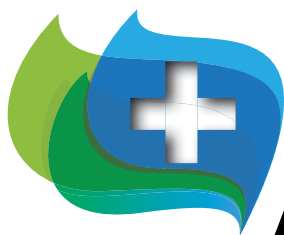




# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS

an excerpt of

*Washington State Primary Care Needs Assessment*



**AHEC WW**

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FOR WESTERN WASHINGTON AT WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# OBJECTIVE

The *Washington State Primary Care Needs Assessment* has been created in partnership with the Area Health Education Center for Western Washington and Washington Healthcare Access Alliance with support and leadership from the Washington State Department of Health Primary Care Office. The full report provides an overview of primary care capacity in Washington, and identifies priorities for programming and legislation. An advisory committee of diverse area experts was consulted in regard to structure, content and sources. Data included was collected from a wide range of public, private, for- and nonprofit partners in the fields of healthcare, economics, education, and social services.

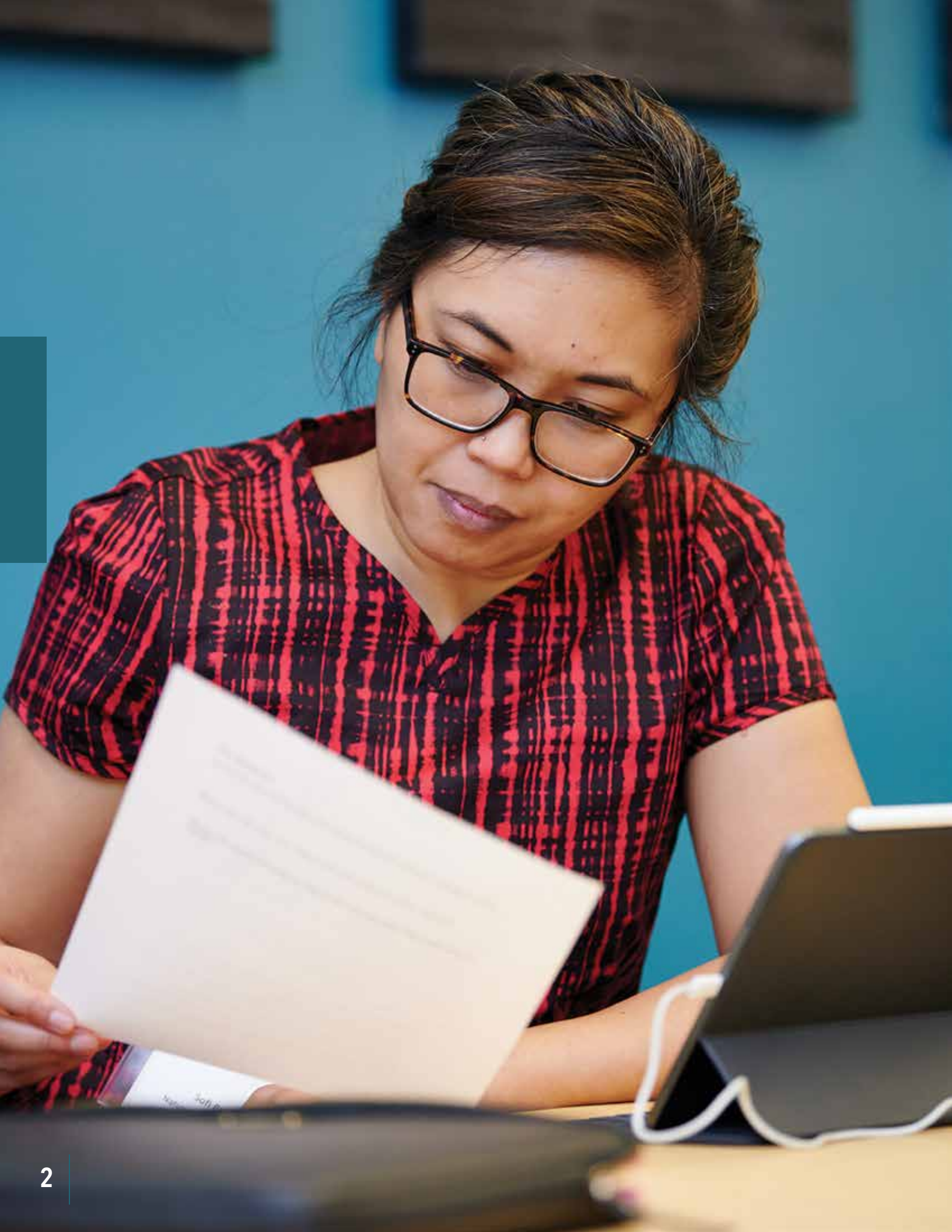
## Data Sources and Limitations

Information included in this report is publicly accessible. Some data referenced was sourced directly from authoring organizations. In some instances, data referenced was voluntarily contributed through surveys, and may not be statistically representative of the population. Additionally, data for minority groups, including racial minorities, LGBTQ individuals, immigrants, and refugees, may be impacted by underreporting. Comparative data is provided where available.

This excerpt comes from the full report, *Washington State Primary Care Needs Assessment*, which is intended to provide a broad overview of primary healthcare access and capacity to inform policy and programming that addresses the needs of Washington's underserved communities. Included here is state-specific information related to workforce development solutions. The full document includes robust and accessible health equity data to inform meaningful policy and programming, special populations, resources, and recommendations.







# WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT SOLUTIONS

## Healthcare Workforce Recruitment and Retention

No single effort can create the ideal healthcare workforce; accordingly, Washington has adopted a multi-pronged approach to improve the size and distribution of the primary care workforce.

Washington's recruitment and retention efforts include coordinated planning, pipeline and education efforts, support for service programs, and employer technical assistance programs. Clinician retention is woven into much of the recruitment programming. Great efforts are made to provide clear communication of and exposure to the unique challenges and rewards that rural and underserved clinical opportunities can bring.

