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## Update to the Community

July 2009

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### Dear Community Member

Our country is in the midst of an exciting national dialogue about comprehensive health reform. As President Barack Obama has said, fixing what's wrong with our health care system is no longer just a moral imperative, but a fiscal imperative. Comprehensive reform will have to improve the quality of health care, expand access, and rein in costs. This is a multi-faceted challenge that will require a multi-faceted solution with all of us aligning our efforts. Objective measurement of quality, efficiency and ultimately costs is an important component of both understanding where improvements need to be made as well as increasing accountability for performance. The Community Checkup is one of our region's contributions to the work ahead.

Next Thursday July 16, we plan to release the next Community Checkup Report. This report will include information on health care provided to about two million people, by 76 medical groups, nearly 240 clinics as well as 30 hospitals across the Puget Sound region. It represents a significant milestone for the Alliance and the community at large as we work together to improve health and health care. This is a challenge for all of us—doctors, hospitals, patients, health plans and even purchasers that buy health benefits—and we all share a responsibility to be part of the solution.

Many community members contributed to this report including physicians, clinic leaders, patients, purchasers, and health plans. We extend our hearty thanks to these individuals and organizations who contributed valuable time, resources, data, and other efforts to make this report possible. I hope to see many of you at the July 16 All Alliance meeting when we publicly release the report. See below for details.

Regards,

*Mary McWilliams*  
Alliance Executive Director

### Progress At-A-Glance

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

- **Rolling out of the expanded and updated 2009 Community Checkup Report at the All Alliance meeting on July 16.** More details are below.
- **Created a policy position on national health reform priorities with input from a variety of stakeholders.** This position will be sent to the board for approval.

**Want to find out more?** *Keep reading!*

## **New Community Checkup Report Available July 16**

Next week, the Alliance will unveil the new and expanded Community Checkup report - the most comprehensive report on health care performance ever produced for the Puget Sound region. The report will show results for more clinics, based on updated and expanded data. This is a particularly important set of results, as this is the first time the report results will be available for use in contract discussions, benefit planning, marketing and other business purposes in order to motivate and reward performance improvement.

A printed version of the report will be available at the All Alliance meeting on July 16, with detailed results for comparison available at [www.WaCommunityCheckup.org](http://www.WaCommunityCheckup.org).

The All Alliance meeting takes place on July 16th from 7:30 to 9:30 a.m., at the One Union Square Boardroom. To attend, please RSVP to Natalie Moe at [nmoe@pugetsoundhealthalliance.org](mailto:nmoe@pugetsoundhealthalliance.org).

## **Alliance Establishes a Position on Health Care Reform**

The Alliance brought a varied group of stakeholders together to set forth the policy parameters to guide how and when the Alliance will enter into the debate on health reform. The relative efficiency of health care in the Pacific Northwest, plus the successes of the Alliance in the Puget Sound region, create the opportunity for others to learn from our work and use Washington state as a laboratory for innovative approaches to increasing health care value. Alliance staff will submit a final document for Board approval later in July.

## **Alliance a "Guiding Force" in Health Care**

Last month, the Alliance was mentioned in a Seattle Times editorial as a "guiding force" in health care in recognition of our Community Checkup report providing a mirror and incentive for providers, clinics, hospitals and patients to make smarter health care decisions. The editorial outlines several major efforts in Washington state to reform health care. Read the full article on the Seattle Times [website](#).

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Improving Health, Reforming Health Care: An Employer Call to Action - November 8-10, 2009**

Attention, health care stakeholders! Join the National Business Coalition on Health (NBCH) and its coalition employer members at the health care buyer's premier conference-two days of in-depth training, networking, & product demonstrations with health care's largest employer customers. Meet with peers and experts alike, capitalizing on this unique opportunity to discuss health care issues and insights as NBCH presents Improving Health, Reforming Health Care: An Employer Call to Action. The 2009 Annual Conference will convene nearly 500 health care leaders in Scottsdale, Arizona, November 8-10, to focus on the overarching and interconnected imperatives of health and health care transformation. More information at:

<http://www.nbch.org/events/conference.cfm>

## **Suggestions or Comments about this Update?**

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