



2020 Supplemental Budget Decision Package

Agency: 303 - Department of Health
Decision Package Code-Title: A7 - Maintain HEAL-WA Web Portal
Budget Session: 2020 Supp
Budget Level: Maintenance Level
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Agency Recommendation Summary

The operation costs of the University of Washington Health Electronic Resource for Washington (HEAL-WA) web portal are increasing as the number of users increase. The Washington State Department of Health, which provides the funding to support the portal, requests additional appropriation to cover the increasing costs to maintain this valuable tool which allows health care providers to access professional literature and clinical resources.

Fiscal Summary

Dollars in Thousands

Operating Expenditures	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Fund 02G - 1	\$451	\$513	\$165	\$202
Total Expenditures	\$451	\$513	\$165	\$202
Biennial Totals		\$964		\$367
Staffing	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
FTEs	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.1
Average Annual		0.1		0.1
Object of Expenditure	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
Obj. A	\$5	\$6	\$8	\$8
Obj. B	\$2	\$3	\$2	\$2
Obj. C	\$441	\$503	\$148	\$186
Obj. E	\$3	\$1	\$6	\$5
Obj. T	\$0	\$0	\$1	\$1
Revenue	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023

Revenue	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023
02G - 0299	\$451	\$513	\$165	\$202
Total	\$451	\$513	\$165	\$202
Biennial Totals		\$964		\$367

Package Description

The Health Electronic Resource for Washington (HEAL-WA) web portal provides certain health care providers with access to the latest evidence-based health care information. Access to current, peer reviewed clinical information improves the providers' ability to respond to patient questions, develop treatment plans, and deliver quality care.

In 2007, the Legislature enacted Engrossed Second Substitute Senate Bill (E2SSB) 5930 (Chapter 259, Laws of 2007) to implement the recommendations of the Blue Ribbon Commission. This legislation requires the University of Washington (UW) to provide health professions with access to online clinical resources. It also requires the Department of Health (DOH) to collect a license surcharge from 24 health professions which have access to the online resources, and transfer the revenue to the UW Health Sciences Library to support staffing and resource licenses for the web portal. The number of licensees within the 24 professions has grown, resulting in an increase of revenue. This revenue will provide HEAL-WA with additional resources to adequately support the inflationary increases for staffing and associated costs as well as for online subscriptions and outreach to professional health associations participating in the program. Specific investments include:

- Providing HEAL-WA providers with access to the premier medical journal in the United States: Journal of the American Medical Association (JAMA);
- Establishing a document delivery service to obtain requested articles from sources to which the UW does not usually subscribe, giving users access to a wider range of information;
- Providing online training to allow users to take advantage of resources to assist with patient care decisions and shared decision making; and
- Promoting the program to potential users through conference attendance and representing HEAL-WA at key meetings, including professional conferences and health policy events.

As the number of users increase, the cost of library resources will also increase. Library resources are licensed as subscriptions, with costs set by the publisher of each resource. These costs are determined by the potential number of users and have been increasing by eight to 15 percent annually.

The additional appropriation requested in this proposal allows DOH to provide the UW with funds to continue offering timely online and mobile access to authoritative information resources and decision support tools. The current resources include: evidence-based databases, decision support tools, electronics books, consumer education monographs, patient education materials, and journal articles on peer-reviewed research. Users of the system have consistently voiced an ongoing need for full text journal articles and decision support tools, which have been less represented to date because of their greater expense.

Problem Statement:

Currently, the revenue the department has collected for the HEAL-WA web portal exceeds its spending authority. DOH therefore requests additional ongoing appropriation to better meet the needs and expenses of the UW in maintaining and improving HEAL-WA for Washington State health care providers.

If not fully funded, HEAL-WA will need to reduce costs in outreach work by reducing the number of conference exhibits, site visits and in-person presentations. Instead, HEAL-WA will reach audiences via webinars or remote attendance at meetings, but these opportunities are not always available.

Budget compression could also result in the cancellation of resources, but UW has already pared resources in past budget periods, so further reductions will impact users. More specialized profession-specific resources such as Natural Medicines for integrative medicine and Centre for Agriculture and Biosciences International (CABI) Abstracts for veterinary resources may have to be cancelled. VisualDX for physicians, physician assistants, and nurses was cancelled in the past two years due to budget compression. The lack of ability to maintain or expand resources would affect healthcare providers' ability to access current information and would ultimately affect patient care.

