

Complementary and Integrative Health Services

*For Health First Colorado
(Colorado's Medicaid Program)
Home and Community-based
Complementary and Integrative
Health Waiver (HCBS-CIH Waiver)*



COLORADO
Department of Health Care
Policy & Financing

 **Health First
COLORADO**
Colorado's Medicaid Program

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What is the Home and Community-based Services – Complementary and Integrative Health Waiver?

The Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program) Home and Community Based Services – Complementary and Integrative (CIH) waiver (formerly the Spinal Cord Injury Waiver) provides eligible members access to acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy along with many other HCBS services.

CHI waiver services are provided in addition to a member's Health First Colorado benefits. The goal is to help individuals with mobility and ambulation challenges resulting from spine and brain injuries remain in a community setting.

The Spinal Cord Injury (SCI) Waiver was expanded statewide to the Complementary and Integrative Health Waiver in 2022 by the Colorado General Assembly passage of [SB21-038](#).

On January 25, 2002, James Ainsworth's life changed forever, after he was shot in a car-jacking incident.



"It's a lot to be a single father, deal with the pain of my injury and continue to work for a living," said James Ainsworth, Health First Colorado wavier member. **"The waiver really helped me to have the energy to tackle everything in my life."**



How can complementary and integrative services help individuals with spinal cord injuries and other conditions leading to paralysis?

“Because of acupuncture I’ve been able to get off all of my pharmaceutical pain medications,” said Jake Mutschler, Health First Colorado CIH waiver member. “I want other people in my position to know about and have access to the benefits of these services.”

Acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy services can help support wellness and healing for acute and chronic conditions caused by physical disabilities.

Preliminary findings from the first three years of the SCI waiver have shown:

100%
of individuals
receiving these services **recommended** that others with spinal cord injuries join this waiver program.

More than 75 percent of individuals receiving these services had a reduction in their self-assessed pain rating, while almost **90 percent of individuals reported less pain and experienced pain on fewer days.**

57%
of individuals
reported a **decrease** in the use of prescription medication.

Average pharmacy costs, practitioner care expenses, outpatient service costs and skilled home health service **costs decreased for individuals who received these services for at least one year.**

77%
of individuals
reported an **increased** range of motion.

Average ratings from the World Health Organization Quality of Life – BREF instrument showed an **increase in all four health domains** (physical, psychological, social, and environmental) for individuals receiving these services.

[Access the full initial report](#) from National Research Center (NRC).



Who qualifies?

To qualify for the CIH waiver, individuals must:

- Be 18 years of age or older
- Be living with a qualifying condition of a spinal cord injury, multiple sclerosis, spina bifida, cerebral palsy, brain injury, or muscular dystrophy resulting in the inability for independent ambulation
- Have been determined to need long-term services and supports as you would receive in a nursing home or a hospital
- Have been determined to be financially eligible
 - If individuals do not meet the financial requirements, they may be eligible through the [Health First Colorado Buy-In Program for Working Adults with Disabilities](#).


Benefits and services

Through Health First Colorado's Home and Community Based Services, CIH waiver members have access to the following benefits and services:

- [Adult Day Services](#)
- [Consumer Directed Attendant Support Services \(CDASS\)](#)
- [Home Modification](#)
- [Homemaker Services](#)
- [In-Home Support Services](#)
- [Medication Reminder](#)
- [Non-Medical Transportation](#)
- [Personal Care](#)
- [Personal Emergency Response Systems](#)
- [Remote Supports](#)
- [Respite Care](#)

Additionally, the CIH waiver offers complementary and integrative health services including:

- [Acupuncture](#)
- [Chiropractic Care](#)
- [Massage Therapy](#)

 CIH waiver members who receive any of the three complementary and integrative health services also participate in the independent evaluation conducted by Mission Analytics through 2025 to study and determine the effectiveness of these services. [Learn more about the study](#)



As a member of the CIH waiver, Jake Mutschler has weekly acupuncture and massage therapy appointments.



