

UPDATE for the Community



March 2021: The 15th *Community Checkup* to be Released

LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The priority for most of us is stopping the devastation of COVID-19 and seeing that vaccine distribution is accelerated. With your support, the Alliance is also holding firm to our mission of working to improve the quality and affordability of health care in Washington state by reducing overuse, underuse, and misuse of health care services, concerns that have been exacerbated by the pandemic. I am pleased to announce that the Alliance's latest *Community Checkup* will be released this month.

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

ALLIANCE UPDATES

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Alliance Vaccination Update

Teachers and Childcare Workers Now Eligible for Vaccinations

Governor Jay Inslee [announced](#) he will follow President Joe Biden's directive to prioritize vaccinations for teachers and childcare workers, making it possible for them to schedule appointments with providers right away. Biden announced the intention to get every pre-K educator, K-12 teacher, and childcare worker at least one shot of COVID-19 vaccine in March. Inslee said the vaccinations will be

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Join Us

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

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.](#)

Visit Own Your Health

The Own Your Health website offers guidance for consumers to make informed health care decision. [Learn more.](#)

We invite you to follow the Alliance

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made possible by the [Federal Retail Pharmacy Program](#), which operates through national pharmacies and independent chains. This is a reversal for Inslee, who earlier in the year said he would not prioritize vaccines to teachers because it would reduce the number available to others.

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.

Despite teachers being ineligible to receive vaccinations, planning by the Washington State Office of Public Instruction and Kaiser Permanente began in January with "[Get Ready](#)," a plan to prepare for creating vaccination sites along the I-5 corridor, from Smokey Point to Southwest Washington and around Spokane. "The health and safety of our students, staff, and families is a top priority for our state, and we're proud to support school employees and lead on equitable vaccine distribution," said Susan Mullaney, President of Kaiser Permanente Washington. "Vaccines are a crucial step needed to get our students and school employees back to school safely, and we are preparing the needed infrastructure now so we can be launch ready when our state approves the next phase of eligibility. We also look forward to working with our colleagues at Kaiser Permanente Northwest to ensure the full coverage of our southwest Washington school employees."

State Superintendent Chris Reykdal said, "Knowing we needed a plan for vaccinating our 143,000 school employees, my first call was to Susan Mullaney and the Kaiser Permanente team." Reykdal continued, "Although our schools are already reopening safely without widespread vaccinations, we know this will expedite that process and ultimately benefit our students, their families, our educators and staff, and our communities as a whole."

Celebrating FDA Approval of Johnson & Johnson's Vaccine

King County's Public Health Insider offers [5 Reasons to Celebrate a Third Covid-19 Vaccine](#).



All-Alliance Webinar April 1st from 11 am to 12:15 pm PST

The Washington State Health Care Cost Transparency Board (HCCTB), established by [HB2457](#) in the last session, is charged with understanding and reducing health care costs. The HCCTB met for the first time last month and is starting its work to:

- determine the state's total health care expenditures;
- identify cost trends and drivers in the health care system; and
- set a health care cost growth benchmark for providers and payers.

How will the HCCTB impact transparency in our state and what are the implications for your organization?

Hear how the HCCTB will undertake this work and ask your questions during a webinar on **April 1st at 11 am – 12:15 pm** with Alliance Executive Director Nancy Giunto and AnnaLisa Gellermann, HCCTB Manager at the Washington State Health Care Authority.

For information about the HCCTB, including a meeting schedule and other materials, click [here](#).

All-Alliance meetings are a benefit of Alliance membership. To find out how you can become an Alliance member, contact Theresa Lampkin Tamura tamura@wahealthalliance.org.



The Alliance Spreads the Word to Reduce Waste

Last month, Executive Director Nancy Giunto presented on the Alliance's efforts to support the low-value care efforts to MN Community Measurement (MNCM), an organization similar to the Alliance that collaborates with doctors, hospitals, clinics, insurance companies, purchasers, and state agencies to design measures and use data to drive health care improvement. She was invited to speak at MNCM's annual meeting.



The presentation chronicled the Alliance's low-value care milestones including:

- the first *Community Checkup*, the most comprehensive report of its kind for the region, in 2008;
- the nation's first [Choosing Wisely®](#) results in 2014;
- the first medical group results for low-value care using the Milliman MedInsight Health Waste Calculator™, published in [First, Do No Harm](#) in 2019;
- the [Driving Value Project](#), helping self-funded purchasers reduce low-value and increase high-value care, supported by Arnold Ventures, started last year;
- reducing waste campaigns, including [Drop the Pre-Op!](#), [More Isn't Always Better](#) campaign, and [Shared Decision Making](#).

Nancy offered practical advice to encourage MNCM to bring together all stakeholders to support evidence-based solutions. Julie Sonier, MNCM President and CEO said, "The Washington Health Alliance is a national leader in reducing low-value care and it was so valuable to hear about its journey, especially the *First, Do No Harm* analysis and reports. As we embark on similar work in Minnesota, hearing about the lessons learned in Washington is so helpful. I look forward to sharing our progress."

View Nancy's presentation [here](#).



How Can You Help Employees Affected by Multiple Sclerosis?

March is Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Awareness Month. Did you know that almost a million people in the US have MS, a disease of the central nervous system? Head to [MS Work Space](#) to discover resources that can help you support your employees who have or are caring for someone with MS

For more information about MS, click [here](#).



**Own Your Health and Choosing Wisely® Help
Health Care Decision Making**

You can find the Alliance's [Own Your Health](#) website, offering practical tools and resources to help consumers make informed health care decisions and our [Choosing Wisely® campaign](#) linked to the Washington State Health Care Authority's [website](#).

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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