

UPDATE for the Community



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

In the introduction to our [2018 Community Checkup](#) – just released this week – we use the metaphor of a journey to describe our health care improvement efforts in Washington state. Along with our health care partners and stakeholders, we have been on this journey for more than two decades. And like kids in the back seat of the car on a long family road trip, we can't help but ask, "Are we there yet?"

[\(Read the full letter HERE\)](#)

ALLIANCE UPDATES

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2018 Community Checkup and Health Waste Reports Released

The [2018 Community Checkup Report](#), "Improving Health Care in Washington State," is now available [online](#). The report, which is based on data from the Alliance's All-Payer Claims Database

(APCD) along with other data sources, compares Washington state's performance to national benchmarks on measures of access, prevention, underuse of effective care for chronic illness, and potentially avoidable care.

Join Us

Are you interested in learning 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 more.](#)

Visit the Community Checkup website

The Community Checkup website helps consumers make informed choices by giving them access to a robust and accessible supply of data and resources. [Learn more.](#)

Follow the Alliance on Facebook

We invite you to follow the Alliance on Facebook.

Follow the Alliance on Twitter

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](#).

This is the 12th edition of the Washington Health Alliance's annual report to the community highlighting health care quality in Washington state since release of its inaugural report in 2008 and it is the fourth time the Alliance has reported on the Statewide Common Measure Set as part of the report. A printed version of the report will be available in January. Detailed results can be found on the Alliance's Community Checkup Website at www.WACommunityCheckup.org.

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.

This month also saw the release of “[First, Do No Harm: Calculating Health Care Waste in Washington State](#),” the Alliance's second report on health care waste using the [MedInsight Health Waste Calculator](#) from Milliman to analyze low-value health care services across Washington state between July 2016 and June 2017. The Alliance released its first report on this topic in [February 2018](#); this newest report is an important next chapter. The number of areas of care examined have expanded, the measurement period has been updated, and the population included in the analysis almost doubled, now including both the commercially-insured and Medicaid-insured populations in Washington state.

As with the first waste report, we have received national, statewide and local media coverage including [NPR](#), the [Tacoma News Tribune](#) and [Becker's Health Care](#). Health care waste is on the minds of many as the nation faces the issues of health care affordability and access. We are pleased that “First, Do No Harm” has become a reliable and much-cited source on this timely topic.



Washington Health Alliance and Milliman Medinsight Receive Leaders in Health Care Award

The [Washington Health Alliance](#) and [Milliman Medinsight](#) are joint recipients of the [Seattle Business Magazine's](#) 2019 Leaders in Health Care Award for Achievement in Digital Health.

The Leaders in Health Care Award is the region's premier health care event recognizing Washington-based health care organizations and executives who have made significant contributions to Washington's health care sector and have excelled in areas such as patient care, outstanding leadership, and thoughtful innovation. The Alliance and Milliman received the award for their partnership and work on the [Health Waste Calculator](#).

The Alliance's Executive Director Nancy Giunto says that the collaboration with MedInsight has been a productive one. “Our partnership with Milliman Medinsight has allowed us to provide employers, providers, patients and health care plans with trustworthy, actionable data on health care value in Washington state. Looking at 48 common medical tests, treatments and procedures, the Health Waste Calculator enabled us to measure and report on low value health care being delivered to over 1 million Washington residents in just a one-year period at an estimated cost of over \$300 million. Talking about “waste” is never easy - no one likes to say that what they're doing is unnecessary. But the results from our “First, Do No Harm” report help us to identify and quantify specific opportunities for reducing waste and potential harm to patients - this needs to be our focus, even if it's

difficult.”

“MedInsight is honored to be recognized for our work with the Washington Health Alliance,” adds Marcos Dachary, MedInsight’s Product Management Director. “We have been working together since 2006 and continue to generate state-wide health check-up scorecards each year. The “First, Do No Harm” reporting monitors the level of harm experienced by Washingtonians due to low value healthcare services. Reducing financial, emotional, and physical harm from low value services is a difficult task and we’re proud to create a data driven path forward for providers, payers, and purchasers, so they can take actions that ultimately benefit consumers.”

The awards will be presented at the 2019 Leaders in Health Care gala, February 28 in Seattle.



WHA and NAHPC Release Clinical Brief on Endometriosis

The Washington Health Alliance and the National Alliance of Healthcare Purchaser Coalitions recently issued a [clinical brief](#) on endometriosis.

Endometriosis is a chronic condition in women caused by uterine tissue growing abnormally in other parts of the body. The tissue continues to grow and bleed during menstrual cycles causing debilitating pain for some women as well as other complications.

Endometriosis is often difficult to diagnose. According to the brief, the usual time from onset of symptoms to diagnosis of endometriosis may be six to ten years or more. It is estimated that between 6 and 11 hours of work per week are lost due to endometriosis, contributing both to absenteeism and impaired employee performance.

There are medical and surgical treatment options for endometriosis. However, treatment of symptoms can require the use of analgesics and opioids. Based on claims data, more than 75% of women with endometriosis have used opioids.

The brief identifies treatment options ranging from less invasive to most invasive and recommends that employers use their claims data to identify care gaps and opportunities for improvement, such as reducing long-term use of opioids. It also encourages employers to increase awareness to help members understand more about this disease and provides resources for them about available treatments.

New Member



This month, we’re excited to welcome Airrosti as the newest member of the Alliance. Read more about Airrosti [here](#).

Joining the Alliance

If you or someone you know would like to learn more about membership in the Alliance, we have an online tool to help you learn about the value of Alliance membership [Learn more at our Join Us website](#).