



WSAHQ

Washington State Association for Healthcare Quality

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER - FEBRUARY 2005

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Total WSAHQ Members
95
As of February 2005

Encourage your
Colleagues to Join and
Renew Membership at
www.wsahq.org

President's Message

By: Patricia Terry
pterry_cphq@yahoo.com

Washington State has had a colorful political season since the elections in November 2004. Our hotly contested gubernatorial race has given us national attention. But headlines aside, the work of conducting our state's business goes on. Our work as healthcare professionals is often impacted by decisions made by the state legislature in Olympia. I thought it might be a good idea to let you know what is going on this legislative session. Listed below are bills relating to healthcare services and practices that have been or will be presented by various members of the Washington State House of Representatives in Olympia.

House Bills Relating to Healthcare in the 2005 Legislative Session:

- HB 1075 - Modifying the composition of the nursing care quality assurance commission.
- HB 1353 - Providing for a central resource center for the nursing work force.
- HB 1441 - Providing access to health insurance for children.
- HB 1443 - Modifying Medicare supplemental insurance policy provisions to conform to federal law.
- HB 1463 - Requiring schools to provide information on meningococcal immunization.
- HB 1479 - Regarding independent prescriptive authority for advanced registered nurse practitioners.
- HB 1486 - Requiring applicants for state purchased health care benefits or uncompensated hospital care to identify the employer of the proposed beneficiary of the benefits or care.
- HB 1497 - Implementing changes to Medicare supplement insurance requirements as mandated by the Medicare modernization act of 2003 and other federal requirements.
- HB 1512 - Concerning improving the quality of care in state-purchased health care programs.
- HB 1546 - Regulating naturopathic physicians.

If you would like to have a deeper understanding of these bills, you can use the link below to take you to the full text of any bill that interests you or your organization:

Bill Search: <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/Legislature/>

If you would like to contact your legislator to voice opinions regarding a specific bill and you're not sure who to call, use the link below to identify the legislator for your part of the state:

Find your Legislator: <http://www.leg.wa.gov/DistrictFinder/Default.aspx>

And finally, if you would just like more information on how to participate in the legislative process, you guessed it; I have provided you with a link for that as well.

Participating in the process: <http://www1.leg.wa.gov/WorkingwithLeg/>



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The passing of a bill can be a long and tedious process. This process can seem mysterious to those of us who are outside the political arena. So in order to unravel some of the mystery, here is a synopsis of how a bill becomes a law:

How a Bill Becomes a Law:

1. A bill may be introduced in either the Senate or House of Representatives by a member.
2. It is referred to a committee for a hearing. The committee studies the bill and may hold public hearings on it. It can then pass, reject or take no action on the bill.
3. The committee report on the passed bill is read in open session of the House or Senate, and the bill is then referred to the Rules Committee.
4. The Rules Committee can either place the bill on the second reading of the calendar for debate before the entire body, or take no action.
5. At the second reading, a bill is subject to debate and amendment before being placed on the third reading calendar for final passage.
6. After passing one house, the bill goes through the same procedure in the other house.
7. If amendments are made, the other house must approve the changes.
8. When the bill is accepted in both houses, it is signed by the respective leaders and sent to the governor.
9. The governor signs the bill into law or may veto all or part of it. If the governor fails to act on the bill, it may become law without a signature.

Regardless of your political persuasion, as healthcare quality professionals we all have a vested interest in the future of healthcare in our state. I would like to encourage all of you to get involved, stay informed, and let your voice be heard as critical decisions are being made by our elected officials.

~ Patricia Terry BSN, RN, CPHQ

Getting to Know WSAHQ's 2005 President-Elect

An Interview with Heather Zuzel

By: Patricia Terry

pterry_cphq@yahoo.com

Heather, please describe yourself briefly, including current work/school, hobbies, etc.:

I have worked in healthcare for about 10 years now. I worked for Planned Parenthood and the Oregon Health Sciences University (OHSU) in Portland, OR. At OHSU, I worked in a grant-funded program where I coordinated educational programs for family medicine residents that helped prepare them for rural health assignments. The courses were designed to help them develop cultural competency, improve their medical Spanish, etc. My undergraduate degree was in Spanish Language and Literature so this role was a good fit for me. While in graduate school at Portland State University, I did an internship at Care Oregon. I currently hold Masters degrees in both public administration and healthcare administration.

I currently work for the Community Health Plan of Washington in Seattle. My specific role is Project Manager for the Quality Integration and Performance Improvement department. My projects are focused on process improvements in the service quality at the community health centers in our state, and developing programs to understand our customers' requirements and needs.



