

A photograph of the Washington State Capitol building at dusk. The building is illuminated with warm lights, and its iconic dome is visible against a twilight sky. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

Protecting behavioral health care in Washington state

Sen. Manka Dhingra

Vision

- Treatment on demand
- Early intervention
- Health care parity
- Affordability
- Holistic approach
- De-stigmatization
- Cultural competency
- Integration



Access to care

- Uninsured rate in Washington in 2013 = 14%.
- Uninsured rate in 2023 = 4.8%.
 - Implementing the Affordable Care Act effectively led to better coverage through Apple Health (Medicaid) and through the Washington Health Benefit Exchange.





Crisis Line phone workers take calls at Crisis Connections. (Dean Rutz / The Seattle Times, 2022)

988

- 2021
- A Place to Call, Someone to Come, A Safe Place to Be
- Crisis Response Improvement Strategy Committee
- Native and Strong, LGBTQ+ Youth, Veteran lines
- Technology platforms
- Comprehensive regional plans for crisis response

Growing the behavioral health workforce

- Certified peer support specialists
- Occupational therapists
- Behavioral health support specialists
- Mental health counselor compact
- Washington Health Corps Behavioral Health Scholarship Program

Capital investments

- Regional clubhouses
- Long-term inpatient beds, intensive BH treatment facilities
- UW Teaching Hospital, UW 24/7 telepsychiatry and SUD center
- Crisis walk-in center
- 23-hour crisis centers
- New forensic hospital
- Recovery residences
- Lake Burien Residential Treatment Facility – youth with complex needs



Trump administration actions impacting Washington

- \$3 billion a year in Medicaid funding loss because of Republicans' H.R. 1
 - 25% of the state's 1.9 million Medicaid enrollees received behavioral health services last year
- Medicaid data sharing with immigration enforcement
- 988 LGBTQ+ Youth Line ends
- Arbitrary withholding of congressionally approved funding

What Washington is doing

- Attorney General Nick Brown has sued the Trump administration 37 times
 - The Legislature has ensured the AGO has the resources needed to pursue justice on behalf of Washingtonians
- The new H.R. 1 Medicaid requirements we will have to enforce need our immediate attention in the 2026 session
- Federal withholding bill



Stay engaged

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lawmakers, share your
stories.