

Progress and Impact Mid-Biennium Report: Health Care Interpreter Program (2025-2027)

The Health Care Interpreter (HCI) Program is a cross-divisional program between OHA's Central Services' Equity & Inclusion Division and the Medicaid Division. The Legislatively Adopted investment for the HCI Program and Medicaid Division is \$7,129,441.

Program background and summary

The HCI program aims to ensure patient access to high quality, professional interpreter services in health care settings. The legislative intent of this program is to strengthen the quality and accessibility of health care interpreter services across the state and emphasize the accountability of health care providers to provide professional HCI services to their patients, free of charge. OHA's HCI program is focused on increasing the numbers of trained and credentialed HCIs in the workforce. As required by legislation, the

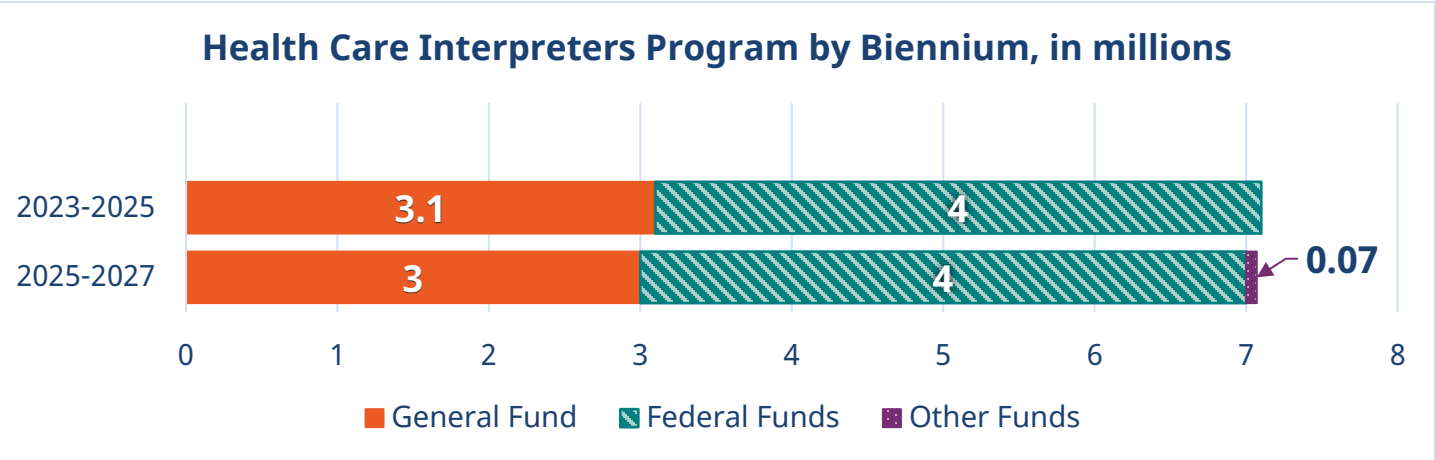
program funds free or low-cost HCI trainings and manages the HCI central registry. Health Care providers that receive public funding and Coordinated Care Organizations are required to work with qualified or certified HCIs from the central registry when providing interpretation services to patients. Working with credentialed interpreters benefits OHP members by ensuring providers and clinics have access to quality interpreters and clinics compliance with HB 2359 (2021).

Trends and outcomes summary

The intent of the HCI Program is to increase and retain the number of professional, qualified and certified HCIs in Oregon. The program does this through workforce development, including funding for free or low-cost training for new and existing interpreters, and maintaining the OHA HCI central registry.

The Medicaid division, in collaboration with the E&I Division's HCI program, will implement the directives of SB 1578 (2024): launch the HCI scheduling and claims/billing portal; negotiate an HCI rate determined through bargaining between DAS and AFSCME's Interpreters in Action Union; and, contract with a non-profit to support HCI recruitment and retention.

Program funding



Objectives, outputs and outcomes

Objective 1:
Increase and retain the number of trained, professional HCIs.

Output:
250 trained interpreters have been added to the central registry during this first year of the biennium.

112 students received free HCI training in 25/27 biennium.

Outcome:
Increase use of the registry by health care providers by improving efficiency & accuracy and by allowing HCIs to apply and renew their credentials online.

Objective 2:
Implement the HCI scheduling and claims portal.

Develop a recruitment and retention program through a non-profit partner entity.

Output:
Launch an online tool available to providers, and HCIs for scheduling, claims, including payment and data tracking.

Launch an HCI recruitment and retention program by a non-profit which will also support use of the scheduling and claims portal.

Outcome:
Increased adherence to the requirement to work with Oregon-credentialed HCIs.

OHP members and others receive appropriate interpreter services.

HCIs experience improved working conditions through the portal, easing the ability to find work, reduce administrative burden and receive payment.

Objective 3:
Together with Department of Administrative Service (DAS) negotiate HCI rates with AFSCME Union Bargaining Unit.

Output:
Configure state claims and payment system (MMIS) to accommodate HCIs as providers and to pay the negotiated rate structure.

Outcome:
Medicaid directly pays HCIs.

Consistent rate paid to HCIs when working with Fee-for-Service or CCO members.

Considerations

Funding for HCI services and increased portal customer service for Healthier Oregon member transition to Fee For Service (FFS) not yet identified.

HB2359 (2021) requires health care providers who receive any public funds to work with HCIs listed on OHA’s central registry.

Other formats and languages

You can get this document in other languages, large print, braille or a format you prefer free of charge. Contact Equity and Inclusion Division at hci.program@odhsoha.oregon.gov or 971-673-3378 (leave voice message for call-back within 1 business day).

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