
Update to the Community

January 2010

In this issue

- Progress At-A-Glance
- Progress on the 2010 Community Checkup Report on Medical Groups
- Save the Date: February 11 All Alliance Meeting on Health Disparities
- Central Line Infection Rates for Hospitals in Washington Available

Dear Community Member

Reflecting on 2009, the Alliance counts among its key accomplishments: production of the third Community Checkup report on medical groups and hospitals; the first public report in the region assessing key aspects of health plan performance; developing preliminary analysis around intensity or "resource use" of health services; beginning work to address health disparities in the region; and, embarking on a pilot with the State of Washington to bring together health plans and select medical groups and employers to develop an innovative, common payment structure to support the medical home model of care.

Like you, we have barely had time to catch our breaths and reflect on the past year before diving head first into another. We are only half way through January, and the Alliance already has a full calendar of projects and progress on the books. The All Alliance meeting on developing reports on resource use was well received. Many attendees signed up to be involved or informed as our work in this area continues, indicating that this is an important topic for our community.

Please save the date for the next All Alliance meeting on February 11, when we will focus on the issue of addressing the business case for health disparities. See below for more details.

Regards,

Mary McWilliams
Alliance Executive Director

Progress At-A-Glance

Thanks to the hard work of the Board, committees, workgroups, volunteers and staff, the Alliance continues to make progress, including:

- **Creating a more streamlined way for medical groups and clinics to update their information in the Alliance database.** See below for more information.
- **Providing input into Governor Gregoire's Health Reform Work Group.** Details will be released in the near future.
- **Finalizing the Alliance first "health equity toolkit," to be distributed at the All Alliance meeting on February 11.** More details below.

Want to find out more? *Keep reading!*

Progress on the 2010 Community Checkup Report on Medical Groups

~~~~~  
Health plans, self-insured employers and union trusts have submitted their data for the 2010 Community Checkup report on medical groups. The Alliance will ask medical groups to update their provider rosters this month as a next step.

Over the past few months, the Alliance has created a new portal to simplify the process for medical groups to update their clinic roster of providers practicing at each clinic location. The portal streamlines the process of updating and editing data and will be easier for medical groups and clinics to view and sort their information. Medical groups should refrain from updating their rosters until the Alliance distributes information for the new site at the end of January. The next Community Checkup report is scheduled to be publicly released in the Spring.

**Save the Date: February 11 All Alliance Meeting on Health Disparities**

~~~~~  
Puget Sound is one of the most racially and ethnically diverse regions of the country, so we cannot improve health care value for everyone without addressing health disparities. Alliance participants are invited to join us on Thursday February 11th for an important discussion of the business case for addressing health equity and health disparities.

The session will feature Dr. Reed Tuckson, Executive Vice President and Chief of Medical Affairs at UnitedHealth Group. Dr. Tuckson is a nationally-recognized expert in health equity issues. He will be followed by a panel discussion with local experts including: Mark Secord (Neighborcare Health), Martine Pierre-Louis (Harborview Medical Center) and, Mary Anne Harmer (Regence BlueCross BlueShield).

Additionally, there will be a robust poster session highlighting the good work of a variety of local organizations committed to improving health equity around the region. Attendees will also receive the Alliance's first "health equity toolkit" developed by our multi-stakeholder Consumer Engagement Team. The toolkit features innovative ways that local health care organizations are addressing health disparities, with suggestions for how to get started in doing your part in this important work.

Join us in the One Union Square Boardroom in downtown Seattle at 7:30 a.m. on Thursday, February 11. For more information and to RSVP, please contact Natalie Moe at nmoe@pugetsoundhealthalliance.org.

Central Line Infection Rates for Hospitals in Washington Available

~~~~~  
The Washington State Department of Health now displays hospital specific central line infection rates on its website. This public reporting was mandated by law in 2007. Twenty-six states, including Washington, now require hospitals to report certain types of infections that occur in their institutions. Updated data show some hospitals have made significant reductions in central-line infections as a result of

intense internal investigations and changes that were made possible in part because of the availability of this kind of data. Click [here](#) to view the data. In the near future, the Alliance intends to incorporate this data into the [Community Checkup](#) report.

**Suggestions or Comments about this Update?**

-----

Email: [diane@pugetsoundhealthalliance.org](mailto:diane@pugetsoundhealthalliance.org)

Contact Us Form: <http://www.pugetsoundhealthalliance.org/contact.cfm>

-----