UPDATE for the Community

WASHINGTON HEALTH ALLIANCE

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

I am delighted to share some exciting Alliance news. As a way to support not just reporting on the health care system, but propelling action to *improve it*, the Alliance's Board of Directors has committed to an initiative to reduce opioid prescribing in our state, focusing on appropriate use of opioid prescriptions for low back pain and dental care. We are calling this initiative the Washington Health Alliance Board Opioid Impact Project. This is the first time we are undertaking an initiative of this type and we believe it is unique in the nation.

We are fortunate to have a talented and committed Board, comprised of twenty-four senior business and healthcare leaders from across the state. Together, they represent more than 133,000 employees, 3,800 providers and more than 4 million insured lives. Each Board member has been asked to commit their time and talent, and that of their organizations, to this effort. We are very happy to be working in close partnership with another Alliance member, Delta Dental of Washington, on this effort.

(Read the full letter HERE)

ALLIANCE UPDATES

- Release of Hospital Inpatient Spending Trend Analysis
- Community Checkup Update
- The Alliance Supports Data-Driven Quality Improvement
- The Alliance Welcomes New Member Health Management Associates
- Joining the Alliance

Release of Hospital Inpatient Spending

LEARN MORE

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.

2020

Highlight

Trend Analysis

Last week, the Alliance released hospital-specific results for our statewide spending trend analysis for 287 hospital inpatient treatments. Looking at approximately 2.2 million commercially-insured lives from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2016, the Alliance examined changes in the number of people insured, how often they seek inpatient treatments, the amount of inpatient services provided during hospitalizations, and the price per unit of service to determine the reasons for spending changes.

Using allowed charges, the contracted fees for physicians and facilities as well as patient obligations such as deductibles and co-payments, 63 higher-volume hospitals are included. Results can be reviewed by hospital, Major Diagnostic Categories (MDC) and All Patients Refined Diagnosis Related Groups (APR-DRG) on our Community Checkup website.

Community Checkup Update

As many of you may have already determined, the Alliance has not yet released a Community Checkup report for 2019. We have been working diligently with our data vendor, Milliman, to strengthen and re-build the Patient Verification portal used by Medical Groups to validate results. Development of the new verification portal has taken longer than anticipated and has resulted in a delay in the release of the Community Checkup results on our website. We sincerely apologize for this delay, but we know how important patient verification is in our efforts to produce trusted results. We believe this delay in the short term is worth it in the long run.

We currently anticipate provider patient verification will begin by the end of February 2020 with an anticipated release of the Community Checkup report in April 2020. With this delay, we have also changed the reporting period for Community Checkup results to January 1, 2018 – December 31, 2018. This reflects a six month shift in our normal reporting period.

We appreciate your patience as we make these upgrades.

The Alliance Supports Data-Driven Quality Improvement

When SEIU 775 Benefits Group wanted to learn about how their 21,000 long-term home caregivers in Washington state and Montana were experiencing their health care plans, Director of Health Plan Performance and Strategy Laura Kate Zaichkin turned to the Alliance for help. She asked if the Alliance would share its patient experience tool developed for Your Voice Matters. Zaichkin says the Alliance's tool made it much easier.

The Benefits Group survey was launched in mid-January in English, Russian, Spanish, Vietnamese, Korean, and Chinese. The data will be reviewed by carrier and plan type with the intent of using the information to identify carrier action, plan-purchaser collaboration, and purchasing expectations. "It was huge not to

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.

have to go through multiple survey instruments and literature reviews to develop the survey. To have something to start with that was used by a respected organization was invaluable."

Zaichkin says the results will be reviewed in the spring. "Our take is that the more information you have, the better. If we don't have the information, we can't begin the conversation. We want to be coming from a place of data-driven decision-making." This serves not only as a benchmark to measure against in the future, "more importantly, it gives us an opportunity to have conversations with plans about where we're doing well and where there are opportunities for improvement. We are excited to open up those conversations around experience."

Zaichkin encourages other purchasers to not be afraid to take matters into their own hands. "The health care system is broken and we have an obligation to make health and health care better for those we're serving. In this case, we are gathering more information and using data to drive experience, and with collaboratives like the Alliance, you don't have to start from scratch. We care about quality and value and we need the data to help us get there."

The Alliance Welcomes New Member Health Management Associates

HEALTH MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATES Health Management Associates (HMA) is a national research and consulting firm with 23 offices and more than 225 multidisciplinary consultants that helps publicly-funded healthcare work better. HMA provides expertise on a wide range of subject areas, including analytics, clinical services, behavioral health, pharmacy, IT, correctional health, the uninsured, managed care, long-term care. Their clients include health systems, health plans, providers, community-based organizations, associations, foundations, local, state, and federal governments, and the investment community. Last week, a report by HMA on the Economic Implications of Medicaid Expansion in Missouri commissioned by the Missouri Hospital Association and Missouri Primary Care Association was released in partnership with other stakeholders from the health care community.

Headquartered in Lansing, Michigan, Betsy Jones is the Managing Principal of HMA's Seattle office. She brings 25 years of experience working with health and social services partners to transform systems of care for vulnerable populations. Her experience includes community-based nonprofits, community health, managed care, and government.

Learn more about Health Management Associates 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.