

**The Puget Sound Health Alliance** is a private, non-profit organization – a team effort of those who provide, pay for and use health care services. We all work together to improve the quality of patient care for a healthier community, at a price more people can afford. By serving as a trusted source for information and public reporting that is grounded in research and reflecting best-practices, the Health Alliance helps:

- **People** take control of their health and become smarter health care consumers;
- **Doctors, other health practitioners and hospitals** provide the best treatments and highest quality care;
- **Public and private employers and union trusts** offer employees quality-focused health benefits and health improvement programs;
- **Health plans** help people find doctors, other health practitioners and hospitals that provide the highest quality care at the best value.

*The Health Alliance focuses on defining, measuring, reporting and rewarding high quality, efficient care. Our initiatives include:*

**Producing a publicly available comparison report** on quality, costs and patient experience in the region. This report will help patients make informed decisions about where and from whom to receive health care.

**Adopting evidence-based treatment guidelines**, in collaboration with physicians and other medical leaders in the region, for health care professionals to use in treating patients. These guidelines – initially for heart disease, diabetes, back pain, depression, and the appropriate prescribing of medications – conform to nationally recognized standards and scientific evidence, and reflect generally accepted standards of care.

**Providing useful informational tools to help guide health care decision-making** for patients about how to work with their doctors to prevent and manage illness and take better care of themselves; and for employers and union trusts to support health improvement for employees.

**Creating incentives and breaking down barriers.** For patients, this includes encouragement to improve personal health and manage chronic conditions. For doctors and hospitals, it includes support for increased use of information technology. It can also include making sure health benefits cover effective treatments, and recognizing and rewarding providers for high quality care (e.g., pay for performance).

### Background

The Puget Sound Health Alliance was founded in December of 2004 as an independent 501(c)3 non-profit, non-partisan coalition. The Health Alliance is a collaborative group of health care organizations, businesses and residents in King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, and Thurston Counties. Currently, individuals and about 140 organizations – representing more than 1 million covered individuals – have joined the Health Alliance. To join, or for more information, please visit our website.