Emerging Issues

Diabetes
Issues you may wish to consider include:

- Diabetes self-management education and support (DSMES) is available as a benefit through nearly all health insurance plans, but few clients use it. Some regions are working on DSMES access to improve referrals and quality of care.

- Short-term outcomes, including cost savings, may be more quickly achieved with interventions that decrease A1c levels in people with diagnosed diabetes. Assessing and addressing cardiovascular risk factors, including blood pressure and high blood cholesterol, are also important in preventing poor outcomes in people with diabetes. Implementing interventions that prevent diabetes, particularly with those experiencing prediabetes, may also help achieve long term cost reduction.

- New interventions, such as group self-management support or engagement of community health workers, may be more effective with some populations than older models of self-management education. However these new models are either not covered by health insurance or not paid for equally.

- Evidence in both clinical trials and studies finds that the onset of type 2 diabetes can be prevented or delayed with lifestyle change support by trained coaches and peer groups over the course of one year. As of April 2018, Medicare began to cover qualified Diabetes Prevention Programs (DPP) for eligible enrollees. Several programs in Washington state have met the criteria to qualify.

- Other insurers in Washington state, including those providing benefits for state and higher-education employees and retirees, cover DPP through specific contracts.