## Coordination of Workforce Planning

Washington's Health Workforce Council serves as the main planning and leadership body around healthcare workforce issues for the state. The Council publishes an annual report to inform policy and programming.

One of the Council's ongoing projects, in partnership with Washington's Workforce Board and the University of Washington's Center for Health Workforce Studies, is the Health Workforce Sentinel Network. Launched in 2013, the network is a cross-sector collaborative working to identify and respond to changing demand for healthcare workers and identifying emerging skills and roles required by employers (*Health Workforce Council, 2018*). The Sentinel Network also provides a data hub on health workforce data, trends, and industry results in workforce development: [WASentinelNetwork.org](http://WASentinelNetwork.org). Initially, the Sentinel Network was funded by the Healthier Washington Initiative and the Governor's Office; in 2018, the Legislature then passed ongoing funding that began in 2019.

Recommendations in the 2018 Health Workforce Council annual report included ongoing support for information needs for state health workforce planning, strengthening the dental health workforce pipeline, promoting integrated care through the creation of a Washington Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education, and establishing a Care Worker initiative to develop multi-disciplinary career pathways for frontline workers (*Health Workforce Council, 2018*).





## Northwest Health Career Path Project

A substantial number of outreach programs throughout the Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) region help create a healthcare workforce that more accurately reflects the population by bridging gaps for underrepresented students in college level training in the health sciences. The Northwest Health Career Path Project coordinates efforts among a spectrum of career outreach programs in order to form career pathways. The project maps the current landscape of where, how, and at what levels health sciences career pathway programs function throughout the WWAMI region (*Northwest Career Path, 2019*).



## Programs Targeting Students Grades 8 through 12

Roots to Wings is a transformative co-mentoring health sciences education pathway program for Native American and Mexican-American students in grades 6 through 12 and osteopathic medical students. The collaborative program involves Mt. Adams School District (MASD), Yakama Nation Tribal School (YNTS), Chief Leschi School (CLS), Heritage University (HU), and Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences (*Pacific Northwest University of Health Science, 2020*).

The Health Occupations Preparatory Experience program (Project H.O.P.E.), administered by the Eastern Washington Area Health Education Center, is one of the most robust experiential learning opportunities for high school students in the state.

