

# Coming together for higher wages

We do extremely important work at CCS to support the behavioral health needs of our community. We are egregiously underpaid for the care we give to the most vulnerable people in our communities. For years, we have told CCS they need to raise wages, but the reality is that the funding that they receive from the state is not enough to provide the meaningful wage increases we all need. That is why we invited management to join us when we took our message to the state legislature last year. Our joint advocacy led to an increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates by 15%!

This year our contract expires, and we were able to get a new agreement that applies that 15% increase and ensures a 25% increase over the next year and a half!

- 15% increase effective retroactively to January 1, 2024
- 3% increase effective July 1, 2024
- 7% increase effective July 1, 2025
- **Total wage increase between now and 7/1/25: 25%**

This agreement extends the contract to June 30, 2026



“This raise is important to reduce turnover and improve quality of services that CCS provides to the community. We did this together as a union, first winning an increase in Medicaid reimbursements and then again at the bargaining table.”

**Brandy George, Child and Family Clinician, Everett**

“This raise is a huge step in allowing us to be valued and paid what we are worth. We love our jobs and want to be able to stay.”

**Tracy Jones, Whatcom WISE, Lead Education Care Coordinator**



“The increase in wages helps get us back to a living wage. I have a lot of co-workers who have taken on second jobs to get by. This will allow more of us to work a single job and have time for self care.”

**Michael Morgan, Everett Recovery Center SUDPT**



## We stood together and held management to its commitment on medical co-pays!

At the beginning of 2023, our co-pays changed in violation of our contract. Management made a commitment to meet with us if they were considering a plan design change. We filed a grievance on behalf of all affected, and we won!

- We can submit receipts of co-pays paid in 2023 to be reimbursed for the amount the copay increased.
- Management agreed we can use paid time to find and/or request the receipts from providers.
- Anyone on the medical plan in 2024 and currently employed will receive a one time \$45 payment to defray the increase to co-pays in 2024
- We got a commitment from management that they will meet with us to discuss future plan design changes.



“The increase in medical co-pays came as a surprise to me. The agreement in our contract is that we discuss changes to the insurance plans before they occur. Winning this grievance is important in principle, and also, this money makes a difference in my life. I raise two kids on my wage. Everything counts. Being a part of a union allows people to have that backup.”

**Andrea Ortel, Rapid Rehousing Case Coordinator**

## How we won the 15% increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates

The raises we are receiving right now are a result of the investment many of us have made in our Healthcare Leadership Fund. This fund is used to help elect leaders who share our values, that behavioral healthcare is a right and needs to be accessible by all. When we have leaders who understand and support what we do who hold elective office, we go to them and tell them what we need to do this work. They then increase budgets and pass legislation which tangibly supports us in doing this indispensable work for our clients. This is how we clap back to the big corporate money in politics that leads to underfunding behavioral health care. When we are all members of the HLF, we can go to the legislature and advocate for what we need, and we elect leaders who share our values.

Follow this link and become a member of the Healthcare Leadership Fund!



<http://hlfseiu1199nw.org>



## Bargaining team

- ★ **Brian Fernander**, Clare’s Place Residential Services Coordinator
- ★ **Brandy George**, Child and Family Clinician, Everett
- ★ **Tracy Jones**, Whatcom WISe, Lead Education Care Coordinator
- ★ **Michael Morgan**, Everett Recovery Center SUDPT
- ★ **Andrea Ortel**, Case Coordinator, Rapid Rehousing