

Washington State's Caregivers Gain Access to Affordable Health Coverage for Their Kids

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/EINPresswire.com/ -- Beginning this month, the children of Washington state's caregivers, or "home care aides" now have access to the same high-quality, affordable health coverage as caregivers themselves.

As a result of the newly ratified [collective bargaining agreement](#) between [SEIU 775](#) and Consumer Direct Washington, thousands of caregivers who work at least 120 hours per month are now eligible to enroll their children in affordable health and dental coverage. The contract was ratified this Spring after the legislature fully funded a home care rate increase proposed by a Rate Setting Board in 2022.



Alyssa E. and family, Sedro-Woolley, WA. (Credit: Kate Baldwin Photography)

“Offering Coverage for Kids marks the fulfillment of our long-held goal to ensure caregivers, like other healthcare professionals, can add their children to their health insurance. We applaud our state lawmakers for investing the resources to bring improved parity for this vital workforce,” said Christina Johansen, Deputy Director of the Health Benefits Trust at [SEIU 775 Benefits Group](#), which operates as both the purchaser of these benefits and a health improvement entity.

“

It's huge – knowing I can get them the resources they need without having to be concerned about the costs. It's just a big burden off my shoulders.”

Alyssa E., a caregiver and mother of two from Sedro-Woolley, WA.

This important change advances equity for a profession that has historically been underinvested in and largely comprised of women, particularly women of color and immigrants. And for caregivers who are parents, it comes

as a welcome relief.

“With all the different medical appointments we have, medical bills add up really, really fast,” said Alyssa E., a caregiver and mother of 2 kids from Sedro-Woolley, WA. “It’s huge – knowing I can get them the resources they need without having to be concerned about the costs. It’s just a big burden off my shoulders.”

As the share of older adults in the state is projected to increase with more of those people seeking options to age in place, this health coverage enhancement supports making caregiving an attractive profession.

Health coverage for caregivers’ kids was championed by SEIU 775, the caregivers’ union that represents home care workers in Washington and Montana. Caregivers were able to elect to add their children to their health coverage during a July open enrollment period, with coverage effective August 1.

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