Project H.O.P.E. is a 4-week, paid summer internship for high school students at healthcare facilities within the student's local community. The program targets students who are first generation college-bound and from rural areas or from populations that are underrepresented in the health professions.

Student interns rotate through several settings within one facility to gain exposure to a variety of health professions and document their activities in the healthcare setting in a journal. Project H.O.P.E. interns are provided a stipend at the end of the internship (*Eastern Washington University, 2019*).

Hosted by Area Health Education Centers, Scrubs Camp is a one-day, hands-on, experiential workshop for high school students to explore a variety of health careers and learn about educational pathways to enter into those professions.

To encourage high school students to explore healthcare careers, Health Professions Affinity Community facilitates activities including presentations by healthcare professionals, field trips, and tutoring at participating high schools. Students also create and implement projects that address public health concerns in their communities, then present their results at a "Health Scholars Fair" (*Area Health Education Center for Western Washington, 2020*).

The Na-ha-shnee Summer Institute, hosted by Washington State University, is a 12-day, free summer camp for Native American and Alaskan Native students currently in the 9th, 10th, and 11th grades. The program encourages youth to explore careers in the health sciences by providing hands-on learning experiences taught by healthcare providers, faculty at WSU Spokane, and health sciences college students (*Washington State University, 2020*).

Doctor for a Day exposes, inspires, and cultivates underrepresented middle and high school students in Seattle to enter careers in healthcare through monthly workshops run by medical students, residents, fellow therapists, and faculty. Day-long, hands-on workshops provide students with education and mentorship. Doctor for a Day is a collaboration with University of Washington School of Medicine Center for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, Student National Medical Association, Network for Underrepresented Residents and Fellows, and Department of Surgery Diversity Council (*Center for Health Equity, Diversity & Inclusion, 2020*).

Beginning in middle school, College Success Foundation engages low- to moderate-income students -- many aspiring first-generation college goers, or students of color -- in college awareness and readiness activities. In high school, College Success Foundation focuses students on goal setting, academic engagement, and college prep through advisors, case management, college visits, leadership development, and scholarships (*College Success Foundation, 2020*).

Tacoma Summer Jobs 253 Program offers public school junior and seniors an opportunity to earn high school credits for graduation, college credits, and work experience through a paid summer employment program. The program is a workforce development initiative first launched in 2013 and is a joint effort between the City of Tacoma and Tacoma Public Schools, managed by the REACH Center (*City of Tacoma, 2020*).

Starting in elementary school, Rainier Scholars is a 12-year program paving a pathway to college graduation for low-income students of color in Seattle. The program provides academic preparation, leadership development, and personalized support (*Rainier Scholars, 2020*).



## Programs Targeting College Students

The Targeted Rural and Underserved Track (TRUST) program was developed at the University of Washington to provide a connection between underserved communities, medical education, and the health professional. The TRUST program creates a workforce pipeline by guiding qualified students through a curriculum that connects underserved communities in Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) to the University of Washington School of Medicine and its affiliated residency programs.

Beginning in the summer before medical school, TRUST scholars participate in clinical and classroom experiences, discussions, and conferences. Scholars gain a clear understanding of the benefits and challenges of a practice in rural and underserved areas. TRUST match data show promising results in building a sustainable rural primary care workforce: over 51% of WWAMI TRUST graduates, from the first graduates in 2012 to the current 2019 graduates, have matched into rural primary care (*University of Washington, 2020*).

Established in 1996, the WWAMI Rural Integrated Training Experience (WRITE) program at the University of Washington School of Medicine is a clinical medical education program designed to help meet the needs for

rural physicians in the WWAMI region. Students in their third year of medical education participate in 22 to 24 weeks of clinical education experience at a rural teaching site. In addition to gaining broad clinical experience, students gain a deeper understanding of components of rural care such as longitudinal diagnosis, treatment and management of care for community members, and integration with the rural community and its resources. As a workforce program, WRITE aims to bring students back to rural and underserved communities within the WWAMI region for future practice after medical school to meet the unique needs of the communities served. As of September 2019, 66.7% of WRITE graduates had returned to one of the five WWAMI states after residency or a fellowship. Since 2018, Washington has been home to 10 WRITE sites.

