



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Nancy Guinto is on a well-deserved vacation, so this month's letter is from the Alliance's deputy director, Susie Dade.

Just a couple of states away, Covered California – the state's health insurance marketplace under the Affordable Care Act – [announced it will exclude hospitals from being "in-network"](#) if the hospitals haven't met targets for safety and quality. They include several targets and one of them is performing fewer unnecessary cesarean sections (C-sections).

When medically necessary to protect the life and well-being of mother or child, a C-section is a good thing – a very good thing. But it's major surgery and with it comes longer recovery times, significant risks and potential serious complications for both mother and baby. Not only are C-sections riskier, they cost considerably more and with high deductible health plans, women and families may end up with much higher bills than they anticipate or can afford. And let's not forget that purchasers get a big bill as well. For many purchasers, the total cost of maternity care for their covered population represents a significant burden and is a priority to manage.

Bottom line: Women shouldn't have a C-section unless absolutely necessary. Health care providers have an essential role to play in providing patient education and shared decision-making – and having systems in place to ensure C-sections ONLY occur when medically necessary. But far too often, C-sections occur for other reasons, such as patient or physician convenience or efficiency, common labor interventions that make C-sections more likely (e.g., inducing labor among first-time mothers), and casual attitudes about surgery.

[Read the full letter to delve into the data.](#)

UPCOMING ALLIANCE MEETINGS

Alliance members are welcome to attend any Alliance Board, committee or work group meeting, except executive sessions, board retreats, or Purchaser Affinity Group meetings (open to purchaser members only). Please RSVP to Adria at amoskowitz@wahealthalliance.org.

Board of Directors Meeting

June 26, 2:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m.
600 Stewart Street, Second Floor
Conference Room

Health Economics Committee

June 14, 8:30 a.m.–10:30 a.m.
Alliance Office

LEARN MORE

Join Us

Do you know someone who would like to learn more about membership in the Alliance? [Learn more about the value of Alliance membership.](#)

Choosing Wisely

Choosing Wisely is a campaign designed to provide easy-to-understand guides for getting better, safer, more effective care. It is a partnership between the Alliance, The American Board of Internal Medicine (ABIM), the Washington State Medical Association and others. [Learn](#)

ALLIANCE UPDATES

- Alliance Releases New Hospital Value Report
- Consumer Health Ratings Names Hospital Value Report Editor's Pick
- New Highlight: Hysterectomy and Oophorectomy
- Bree Collaborative Public Comment Request: Prescribing Opioids for Postoperative Pain Guidelines
- Alliance Purchaser Members Take "Deep Dive" on Behavioral Health
- Washington Fares Well in New Commonwealth Fund 2017 Scorecard; Still Room for Improvement
- New Member: Oregon Health Leadership Council
- Joining the Alliance



Alliance Releases New Hospital Value Report

On May 22, the Alliance released the new [Hospital Value Report](#), which offers a unique perspective on hospital care at the intersection of the three key elements of value: quality, patient experience and price. This combination

of factors allows us to view the extraordinary pattern of variation in value across our state and see where some hospitals perform better on important measures. It also refutes the common belief that higher prices always translate into better care and improved outcomes for patients. The full report, which shows the rankings for 48 hospitals, individual hospital scores for 13 quality measures, patient experience scores, and gross charge index, is available only to Alliance members. The report has been distributed to members whose contribution is above \$7,500, and is available for purchase to members who are at a lower contribution level. If you are interested in purchasing the report, or if you are not a member and are interested in membership and accessing the report, please email contactus@wahealthalliance.org.



**CONSUMER
HEALTH RATINGS**
YOUR GUIDE TO QUALITY AND COST

Consumer Health Ratings Names Hospital Value Report Editor's Pick

Consumer Health Ratings, a health care quality informational website run by the Dahlen Group, lauded the Hospital Value Report for its ease of use and timely data. "The idea of value as the sum of quality/patient safety, patient satisfaction and price or cost is one that we endorse," said Gretchen Dahlen, president of Consumer Health Ratings. [Read the report summary](#).



New Highlight: Hysterectomy and Oophorectomy

As part of our Different Regions, Different Care reporting, we have released a new "Highlight" showing rates of hysterectomy and

oophorectomy in Washington state. The Highlight includes a number of key findings, including the fact that women ages 20 to 44 in Richland were nearly five times more likely to have a hysterectomy than their peers in Seattle. The Highlight includes

more.

