Care Connect Washington

The Challenge

Meeting chronic and emergency public health challenges in every community.

Chronic public health challenges such as food insecurity and the lack of affordable housing continue to threaten the health and well-being of Washington residents–especially those from institutionally underserved or excluded communities. This fact has been underscored by recent events, including the COVID-19 pandemic and an extremely challenging fire season.

We need a new public health approach that helps us address ongoing community challenges every day but is also flexible enough to quickly scale up during a public health emergency.

The Solution

Care Connect Washington—an integrated, scalable client-centered support system.

Care Connect Washington is an innovative model well suited for meeting everyday community and public health priorities as well as rapid crisis response needs. **Care Connect** is designed to assist individuals and families using a combination of community-based, human-centered supports in tandem with a state infrastructure designed to amplify local efforts.

In this coordinated system, each partner has a role:

- **A regional Hub** acts as the anchor point for coordinated support across the health and wellness continuum.
- **Local Care Coordinating Agencies** (CCAs) provide the community-based workforce that grounds each client's experience in a human and trusted connection.
- **The state** supports local efforts and statewide partners by providing a rich set of interconnected assets:
    - Comprehensive statewide **resource directory.**
    - Technology that supports a shared **community health record.**
    - Statewide **call center.**
    - **Braided network of state and local resources** to help meet clients' health-related social needs.
    - Trusted **community-based workforce.**

How It Works

Care Connect is based on five primary action points.

Identify—*Referrals come into the* ***Care Connect*** *system.* Referrals can come from a wide variety of sources including 211, social and economic service providers, public health or health care systems, community partners, individuals, or other channels.

Assess—*Referrals triaged and referred to* ***regional Hubs****.* Using a set of standard tools, Hubs assess health and social needs to identify supports or services that might be helpful to a client.

Support—*Clients partner with a community-based worker.* This may be a Community Health Worker (CHW) peer specialist or other resource staff operating out of a local CCA. Together, they create a care plan and work to resolve the client's needs.

Connect—*Clients are connected to other resources*. For example, they may also receive a warm hand-off to longer-term services or programs that are able to support their ongoing health and social needs.

Measure—*Monitor, evaluate and optimize outcomes*. This will include dashboards and reports to help with continuous quality improvement, as well as regular evaluation and impact assessment.

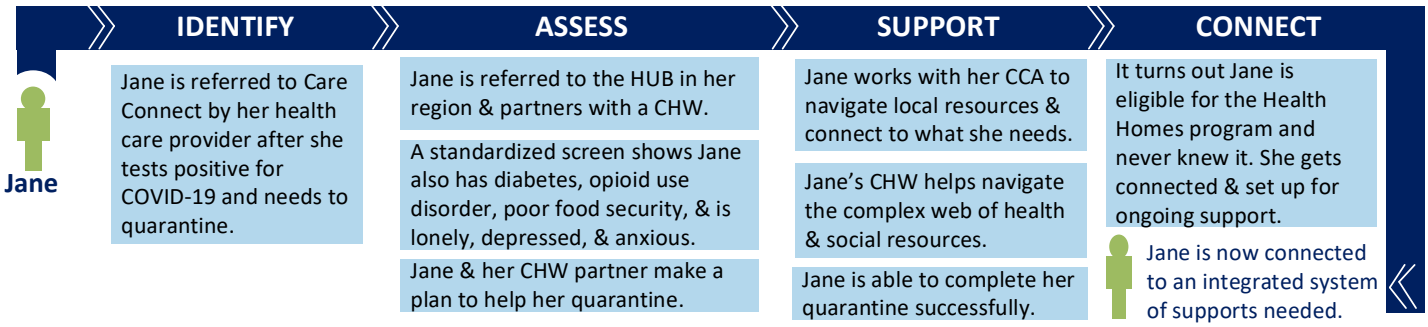
Why It Works

A human-centered experience rooted in community.

Each client's experience is anchored in a relationship with community-based staff (such as a CHW) who operate out of local CCAs and reflect the community where the client lives. Working with these care coordinators, clients are matched to the local

services best suited to their needs and preferences. Clients also benefit from ongoing access to a trusted partner who can help them navigate the complex web of interconnected systems and services to achieve the goals established in their care plans.

A client example:



Partners Working Together

State supported, regionally coordinated, and locally implemented.

The success of **Care Connect** is largely based on its strong state and local partnerships, with each partner's role clearly outlined. This model includes a focus from all partners on health equity, and works for:

Everyday community and public health priorities. Serving as a community "care traffic control center" **Care Connect** helps connect and integrate the community and clinical resources needed to help provide individuals with whole person care.

Crisis response. Whether it's a locally based or a statewide event, **Care Connect** acts as an infrastructure for quickly coordinating and channeling state resources to communities experiencing public health emergencies. **Care Connect** infrastructure has already been used to launch COVID Care, the state's program to help reduce COVID-19 spread by supporting people with social needs that complicate their ability to successfully maintain successful home isolation or quarantine.

More Information

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Visit our **Care Connect** website for more information at waportal.org/partners/home/care-connect