The Rural Underserved Opportunities Program (RUOP) is a 4-week rural immersion program for University of Washington students between their first and second years of medical school. This program is supported by the Area Health Education Centers and RUOP coordinators throughout the WWAMI region. Students are placed with a preceptor in a rural or underserved clinical site to participate in hands-on clinical learning. This program was developed to encourage primary care careers in clinical practice and expose students to a rural or underserved community.

In RUOP, students receive broad clinical experiences and contact with the community. They may complete histories and physicals, assist with office procedures, attend births, and assist in surgery.



Students also receive funds for travel and assistance in locating and paying for housing via partnership with Area Health Education Centers (*University of Washington, 2019b*).

The Community-focused Urban Scholars Program (CUSP) at the University of Washington School of Medicine trains physicians who reflect urban underserved communities and are committed to serving as providers. CUSP is a 4-year longitudinal program incorporating clinical care, personal and professional development, and population health components into students' education. Students also participate in team-based activities and service-learning projects. CUSP students go beyond the graduation requirements of the UWSOM and complete multiple clinical rotations in underserved urban settings (*University of Washington School of Medicine, 2019a*).

Within the Center for Health Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, the University of Washington also has numerous programs for research and enrichment including Summer Health Professions Education Program, UW Health Professions Academy, Chicanos/Latinos for Community Medicine, and the Minority Association of Pre-Health Students.

The WWAMI Area Health Education Centers (AHEC) program works through a variety of programs to address the persistent health workforce shortages and poor health outcomes of urban underserved and rural communities and to develop a diverse, interdisciplinary health workforce. Since 2018, the WWAMI AHECs include a program called AHEC Scholars among their other offerings. AHEC Scholars are students from a variety of health education programs participating in additional didactic and community/experiential/clinical learning over the course of a 2-year certificate program. Students gain valuable education in topics that will support them in providing team-based, culturally sensitive, patient-centered care for rural and underserved communities (*Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho Area Health Education Center, 2018*).

In 2017, Washington State University opened its doors to a new Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine which was created to fill critical healthcare gaps across the state. The community-based clinical training model employed at the college helps students gain experience in healthcare settings in communities with the greatest need. The college attracts students with significant ties to Washington, both urban and rural, which increases the likelihood of their remaining in the state to practice medicine after graduation (*Washington State University, 2019*).







## Registered Apprenticeship Programs

Washington State Department of Labor and Industries operates the registered apprenticeship program through their Washington State Apprenticeship and Training Council (WSATC). Registered apprenticeships offer on-the-job training for skilled workers under professional supervision, along with classroom instruction, to develop a highly skilled professional workforce. Apprenticeship results in a nationally-recognized professional credential. Apprentices are paid during their training, making the apprenticeship model an accessible avenue to education when income is an essential. Registered apprenticeships also require a sponsoring organization such as employer, union, or employer association to oversee the apprenticeship program (*Washington State Department of Labor & Industries, 2019*).

Apprenticeship training in healthcare is helpful for workforce development because it can assist with retaining an incumbent workforce of people who would like to progress within their organization or facility and add to their job satisfaction. Apprenticeships also provide a pathway for new entrants

into the workforce. As primary care works to address its workforce distribution needs and challenges, apprenticeship can be one mode to target specific professions and locations in need of increased workforce.

The Washington Association for Community Health created a new apprenticeship model to increase the medical assistant workforce through a stipend, 12-month program. The Registered Medical Assistant Apprenticeship Program, offered through the Institute for Rethinking Education & Careers in Healthcare (IN-REACH), prepares students to take the Certified Clinical Medical Assistant (CMAA) exam through 2,000 hours of on-the-job training, 410 hours of supplements coursework, and in-person lab days to demonstrate mastery of hands-on technical skills. In addition, completion of the apprenticeship program counts toward college credit. To date, 403 apprentices have graduated from the program. Since 2017, the program has achieved a 99% CMAA exam pass rate, and apprentices have earned over 9,600 college credit hours.