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We invite you to follow the Alliance on Twitter @WAHealthCheckup.

Follow the Alliance on LinkedIn

We invite you to follow the Alliance on our LinkedIn company page.

The Washington Health Alliance brings together those who give, get and pay for health care to create a high-quality, affordable system for the people of Washington state.



WA Health Alliance



1,565 followers

3,807 tweets

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Latest Tweets

- We're excited to welcome the Oregon Health Leadership Council as the newest members of the Alliance!
<https://t.co/Lb7tiGIGTX> 11:55AM
- RT @LeapfrogGroup: ICYMI: Our new report out today shows encouraging progress reducing episiotomies, but none reducing C-sections. <https://...> 1:35PM
- We're excited to announce the release of our new #Hospital Value Report!
<https://t.co/LzH8PwY2rN> 10:14AM
- RT @SEIU1199NW: Proud to be joining @WAHealthCheckup - healthcare works best when we all can access the right care in the right setting at... 11:17AM
- RT @OpportunityWA: "Do no harm" report from @WAHealthCheckup provides valuable information on how to reduce health care costs by cutting w... 10:49AM

Action Steps stakeholders can take to make sure hysterectomies/oophorectomies are appropriate and medically indicated. [Read the new highlight.](#)



Bree Collaborative Public Comment Request: Prescribing Opioids for Postoperative Pain Guidelines

Your feedback is requested on the Bree Collaborative's draft [Prescribing Opioids for Postoperative Pain Guidelines](#). The workgroup will review comments before submitting a final draft for review and adoption by the Bree Collaborative. [Take the survey here](#). Surveys will take 10 to 15

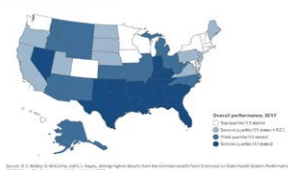
minutes to complete. **Feedback must be received by 5 p.m. on Friday, June 22.** More information can be found at www.breecollaborative.org/involved/. Contact Ginny Weir, Program Director of the Bree Collaborative at GWeir@qualityhealth.org or (206) 204-7377 or visit www.breecollaborative.org for more information.



Alliance Purchaser Members Take "Deep Dive" on Behavioral Health

On June 5, members of the Alliance Purchaser Affinity Group reviewed results from the eValue8 "deep dive" on behavioral health. eValue8™ is a nationally standardized Request for Information that commercial health plans respond to; results provide purchasers with the ability to compare health plans locally as well as to national benchmarks. The Alliance sponsors eValue8 in Washington every other year. For the first time, this year eValue8 did a special "deep dive" focusing specifically on health plan services and performance related to behavioral health. Thanks to the five health plans that participated: Aetna, Cigna, Kaiser-Permanente, Regence Blue Shield and UnitedHealthcare.

Overall State Health System Performance: Scorecard Ranking 2017



Washington Fares Well in New Commonwealth Fund 2017 Scorecard; Still Room for Improvement

Each year, the Commonwealth Fund releases a [scorecard](#) that ranks states on 44 performance measures in five broad areas: health care access, quality, avoidable hospital use and costs, health outcomes and health care equity. Most states improved on a broad array of health indicators and Washington state was among them, moving up to an overall ranking of #7. But the overall ranking varies based on the local area of our state (ranking out of 306 local areas nationwide), for example: Everett (#46), Olympia (#108), Seattle (#16), Spokane (#106), Tacoma (#153) and Yakima (#209).

In Washington, we saw the greatest gains in areas such as reducing the number of uninsured children and adults, adults with a usual source for care, children receiving recommended doses of vaccines (although we know from our own data that we have significant room for improvement here), hospitalized patients given information about what to do during their recovery at home, infant

mortality and deaths from colon cancer per 100,000 population. In some areas our performance declined, such as: deaths from breast cancer per 100,000 female population and 30-day risk adjusted mortality among Medicare beneficiaries hospitalized for heart attack, heart failure, pneumonia, COPD or stroke.

NEW MEMBERS

We're excited to welcome the Oregon Health Leadership Council as the newest members of the Alliance! [Learn more here.](#)

Joining the Alliance

Our members can be the best ambassadors for our work. If you know someone who would like to learn more about membership in the Alliance, we have an online tool to help you talk about the value of Alliance membership. [Learn more at our Join Us website.](#)