Interpreters
- 1 tobacco cessation counselor
- 4 child passenger safety technicians
- 2 OHP assisters
- 2 Self Defense instructors
- 2 Better Bones & Balance instructors
- 2 Healthy Eating Everyday coaches
- 2 Tai Chi instructors

In each specialty, there is at least one bilingual CHW.



PROGRAM

2014

ConneXions is founded. Partially funded by EOCCO grant.

2019

ConneXions has grown to 6 CHWs, facilitates weekly MDT meetings for patient care coordination, and assists in-person at the clinics and ED.

2020

Jessica and Brittany took over in ConneXions management. Implemented new and updated processes and offered specialty certifications to CHWs.

TIMELINE

2023

Trained ConneXions' first Peer Wellness Specialist; helps patients with mental and behavioral health needs & facilitates local teen mental health group.

2024

ConneXions CHWs are certified in 8 different areas and offer 4-6 different classes to community members. Services continue to change and evolve with the needs of the community.

2025

Goal to continue expanding the program and hire additional THW/CHWs as needed.



WHY CHWs?

- Improved access to health care services.
 - Increased health and screening.
 - Better understanding between community members and the health & social service system.
- Enhanced communication between community members and health providers.
 - Increased use of health care services.
- Improved adherence to health recommendations.
 - Reduced need for emergency and specialty services.



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Questions?



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Thank you!

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