The Washington Association for Community Health, in addition to sponsoring the Medical Assistant





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apprenticeship program, also has adapted the Dental Assisting curriculum into a stand-alone training that employers can use to train staff. Similar to an apprenticeship program, the curriculum can be accessed online via module-based learning. The Association also offers training and technical support as needed (*Washington Association for Community Health, 2019*).

The Healthcare Apprenticeship Consortium under SEIU Healthcare 1199NW Multi-Employer Training Fund, is a multi-union, multi-employer partnership sponsoring healthcare apprenticeship programs such as Medical Assistant and Central Sterile Processing Technician programs to provide all Washington State healthcare employers access to skilled training for their workforce.

## Additional Resources

The Area Health Education Center for Western Washington conducted an assessment of needs and possibilities for a distance-learning program to train talent -- and address nursing shortages and distinctive healthcare needs. The culminating report, *Strengthening the Local Nursing Workforce for Rural and Tribal Communities*, published December 2018, concluded that addressing these needs and challenges will require collaboration across education, healthcare providers, and a range of other supporting agencies. The approach suggested included multiple lines of action taken up by a coordinated consortium of workforce, education, labor, and industry partners to create place-based learning and professional development in rural and tribal communities (*Zabihi, 2018*).

The Washington Rural Palliative Care Initiative (WRPCI), led by the Washington State Office of Rural Health at the Washington State Department of Health, is a pilot effort to better serve patients with serious illness in rural communities. The initiative uses public-private partnership to integrate palliative care in multiple settings. Seven rural communities are currently participating in the initiative (*Healthier Washington Collaboration Portal, 2020*).

The Palliative Care Institute at Western Washington University in a partnership with Northwest Life Passages Coalition and other community agencies and volunteers to transform palliative care in Whatcom County and support our human responses to living and dying. Among their other work, the Institute's leadership made a presentation to the Joint Legislative Executive Committee on Aging and Disability in 2016 to advocate for special healthcare that would improve quality of life for those with serious illnesses (*Western Washington University, 2016*).

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Prepared by:

**AREA HEALTH EDUCATION CENTER**  
FOR WESTERN WASHINGTON AT WHATCOM COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Whatcom Community College Foundation Building 101B  
237 W. Kellogg Rd, Bellingham, WA 98226 | (360) 383.3170 | info@AHECWW.org

**Authors:**

**Kate Di Nitto, MFA**

Area Health Education Center for Western Washington

**Christine A. Lindquist, MPH**

Washington Healthcare Access Alliance

**Rachel Eagan**

Writer and Research Assistant

**Washington Primary Care Needs Assessment Advisory Committee**

Dr. Mabel Ezeonwu, Associate Professor, School of Nursing & Health Studies, University of Washington

Dan Ferguson, Director, Allied Health Center of Excellence

Katherine Lechner, Workforce Development Manager, Washington Association for Community Health

Carlos Enciso Lopez, Student, UWSOM

Stacey Morrison, Associate Director, WWAMI AHEC Program Office at the University of Washington

Nancy Murphy, Director of Mental Health Services, The Olympia Free Clinic

Dr. Ki Shin, Internal Medicine Physician, Montesano Family Medicine

Sue Skillman, Senior Deputy Director, Center for Health Workforce Studies; Research Scientist, WWAMI Rural Health

Research Center & Rural PREP

Suzanne Swadener, Senior Health Policy Analyst at Washington State healthcare Authority

Nathan Thomas, Workforce Specialist, Northwest Regional Primary Care Association

Jacqueline Barton True, Senior Director, Rural Health Programs, Washington State Hospital Association

Diana Sampson, Manager of Program Operations, SOM: Psychiatry: Admin: Research Administration

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Cori Garcia Hansen, BA, BS, CMA, Director, Area Health Education Center for Western Washington

Carolyn Watson, MS, Associate Dean for Health Professions, Whatcom Community College

Lee Che P. Leong, MEd, Project Manager, Area Health Education Center for Western Washington

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