Reduction in staff to maintain and update the website, troubleshoot problems, and assist users may have to occur. HEAL-WA currently is accessible Monday to Friday, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and requires the current staffing level to maintain this level of service. Staffing reductions would result in reduced service hours and reduced weekly access.

Assumptions and Calculations

Expansion or alteration of a current program or service:

This proposal seeks to support the existing activities of the HEAL-WA portal and make needed adjustments to support the evolving needs of the state's medical/clinical community.

Detailed assumptions and calculations:

A document supporting this proposal is available.

Calculations informing this request involve comparing the existing contractual agreement with the UW with their assessment of future expenditures. Anticipated revenues are then compared to anticipated expenditures which demonstrate anticipated revenues and current fund balance are sufficient to cover the total appropriation resulting from this request. Sufficient fund balance amounts are anticipated for the 2019-2021 biennium and the 2021-2023 biennium. Projections indicate a nominal fee increase may be necessary (\$1 or \$2 per licensee) in the ongoing biennia.

Workforce Assumptions:

See attached financial calculator (FNCAL)

Strategic and Performance Outcomes

Strategic framework:

This request supports Results Washington Healthy and Safe Communities by ensuring participating health care professionals have access to the latest evidence based research.

This request also supports the Agency Strategic Plan Goal 3: Ensure health equity and improve population health, by increasing resources available to the participating health care professionals.

Performance outcomes:

With the additional appropriation, HEAL-WA will be able to adequately support the inflationary increases for current online subscriptions and outreach to professional health associations participating in this innovative program by:

- Increasing the number of resources available;
- Establishing a document delivery service to obtain requested articles from sources the UW does not usually subscribe to, giving users access to a wider range of information;
- Providing online training for users on how to use the portal to best take advantage of resources to assist with patient care decisions and shared decision making; and
- Increasing outreach to potential users through conference attendance and representing HEALWA at key meetings, including professional conferences and health policy events.

Other Collateral Connections**Intergovernmental:**

The Legislature has directed DOH to collect a license surcharge and transfer the revenue to the UW Health Sciences Library to support the HEAL-WA web portal. The UW needs these resources to maintain the current level of services for the web portal.

Stakeholder response:

The participating professions and associations will be supportive of UW using the funds already collected to expand the resources and usability of the HEALWA web portal.

Legal or administrative mandates:

The following proviso exists within Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1109, Section 221(2)...

“During the 2019-2021 fiscal biennium, each person subject to RCW 43.70.110 (3)(c) is required to pay only one surcharge of up to twenty-five dollars annually for the purposes of RCW 43.70.112, regardless of how many professional licenses the person holds.”

As result of this proviso, DOH is required to audit renewals and applications for the 24 participating professions to ensure health professions only pay HEAL-WA surcharge each year. Approximately 20 percent of the participating professionals hold more than one credential requiring a manual renewal process versus an automated renewal.

The Office of the Washington State Auditor completed a performance audit in 2018, Aligning Healthcare Professional Fees with Licensing costs, and one of the recommendations was to develop and implement a plan to decrease the surplus for HEAL-WA. After decreasing the surplus, ensure the fee reflects current contract costs. This request will address the surplus revenue and bring the fund balance for the HEAL-WA program down. If the number of healthcare professionals continues to grow at the current rate of five percent per year, a fee increase is not necessary in the near future.

Changes from current law:

This request does not require any changes to statutes or rules.

State workforce impacts:

This request does not impact existing collective bargaining.

State facilities impacts:

This request does not impact facilities and workplace needs.

Puget Sound recovery:

This request is not related to Puget Sound recovery efforts.

Reference Documents

- HEAL-WA 2019-21 Budget.xlsx
- ML A7 Maintain HEAL-WA Web Portal-FNCAL.xlsm
- ML A7 UW HEALWA Support Letter.docx

IT Addendum

Does this Decision Package include funding for any IT-related costs, including hardware, software, (including cloud-based services), contracts or IT staff?

No