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## Update to the Community

September 9, 2008

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### Dear Community Member,

*I'm very pleased to announce the launch of our new [Community Checkup](#) website, designed to make the online report much easier for everyone to use.*

*For the first time the online Community Checkup report also includes results for 26 local hospitals, using publicly-available data from the U.S. Dept of Health and Human Services. We plan to add more hospital measures using other data sources too.*

*The Community Checkup is becoming the best source for integrated, comparative information on health care quality and value in this region. We hope that you will use the new online report and spread the word about the Community Checkup to your employees, patients, enrollees, family members and friends. It is a unique and valuable resource designed for everyone in the community.*

*Progress here at the Alliance is continuing on many other fronts, too. The second Community Checkup report is now in draft form and being privately reviewed by medical groups, with the plan to finalize and make it available to the public in November. At that time, the online report will show the updated results and be expanded to include one new measure on asthma and results for many more medical groups and clinics being added in the second report.*

*Thank you for your continued interest in increasing transparency and value in local health care. To support this work, please contact us to join the Alliance.*

*Regards,*

*Mary McWilliams*  
Executive Director

### Searchable Community Checkup Report Now Available

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The new online [Community Checkup](#) makes the report on local health care performance easier for everyone to use.

Click the link above (or type in **[www.WACommunityCheckup.org](http://www.WACommunityCheckup.org)**) to get to the report that you can search and sort reflecting your interests. Look up results based on where you live or work or get care, or for specific clinics or medical groups or hospitals, or by certain health topics or conditions.

The Community Checkup shows how consistently recommended care is provided to patients in the areas of diabetes, heart disease, depression and low back pain, use of generic drugs, use of antibiotics and prevention. It also includes information on how consistently hospitals provide recommended care for patients who have surgery or are treated for heart attack, heart failure or pneumonia.

The online report includes descriptions of what is being measured and why it is important, along with suggestions for what patients, doctors, health plans and purchasers can do to help improve care.

You can also search and find best-in-class tools and information to suit your interests, on topics ranging from asthma to wellness and prevention. Look up what you need based on your perspective as a patient or individual, doctor or clinician, or employer or other purchaser.

At this point, the online report shows the results included in the Community Checkup report published by the Alliance in January 2008. The report shows a symbol for each result, based on the average performance across the region. Note that in some cases, the regional average is very high, so even the clinics or hospitals shown as performing at an 'average' rate are doing well. In other cases, the regional average rate is low, so even those listed with an 'above average' symbol have room for improvement.

All health care is not the same and each of us can do our part to help improve the overall quality and affordability of health care in our region.

### Carena Inc: Welcome to the Alliance!

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With the addition in August of Carena, Inc. The Alliance now has 171 participating organizations and 60 individual participants. We encourage everyone to join the Alliance to support this important work. Thank you to every Alliance participant!

### Upcoming Events and Opportunities

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**Join the Healthiest Business Challenge** -- Enter your business in the Healthiest State in the Nation Campaign's third annual Healthiest Business Challenge! It's a free way to engage your employees in healthy behaviors at work and at home. This six- week challenge, run by the Washington Health Foundation and sponsored by the Alliance, instigates some healthy competition around the state as Washington strives to log 7.5 million miles of health. The top three businesses will celebrate at a special reception at the Governor's Mansion in January 2009. The competition begins September 18. A CD-Rom with posters, health tips and examples is available to help you implement the challenge with little effort. Learn more at [www.HealthiestState.org](http://www.HealthiestState.org).

**2008-2009 University of Washington Extension Certificate Program in Healthcare Regulatory Compliance** -- The Healthcare Regulatory Compliance certificate program is a nine-month, three course program for those currently working in or around, or new to, the healthcare compliance field. Program begins October 1 and runs Wednesday evenings through June 2009 at the University of Washington Seattle campus. To learn more and to apply: [click here](#).

**Medical Home Pilot Grants -- Qualis Health is now accepting applications to take part in a grant they received from the Commonwealth Fund for a 5-year demonstration project to transform safety-net clinics into patient-centered medical homes.** Qualis, in partnership with the MacColl Institute for Healthcare Innovation, will select and support four organizations to serve as "Regional Coordinating Centers" to implement the program among participating clinics. Grantee organizations will receive financial support and technical assistance. Application packages can be downloaded from: <http://www.qhmedicalhome.org/safety-net/index.cfm>. Applications are due on November 3, 2008. For more information, please contact RFP@qhmedicalhome.org or Kathryn Phillips, MPH, Project Manager, at 206-364-9700 ext 2007.

**Free Hypertension Screenings at your Workplace --** Alliance organizations, including Virginia Mason, Hope Heart Institute and Novartis are participating in a program to increase community and employee awareness of hypertension. As a part of the program, Novartis is offering employers and other organizations a free blood pressure screening day at worksites. Participating employees qualify for a drawing for a pair of free tickets to a Seahawks home game. If you are interested conducting a screening day at your workplace, contact Darren Hageman [darren.hageman@novartis.com](mailto:darren.hageman@novartis.com).

### **The Alliance in the News**

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**Delivering Information - AHRQ Drives Quality in Context**

Because there are so few methods to funnel new intelligence into the healthcare system, valuable discoveries have the risk of going unnoticed and unused. The U.S. Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality (AHRQ) is tasked with a mission to gather research and disseminate valuable findings to those who can translate information into practice. (See section on the Alliance on the last page of the article.)

*August 2008, Managed Healthcare Executive* [Read more](#)

**Puget Sound Health Alliance Gears Up for Second Local Provider Report Card**

The Puget Sound Health Alliance is set to release a second local provider report card to the public in November.

*August 25, 2008, Healthcare IT News* [Read more](#)

**Alliance Receives \$50,000 Grant from the Regence Foundation**

The Regence Foundation recently awarded the Puget Sound Health Alliance \$50,000 to create a web-based portal to deliver performance results to Puget Sound area physicians and clinic leaders. The funding will enable the performance reports to be valuable tools to refine clinical improvement processes, identify and start new patient support programs, and guide overall quality improvements.

*August 24, 2008, Federal Telemedicine News* [Read more](#)

**Suggestions or Comments about this Update?**

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

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