
Update to the Community

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Dear Community Member,

Reflecting on 2008, the Alliance counts among its key accomplishments: the production of two Community Checkup reports, sponsorship of the eValue8 program comparing health plan performance for purchasers, identifying new initiatives to improve health care affordability and value, defining an approach to improve depression care in primary care settings, and launching the "Rx for Health Information" consumer engagement program in Olympia. The Alliance was also honored to receive an additional 3- year grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and to be recognized by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services as one of the first Chartered Value Exchanges in the country.

Buoyed by these developments, we have another ambitious agenda for 2009. We'll continue our strategies of transparency, value and consumerism to transform health care.

Please consider joining the Alliance as we continue with this important work to improve health care quality and affordability for everyone in the region. Visit our [website](#) to learn more about participating in the Alliance.

Regards,

Mary McWilliams
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:

- **Began testing of data for the 2009 Community Checkup Report.** Our independent data consultants received data extracts from 18 data suppliers and is now loading and testing the data. The consultants will run data snapshots for review by the data suppliers and data suppliers will verify whether the resulting summary reports match their internally- derived results.
- **Added two more data suppliers for the Community Checkup report.** Data has been received from all 18 data suppliers for use in the 2009 Community Checkup.

- **Created specific reports for data suppliers.** As an added value to health plans, self-insured employers and union trusts who supply data for the Community Checkup reports, the Alliance will provide data supplier specific reports showing the same measures of effective care provided to each data supplier's enrollees, employees, and/or dependents, compared to the care provided to more than 1.6 million patients across the five-county region.
- **Completed review by medical groups of the draft results comparing care by payer type** (e.g., Medicaid vs. commercial coverage). The final report will be released in early March.
- **Hand-delivered the Community Checkup report to every member of the Washington state legislature**, along with a letter signed by Mary McWilliams and Steve Hill, WA Health Care Authority administrator and Alliance Board member. We thanked the legislature for their support of health care transparency to motivate improvement in quality and affordability, and encouraged the State to continue to make value-based purchasing decisions to help move the market.
- **Recognized hospitals for using the SCOAP Surgical Checklist.** As a partner in the SCOAP Surgical Checklist program, the Alliance endorses efforts to spur use of the checklist. We intend to report which hospitals are using the SCOAP Surgical Checklist as part of the hospital comparisons in the Community Checkup.

Want to find out more? Keep reading!

Gov. Gregoire Encourages Hospitals to Use the SCOAP Surgical Checklist

Surgical Care and Outcomes Assessment Program's (SCOAP) goal is to improve quality by reducing variation in process of care and outcomes at every hospital in the region. With support from Governor Gregoire, earlier this month, SCOAP rolled out the SCOAP Surgical Checklist for all hospitals statewide on January 15. The SCOAP Surgical Checklist is now the standard checklist that all hospitals in this state should use to ensure that every patient benefits from surgical teams double-checking important details, which will increase patient safety, reduce medical errors, and streamline surgical procedures. We intend to report which hospitals are using the SCOAP Surgical Checklist as part of the hospital comparisons in the Community Checkup. To learn more about the checklist go to www.scoap.org/checklist.

Additionally, the Alliance applauds SCOAP, which recently began to publicly report how often recommended care is provided during certain surgeries in some of the hospitals that participate in the program. Hospitals that agree to publicly share their SCOAP results are on the leading edge of providing safer, more effective health care for their patients. To read more about the performance data, go to www.scoap.org/public.

Opportunity to Participate in National Disparities Leadership Program

The Disparities Leadership Program (DLP) is a year-long executive education program designed for leaders from hospitals, health plans and other health care organizations who want to implement practical strategies to eliminate racial and ethnic disparities in health care, particularly through quality improvement. The program sponsored by the National Committee for Quality Assurance and the Joint Commission, focuses on the lessons learned and expertise gained from the development and evolution of programs currently in place at the Massachusetts General Hospital as well as at several leading health plans across the country. The application deadline to participate in the program is February 27, 2009. To learn more, visit www.mghdisparitiessolutions.org.

Upcoming Events

National Wear Red Day on Friday, Feb. 6. Join with millions of women, as well as companies, organizations and cities across America on National Wear Red Day, Friday, Feb. 6, 2009, a program of the American Heart Association. To learn more visit: <http://goredforwomen.org>.

National Health and Productivity Forum. The Integrated Benefits Institute (IBI) and the National Business Coalition on Health (NBCH) will hold its first annual Health and Productivity Forum on February 9 - 11, 2009 in Los Angeles at the Hyatt Regency Century Plaza. The forum features a variety of health and productivity topics, including a preconference workshop on 2/9 from 4 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. focused on coalitions' work to measure health and productivity. In that workshop, the Ohio and Kansas City coalitions will share the data strategies they are using to assist members like you. Dr. Ron Kessler from Harvard Medical School will address how self-reported data fit in. For more information and to register go to <http://ibiweb.org/>.

Foundation for Health Care Quality job opening

The Foundation for Health Care Quality (FHCQ), a private, not-for-profit 501(c) corporation, is seeking a part-time Medical Director for the Clinical Outcomes Assessment Program (COAP). COAP is a well- established, statewide cardiac revascularization quality improvement program. Please visit the COAP website, www.coap.org, for additional information about the program.

Suggestions or Comments about this Update?

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