

UPDATE for the Community



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LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

It is fitting that our All-Alliance Meeting later this month focuses on primary care. We have long believed that primary care prevents more serious health issues down the line and is the best place to focus our resources, but with some recent [findings](#), we have some support to back it up.

The Patient-Centered Primary Care Collaborative did a state-by-state breakdown, looking at each state's primary care investment. It is the first attempt at calculating state-level primary care spending by all payer types, private, public, and uninsured. In addition, it looked at primary care spending and utilization such as emergency room visits, ambulatory care-sensitive hospitalizations, and total hospitalizations. Since there is not a uniform definition of primary care yet, the study used two approaches, characterized as a "narrow" and a "broad" definition.

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

ALLIANCE UPDATES

- [Large Employers Stepping Up to Address Workers' Health Needs](#)
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[Large Employers Stepping Up to Address Workers' Health Needs](#)

The recent Optum study, [Ten Years of](#)

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](#).



Health and Well-Being at Work: Learning from our Past and Reimagining Our Future,

shows that most large employers expect their health and wellness program expenditures to increase over the next three years with particular attention on mental and behavioral health, workers' chronic conditions, women's health, and expanding digital and telehealth resources. Nearly 90% of employers report that they plan to reduce the stigma around mental health within a year and improve access to behavioral health services, including implementing digital and telehealth visits and increasing their provider network. The study shows about 75% of employers believe that integrating physical and behavioral health will lead to better physical outcomes. Many employers, 84%, are concerned about substance abuse and report that they will be expanding education efforts, improving benefits, increasing Employee Assistance Programs, and offering counseling to assist employees and their families. In addition, the same percentage, 84%, plan to increase spending on women's health and well-being in the next three 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 Alliance, we wholeheartedly support purchasers making decisions that will improve the delivery of health care services to their members and families--that's what the Purchaser Affinity Group is all about. If your organization isn't already a member and think you should be, contact Susie Dade at sdade@wahealthalliance.org.

Share Our Celebrations!

Theresa Tamura to Join the Alliance Team

The Alliance is delighted to announce that Theresa Tamura will be joining our staff as our new Membership and Business Development Manager. With her experience at PATH, Group Health Foundation, and Kaiser Permanente formerly Group Health Cooperative, Theresa brings decades of experience working with health care systems. We are excited that she will be bringing her visioning and strategy to the Alliance.

In addition to her professional qualifications, we are proud that she contributes her time and energy as the Vice President of the Board of WithinReach, a non-profit dedicated to helping Washington families navigate health and social systems and connect with the resources they need to be healthy. Last year, WithinReach served more than 285,000 people in 39 counties, 89% of them were low-income and 46% were people of color.

Our New Member Magick.AI



This month, we're excited to welcome Magick.ai as the newest member of the Alliance. Magick.ai is integrating new approaches to event modeling with advances in reinforcement learning to augment memory and improve decision-

making for the estimated 5.7 million Americans and more than 46 million people worldwide with Alzheimer's disease and Alzheimer's disease-related dementias. Earlier this year, it submitted a proposal to the NIH to demonstrate the use of machine learning to assist Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers. Learn more about Magick.ai [here](#).



Don't Miss the Upcoming All-Alliance Meeting -- Open only to Alliance Members

Wednesday, September 18, 9 –11:30 am

Cambia Grove, 1800 9th Avenue, Suite 250, Seattle, WA 98101

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 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' "Primary Care First" initiative will take effect in 2020 in 26 regions and states, and other state-led efforts (e.g., Delaware, Rhode Island, and Oregon) are already underway to increase the proportion of health care spending for primary care. At our last All-Alliance meeting, Milbank President Chris Koller talked about the important role of primary care in making health care more affordable for individuals and purchasers and recommended that we raise primary care spending in the state by at least one percentage point per year for five years.

At this All-Alliance meeting, we'll host a robust discussion of what it will take to do that. 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 the program begins at 9:30.

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

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.](#)