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This past year, I am also working as an examiner for the Washington State Quality Award.

What are your hobbies?

I have done quilting for 12 years. And I don't know if you can call it a hobby, but I LOVE Hawaii! I have been to Molokai two times and am always thinking about my next trip to paradise. I also have two cats that own me!

What interested you in becoming a board member?

I thought it would be a good opportunity for meeting new people. I am interested in collaborations that impact healthcare quality and patient safety issues.

What are your future ideas for the organization?

My specific role as President-Elect is to support the membership. I will be the liaison to the newly formed Western States Quality Alliance. Closer to home, I would like to see an expansion of our membership that included people from the community health center network. Since many of them work in remote locations, they often feel isolated. I would like to find ways to help them feel more connected and to have greater access to education about quality. I would also like to see WSAHQ in active partnerships with other similar organizations, such as the Washington Health Foundation. I could see myself taking an active role in the marketing of the organization for forming partnerships.

As you can see, we are very lucky to have Heather on the 2005 Board of Directors. We look forward to her insight, enthusiasm and leadership in the years ahead. Thank you for spending a few moments of your time to get to know her a little better. If you have any questions for Heather, she can be emailed at huzel@chpw.org. Stay tuned for next month's newsletter when another board member will be featured.

The Puget Sound Health Alliance is Born

King County Executive Ron Sims to Lead the Way.

By: Martin Benning

martin.benning@seattlesurgerycenter.com

"I tell my children to bicker now because when they are adults, they must come up with solutions," says King County Executive Ron Sims at a press conference held on January 28, 2005. Community leaders in healthcare, business, and politics joined to unveil the Puget Sound Health Alliance (PSHA). Sims stressed the need for a solution to our current healthcare crisis. According to a 2004 RAND study, 41% of the health care purchased in the Seattle area as employers and patients does not contribute to better health outcomes. Sims stressed the need for alignment with the cost and quality of healthcare delivered in our region.

The goal of the alliance is to collaborate health care purchasers, providers, plans, professionals and patients to improve the quality of care and at the same time, reduce the costs. "No one purchaser, plan, or health care professional group by itself is capable of creating the change necessary to decrease waste, improve the quality of care, and decrease the cost trends in the Puget Sound region. We must harness the collective strength and intelligence of our region to meet this challenge," says Sims. Achieving this effort will require uniform standards for quality, measurement, data sharing, and cooperation from purchasers, providers and payers. In addition to improving outcomes, the goal of the Alliance is to improve consumers' and health care professionals' ability to become partners in managing health and decision-making.



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At the press conference business leaders from Washington Mutual, Starbucks, REI and other top companies presented their concerns for the crisis as well as their support of the Alliance. "Better health care for our employees is a critical issue and it's absolutely necessary to control the cost of that health care for both businesses and employees," says Craig Tall of Washington Mutual.

The Alliance currently has 24 members representing over 330,000 insured citizens in the Puget Sound region. The interim board of directors is working diligently on the formation of the Alliance and the recruitment of new members. For more information, visit <http://www.govlink.org/psha/>

WSAHQ Upcoming Events

Compiled By: Rosa Johnson

rosaj@qualishealth.org

We are pleased to announce we have scheduled the quarterly WSAHQ continuing education meetings for 2005. The meetings will be held at the Tukwila community Center on the following dates and times:

- May 11th 4-6PM: Effective use of data in QI
- September 29th 4-6PM: Malcolm Baldrige quality awards: Introduction to the Criteria and Process
- November 9th 4-6PM: Reports from the NHQA annual meeting

And please mark your calendars tentatively for the annual meeting, which we are planning in conjunction with OHQA for April 22nd in the Portland area.

More definitive details will follow as soon as we know more. Keep checking www.wsahq.org for updates.

Mark your calendars and share this information with others who may be interested! Susan Mellot, PhD, RN, CLNC, CPHQ, FNAHQ of Mellot and Associates will be conducting a CPHQ preparation course on June 23-24 in Wenatchee. We are delighted that Dr. Mellot, who conducts these preparation courses nationally, is available to present this locally. Who should attend? Those wanting assistance in preparing to take the CPHQ examination as well as those already certified who want a refresher, or those just interested in the content. More detail to come later. Contact Rosa Johnson at rosaj@qualishealth.org or at 206.364.9700, ext 2142.

Thanks so much!
Rosa

Career Opportunities

Check out our website for current career opportunities www.wsahq.org. Click on the [Directory](#) link to navigate to the appropriate page.

If you have events, news or other content that members may find useful, please email them to: martin.benning@seattlesurgerycenter.com