

# Access to Behavioral Health Services Project (Cycle II) – Project Abstract

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The Washington State Office of Insurance Commissioner (OIC) is requesting \$684,447 for activities to implement the findings and recommendations identified in Cycle I related to Section 2702 – Guaranteed Availability of Coverage under Part A of title XXVII of the PHS Act (Section 2702).

The **goal** of this project is to ensure that health insurance issuers offer comprehensive and affordable health benefit designs by conducting targeted market conduct examinations, developing an issuer compliance reporting tool for use during market conduct examinations, developing additional consumer resources and training for OIC’s Consumer Protection staff and engaging in additional claims data analysis. These goals will be achieved with five projects.

**Project 1** will be to pursue market conduct activities related to the issuers’ market scan responses received during Cycle I; this project will enlist the assistance of a market conduct consultant/examiner and a contractor with expertise in behavioral health parity.

**Project 2** will further refine the market scan documents and other materials utilized by the OIC to gather information and review parity compliance.

**Project 3** will improve consumer support by providing OIC’s consumer protection staff training specific to behavioral health parity and consumers’ use of the DOL Consumer Parity Disclosure form, enhancing OIC’s behavioral health parity web pages, and Identifying and creating additional consumer and provider education materials.

**Project 4** will be focused on developing policy proposals, both legislative and rulemaking, to resolve issues identified during Cycle I.

**Project 5** will purchase access to the APCD data set and to allow OIC to analyze more current claims data against prior years’ data to determine if there has been a change in service utilization based on OIC’s efforts to improve parity compliance.

The products of this project are completed market conduct activities, refinement of a parity compliance monitoring tool, consumer advocacy staff training, consumer resources related to behavioral health parity, an updated OIC parity website, and completed data analytics.