

UPDATE for the Community



December 2020: Alliance Resources Help Increase Value-Based Care

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The Washington Health Alliance (Alliance) and Bree Collaborative (Bree) at the Foundation for Health Care Quality are teaming up to encourage everyone involved in the Washington state health care system to act to improve health and health care for all Washingtonians. Bree Chair Dr. Hugh Straley and I asked participants at the close of our recent Value-Based Care Summit (recording available [here](#)) to join this effort and make it a priority.

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

ALLIANCE UPDATES

- [Ketul J. Patel, MHA, MBA, Joins Alliance Board of Directors](#)
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Ketul J. Patel, MHA, MBA, Joins Alliance Board of Directors

The Alliance is proud to announce that joining our Board of Directors is Ketul J. Patel, President of the Pacific Northwest Division of CommonSpirit Health, one of the nation's largest nonprofit health systems, with operations in 21 states

LEARN MORE

Join Us

To find out about the benefits of joining the Alliance, email Theresa Lampkin Tamura, Director of Membership and Business Engagement, at ttamura@wahealthalliance.org.

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, 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.](#)

across 700 sites of care, serving 20 million patients annually and Chief Executive Officer of CHI Franciscan.

Mr. Patel has executive oversight and leadership responsibility for strategy network development and growth as well as overall operational management for the multi-state regional health care system. The Pacific Northwest Division consists of CHI Franciscan—one of Washington state’s largest health systems—and two additional hospitals in Oregon state with revenues of over \$2.9 billion. Mr. Patel has responsibility for 12 acute care facilities, more than 12,000 employees, which includes over 8,000 providers and nurses, more than 1,000 employed and aligned providers; and more than 200 primary and specialty care clinics including a clinically integrated network with over 5,000 providers.

With a career in health care spanning more than 25 years, Mr. Patel has previously served as: Executive Vice President and Chief of Strategy and Chief Operations Officer of Hackensack University Health Network located in northern New Jersey; Vice President of Operations for the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center’s Magee-Women’s Hospital; Senior Vice President of Franciscan Health Alliance St. James in Chicago; and Vice President for Strategic Planning and Business Development of Sharp HealthCare in San Diego.

Mr. Patel holds master’s degrees in health administration and business administration from the University of Pittsburgh, and a bachelor’s degree from Johns Hopkins University. He is known both regionally and nationally for his leadership. He is recognized by Modern Healthcare as one of the 100 Most Influential People in Healthcare in addition to being featured as one of Modern Healthcare’s Top 25 Healthcare Leaders and one of the country’s Minority Executives to Watch. In 2019, Mr. Patel was awarded Nonprofit Healthcare Leader of the Year by the University of Washington Tacoma Milgard School of Business. Additionally, he is recognized by Roshni Media Group in their book global and emerging leaders—honored among more than 250 inspirational professionals who have demonstrated leadership in their discipline and who are ambassadors of diversity.

He is an active board member of the American Hospital Association Regional Policy Board, Washington State Hospital Association, the Carol Milgard Breast Center, Greater Seattle Partners, and a Community Leader for South Sound Together. In 2017, Mr. Patel was Chair of the first combined Seattle and Tacoma American Heart and Stroke Association Heart Walks and made history for raising the most funds and participation than any Chair prior in the Puget Sound region.

We invite you to follow the Alliance

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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.



Washington State’s Efforts to Transform Primary Care Delivery and Payment

Washington Health Alliance Director of Performance Improvement

and Innovation Karen Johnson [comments](#) on the ongoing [collaborative effort](#) to improve primary health care in Washington state with insurance payers, the Washington State Medical Association, the Washington State Health Care Authority (HCA), and Governor Jay Inslee's office. Earlier this year, they signed a memorandum of understanding to develop a new payment model and quality metrics. "Building a strong primary care foundation is an essential building block, and we applaud the work of the Health Care Authority in bringing payers together to tackle this challenge in a coordinated manner that minimizes the administrative complexity for providers and accelerates the impact for patients."

