

# Olympia Business Watch

The Association of Washington Business blog reviewing the news and events shaping business and politics.

## More on Federal Recognition of PS Health Care Alliance

Posted by Richard Davis on January 04, 2007 at 3:08 PM

The health care [event](#) I discussed yesterday and the Puget Sound Health Alliance's anticipated report on quality of care received extensive coverage this morning.

The Seattle [Times](#) describes the scene:

To hear those most involved, it's a historic effort. And Wednesday, with a hailstorm of buzzwords, federal Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt, Gov. Christine Gregoire and King County Executive Ron Sims joined a slew of other government and business leaders at Starbucks headquarters in Seattle to praise the effort and predict it all will soon become meaningful to average consumers of health care, too.

The Seattle P-I [gets](#) to the crux:

The bottom line for consumers is that they eventually will have a way to compare their health care needs with the cost and performance and decide who and where they want to go to be treated.

[The News Tribune](#) has a similar take:

Soon, you're likely be able to shop for hospitals and doctors the way you shop for cars – armed with the latest information on how they stack up against the competition, both in quality and cost.

And the [Puget Sound Business Journal](#) provides this detail:

Margaret Stanley, the alliance's executive director, said that this year the alliance will for the first time publish a report on how medical groups in this region compare in quality on 23 measures covering the care of chronic diseases such as cancer and diabetes, back pain and depression. The report also will judge doctors' practices on preventive care and prescription drugs, and it will compare medical groups on how efficiently they treat patients. ... Doctors and hospitals will gain information on how they measure up in comparison with their peers, and presumably this will drive them to improve the quality of the care they provide.

I think of this less as health care reform, which always seems to mean more government and less choice, than as a sensible effort to give patients and purchasers the information they need to make a market-based system work. That's a worthwhile goal.