How to apply

If the individual is already enrolled Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program), they must contact their local **Single Entry Point (SEP)** – based on the county where they live – to start the waiver application process. Click on the SEP link to find the right contact.

If the individual is NOT yet enrolled in Health First Colorado, **click here** to apply now.

Resources for CIH waiver members

GENERAL QUESTIONS

- For questions about the CIH waiver please contact the individual's local **Single Entry Point Agency** or access the **Member Contact Center**.
- **CIH Waiver Frequently Asked Questions**

PROVIDERS

- **A current list of providers** is available on the CIH Waiver website. Members should contact their case manager for information, including the availability of these providers.
- To find an individual member's case manager please contact the individual's local **Single Entry Point Agency**.

TRANSPORTATION

- As a waiver benefit, CIH waiver members have access to the non-medical transportation (NMT) benefit, allowing transportation to and from CIH appointments. **More information about transportation services**.



Information for providers of acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy services

In order to offer acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy services to CIH waiver members, providers must enroll to Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program).

Health First Colorado providers have the opportunity to improve the health and well-being of many Coloradans. Health First Colorado is more than health insurance – it is a vital public service, helping Colorado citizens stay healthy or move toward better health.

“These services are vital for individuals with physical disabilities and spinal cord injuries” said Chanda Hinton, executive director and founder of the Chanda Center for Health.

[Read more about CIH waiver providers](#) and their experiences offering services to members with spinal cord injuries.



“It is a privilege to advocate for integrative services, specifically acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy, knowing it has such a powerful impact on the health of our communities” said Chanda Hinton, executive director and founder of the Chanda Center for Health.





HOW TO ENROLL TO BE A MEDICAID PROVIDER

To offer services to CIH waiver members, providers must first enroll with Health First Colorado (Colorado's Medicaid Program).

For technical assistance during the application process, providers can email questions to hcpf_hcbs_questions@state.co.us.

STEP 1 To get started every provider needs to visit our [**provider enrollment web page**](#), where there are important facts and information about the enrollment process.

STEP 2 Review the [**Enrollment Information for HCBS Providers**](#) and your Provider Type. CIH services have three Provider Types.

STEP 3 Watch the [**HCBS Provider Training**](#) recording and take the [**Enrollment Training quiz**](#). Attach the quiz results with your application materials.

STEP 4 Download and review the [**Provider Enrollment Manual**](#) and [**Atypical Checklist**](#). **Start the application.**





Davis Hirschfeld, Executive Director of NeuAbility

“NeuAbility is proud to be a provider for the Complementary and Integrative Health Waiver,” said Davis Hirschfeld, executive director of NeuAbility. “I see this service as a much-needed social progression that will end up saving the taxpayer money in the long run. Sustainable programs, like the CIH Waiver, allow NeuAbility to grow and serve the paralysis community for decades to come. I can’t wait to see what happens next.”

Provider requirements

- Have proper licenses, certifications, and registration.
- Have one (1) year of experience in practice as an acupuncturist, chiropractor, or massage therapist

OR

Have at least one (1) year of documented experience working with individuals with spinal cord injuries or other long term physical disabilities.

Provider resources

BILLING, ENROLLMENT AND CLAIMS ASSISTANCE

Contact the Provider Services Call Center at **1-844-235-2387**.

PROVIDER RULES

Read the complete Home and Community Based Services rules for provider agencies: **10 CCR 2505-10 8.487**.

ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

For additional questions, email: **HCPF_HCBS_Questions@state.co.us**

Provider reimbursement rates

The reimbursement rates for acupuncture, chiropractic, and massage therapy services are highly competitive with market rates in the Denver metropolitan area.

The most current reimbursement rates can be found in the HCBS Rate Schedule (EBD, CMHS, BI, CIH).





<https://hcpf.colorado.gov/complementary-integrative-health-waiver-cih>