



UPDATE for the Community



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

You may have seen the recent *Wall Street Journal* article, “Posting Health Prices Online Isn’t Cure-All.” In it, the reporter takes a close look at New Hampshire’s twelve years of experience of posting prices [online](#) and concludes that there have been few benefits: prices have not significantly decreased, overall spending has been reduced only marginally, and few consumers use the site. Even though “New Hampshire has one of the most comprehensive and oldest hospital price-transparency laws in the U.S.,” the article suggests it’s a failed experiment.

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

ALLIANCE UPDATES

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Don't Miss the Upcoming All-Alliance Meeting

Are you interested in how we can increase primary care spending without increasing our total health care spending? Alliance membership enables you to join us for the All-Alliance meeting on September 18, 2019 at Cambia Grove.

15% Primary Care Spend: Easy to Say, Hard to Do – Can We Get There?

Despite very high levels of health care spending across the country and in Washington state, the proportion spent on primary care

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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

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remains low (<10%) and is insufficient to achieve the goals of lower total cost of care, fewer hospitalizations and ER visits, better patient experience and, most importantly, lower mortality. The high cost of health care makes an increase in total health care spending highly undesirable, particularly among those who pay most of the bills – public and private purchasers. So, *a shift in current health care spending and resources will be necessary* to better support comprehensive, well-coordinated primary care. Easy to say, hard to do. The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services have recently announced their “Primary Care First” initiative, and other state-led efforts (e.g., Delaware, Rhode Island, and Oregon) are underway to increase the proportion of health care spending for primary care. At our March 2019 All-Alliance meeting, Milbank President Chris Koller talked with us about the important role of primary care in making health care more affordable for individuals and purchasers. Mr. Koller suggests that we raise primary care spending by at least one percentage point per year for five years.

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.

At the September 18th All-Alliance meeting, we'll host a robust discussion of what it will take to increase relative spending for primary care without increasing total health care spending. To be successful, both government and commercial payers will need to participate. We'll examine how different special interests in our state think about this and explore potential strategies for getting us there. We have lined up an interesting panel of speakers to consider multiple perspectives on this important topic.

Panelists:

- Nancy Fisher, MD, CMS Region 8, 9, 10
- Mary Fliss, Washington State Health Care Authority
- Tim Lieb, Regence Blue Shield
- Sheila Rege, MD, Washington State Medical Association
- Cassie Sauer, Washington State Hospital Association
- Jonathan Sugarman, MD, Washington Academy of Family Physicians
- Jeff White, The Boeing Company

Doors open at 9 am for coffee and networking. The program will begin at 9:30 am.

Contact Catherine Lanham at clanham@wahealthalliance.org or 206-454-2959 for membership information.

The Alliance is Hiring!

The Alliance is looking for an experienced [Membership and Business Development Manager](#) to join its staff. If someone you know has at least 5 years of experience in business development or nonprofit membership development and a passion for improving health care delivery in Washington state, please let them know about our opening.

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.](#)