The goals of the effort include:

- increasing primary care expenditures while decreasing total health spending;
- aligning payment and incentives across payers and using quality metrics to measure progress;
- promoting an integrated approach to whole-person and team-based care including primary, behavioral health, and preventive care;
- improving provider access and capacity; and
- working with public and private employers to spread the model across the state.

The primary care effort was also highlighted at the Health Care Payment Learning & Action Network Summit [Aligning for Shared Accountability](#) by HCA Chief Medical Officer Dr. Judy Zerzan-Thul. "I like to say we are moving away from the combustion engine in our car of primary care and we are moving to an electric car and that electric car has new ways of delivering primary care and new ways of paying for primary care." In addition to improving primary care, Zerzan-Thul raised the issue of equity. "We realized our race and ethnicity data is captured inconsistently and has some large gaps. Our focus is on data collection and stratification of quality measures by race and ethnicity and to have that in place by July 2021."

Recently, Zerzan-Thul [announced](#) that the HCA will devote resources to reducing disparities in quality measures. "The first measure we have decided to focus on is depression management, where we have noticed a big gap. That is in the wheelhouse of primary care – identifying and treating anxiety and depression."



Support for Providers Caring for Patients with Mental Health Needs

Recent data [estimates](#) that 22% of the state population or 1,269,000 Washingtonians have a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder. The problem is that for far too many, access to behavioral health care is not just limited, it is nonexistent. Some Washington [counties](#) have no practicing psychiatrists and for those that do, wait times for appointments are not measured in days or weeks, but months. Couple that with an [increase](#) in the number of people who have seriously considered suicide and that the highest risk of suicide due to the pandemic is expected to occur between [October and December 2020](#) and put simply, we are facing a mental health crisis. Some mental health experts call it [a perfect storm](#).

But this isn't news. Limited mental health resources and the mental health workforce shortage is [well-documented](#). Between [2017 and 2030](#), the expected number of new entrants into the field of psychiatry is woefully short of the number retiring. In ten years, the supply of psychiatrists, nurse practitioners and psychiatric physician assistants may help blunt the shortfall, but it will not offset it. In Washington state, there are several efforts to help improve available mental health resources.

To increase our infrastructure, there are new facilities in the works. In November, King County voters [approved](#) a \$1.74 billion bond to support improvements over the next 20 years at Harborview Medical Center. Of that funding, \$79 million is designated to expand capacity for Harborview's behavioral health services and programs. In 2023, UW Medicine will open a new behavioral health facility to offer more treatment beds. For those interested in the field, there is an effort to create a Behavioral Health Support Specialist bachelor-level credential, and additional psychiatry residency and fellowship positions have been added to the UW School of Medicine. But these are long-term solutions. Given the importance of mental health access and its effect on better treatment adherence and patient outcomes, what we really need is to help health care providers who are de facto mental health practitioners now.

- The [Psychiatry Consultation Line](#) (PCL) is available seven days a week, 24 hours a day and helps prescribing providers with patients who are 18 and older. Started in July 2019, callers from primary care clinics, community hospitals and emergency departments, substance use treatment programs, county and municipal correctional facilities, and other settings, can get help with their patients' assessment, diagnosis, and treatment planning, including medication management, from faculty of the UW Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences. Within 24 hours of the consultation, the provider requesting assistance receives a written summary of the recommendations. There are no restrictions on the number of times a provider may call the PCL at 877-WA-PSYCH (877-927-7924) and follow-up calls regarding a particular patient's progress or changing needs are welcome.
- The [Perinatal Mental Health Consultation Line for Providers](#) (PAL for Moms) provides support for any provider caring for pregnant or postpartum patients (that includes midwives and doulas). By improving mental health for this population, experts believe more serious mental illness can be [avoided](#). Started in January 2019, the consultation line is available weekdays from 9 am to 5 pm. Common topics of consultation include anxiety, depression, substance use disorders, or other psychiatric disorders, such as bipolar disorder or post-traumatic stress disorder. Callers to PAL for Moms at 877-725-4666 (877-PAL4MOM) will consult with faculty members with perinatal mental health expertise at the UW Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences and will receive written recommendations following the consultation.
- The [Partnership Access Line](#) (PAL) was the first psychiatric consultation line established in Washington state, started back in 2008. Now it provides mental health support for primary care providers caring for pediatric and adolescent

patients regardless of insurance type in Alaska, Washington, and Wyoming. In Washington, in addition to providing psychiatric consultation, a master's level social worker is available to assist doctors, nurse practitioners, and physician assistants with finding mental health resources to help patients under 18 years old, weekdays from 8 am to 5 pm at 866-599-7257. Based out of Seattle Children's and staffed by psychiatrists with expertise in child and adolescent psychiatry at Seattle Children's and the UW Medicine Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, assistance was provided to [3,218 calls](#) to PAL in the 2019 to 2020 fiscal year.

While these consultation lines cannot address our state's mental health crisis in totality, they are critical to helping caregivers provide patients with important mental health treatment support now. "These psychiatric services help ensure children and adults with behavioral health needs receive high-quality services at the right time and in the right setting," said MaryAnne Lindeblad, State Medicaid Director at the Health Care Authority. "We hear regularly from providers how important these services are to helping them with complex medication, diagnosis and treatment situations. These services also help to keep the care with local community providers, which is good for the patient, their families and the system."

Feedback to the program has been overwhelmingly positive, with comments from providers such as "amazing," "fantastic," and "wonderful." One captured the downstream effects perfectly, "It makes me feel so much more confident to know that I have an expert available for tricky questions, and then I can apply that knowledge to my next patient in a similar circumstance."

You can help spread the word about [these valuable resources](#), by passing them along to an individual or organization that can help get the word out to providers.



Collaboratives in Action: Responding to Covid-19 Webinar

Join Alliance Executive Director Nancy Giunto who will be moderating the Network for Regional Healthcare Improvement's webinar on December 8th from 1 to 2:30 pm PST, "[Stronger Together: Applying Lessons from 2020 to Create a Better Path Forward](#)," with expert panelists Mara Aspinall, Co-Founder and Professor of Practice, Biomedical Diagnostics at Arizona State University, Sarah Dash, President of Alliance for Health Policy, Dr. Rishi Manchanda, President and CEO of HealthBegins; and Dr. Mark McCellan, Director of Duke Margolis Center for Health Policy.

Participants will explore what regional leaders can expect from the administration, states, and the private sector in the coming year as they respond and address key health and healthcare issues resulting from the pandemic in several important areas, including:

- care delivery reform;
- payment reform;
- testing and vaccination strategies;
- measurement, reporting, and quality improvement; and
- health equity.

Register [here](#).

The Alliance Welcomes New Members Lucid Living, LLC and University of Washington Master of Health Administration Program



Bridging the Dangerous Gap

The time immediately following discharge from a restrictive setting is particularly difficult for psychiatric patients. Research shows that: schizophrenia and other psychotic disorders are the primary cause of Medicaid and Medicare 7-day readmissions; the period following hospitalization carries an increased risk of homelessness, drug use, relapse, and violence; and there is a 12-fold increased risk of suicide and death after discharge from a restrictive setting.

Lucid Living is working to change that by using data-driven solutions to help psychiatric patients access important community supports using a peer-run and grassroots service delivery model. Based in Tumwater, WA, Lucid Living is looking for more partners and is currently working with Washington State Department of Commerce, Molina Healthcare, Amerigroup, Seattle's Union Gospel Mission, Coordinated Care and Community Health Plan of Washington.



Training Tomorrow's Health Care Leaders

The Master of Health Administration program at the University of Washington is training the health care leaders of tomorrow to make an impact on the future of health care. Designed for early career professionals, the two-year, full-time program equips students with the leadership skills needed to launch their career in health administration. For mid-level career professionals, the UW also offers an Executive MHA program. Ranked as one of the top MHA programs in the country by U.S. News & World Report, the UW MHA program has long been considered a national leader in health administration training.

Learn more about Lucid Living, LLC and the University of Washington Master of Health Administration Program [here](#).

Joining the Alliance

To find out about the benefits of joining the Alliance, email Theresa Lampkin Tamura, Director of Membership and Business Engagement, at tamura@wahealthalliance.org.

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