



**FOUNDATION FOR
Health Care Quality**

2025 Annual Report

Letter from the CEO

Collaboration matters, now more than ever. Collaboration takes down silos, forms and builds relationships, changes culture, and improves care. Now, we are facing a growing health care economic crisis, a dismantling of the institutions meant to protect our health, and widespread public mistrust of providers, vaccines, and our health care ecosystem at large. This moment demands that we all come together as a health care community to promote what works and change what does not.

Our Foundation for Health Care Quality has had a tremendous impact on our region's health. Our Care Outcomes Assessment Programs have significantly reduced adverse events after surgery, lowered costs, and centered care on the patient. The Washington Patient Safety Coalition has helped to promote a culture where staff feels comfortable speaking up and identifying errors. The Bree Collaborative has improved clinical care workflows, payment strategy, and the public's health. Smooth Transitions has built relationships the improve care transfers for birthing people, providers, and organizations.

Each of us has a role to play. We look forward to partnering with you next year and beyond.

In community,
Ginny Weir

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BY THE NUMBERS

Improving health and health care through meaningful clinical data; multi-sector action; education; highlighting success across our health care ecosystem; and empowering collaboration.



5 Conferences and Summits



Cardiac COAP Surgery Performance Award

- Virginia Mason Franciscan Health St. Michael Hospital
- Providence Regional Medical Center



Cardiac COAP PCI Performance Award

- Harbor Regional Health
- MultiCare Auburn Regional Medical Center
- MultiCare Deaconess Medical Center
- PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center
- Virginia Mason Franciscan Health St. Francis Hospital
- Virginia Mason Franciscan Health St. Joseph Medical Center



Awarded by a panel of judges to organizations that demonstrate progress on embedding equity into Bree best practices

- Community Health Plan of Washington
- Kaiser Permanente Washington
- Virginia Mason Franciscan Health St. Francis Hospital



9 Publications
17 Research projects



Award given to organizations that demonstrated fidelity with Bree best practice recommendations

14



115 Webinars, trainings, and presentations



8 Students mentored



Award given to organizations that demonstrate the initiation of work on implementation of Bree guidelines -

4



125 Participating organizations



Recognition program to celebrate staff and teams who voice their concerns to keep patients and staff safe, and their organizations that create work environments to encourage them to do so

2



Continuing education credits



Award given to organizations that demonstrate innovation in create equity in patient safety programs. This year's winner was Wellpoint Washington

1

CME - 169.5
CE - 316
CNE - 114.5

CARDIAC CARE IMPROVEMENT ACROSS PROCEDURES



Cardiac Care Outcomes Assessment Program

Launched in 1997, and guided by core beliefs that the direction of health care is best guided by physicians; the quality of health care is best measured by analyzing clinical data; and the improvement of health care is best achieved through universal program participation, COAP convenes clinicians from across the region at monthly meetings to review data, discuss current challenges, and identify areas for improvement. Individual hospitals and physicians are supported with real time data reports and access to COAP community resources and expertise. We convene members virtually for quarterly webinars and every year, in person, to review regional data, share practice, discuss current issues in cardiac care, and further build community.

“...the PNW does a great job with our cardiac patients, but there is always room for improvement. Lots of new ideas to float around to improve outcomes...”



New Regional Initiatives

Surgery Initiative: Increasing rates of Left Atrial Appendage Ligation

PCI Initiative: Increasing rates of intracoronary Imaging during PCI



PCI Bleeding Reduction Initiative Wrap-up: Final Report
June 2025. 25% reduction in PCI risk-adjusted bleeding rates 2021-2024



Clinical Data and Medicare Claims Data

Integrated clinical data with Medicare claims data for PCI and cardiac surgery to track long term outcomes found the relative risk of adverse events to be significantly lower in Washington compared to rest of country.

Jeannie Collins-Brandon Retirement

Jeannie has been leading Cardiac COAP for the past ten years and is retiring January 2026. She has been instrumental in bringing a strategic lens to the program and growing our impact across the region. Of our cardiac community, she says, *“You’re a dedicated, compassionate group doing life-changing work. I’m grateful to be a part of it!”*



“COAP’s purpose is to support all hospitals and clinicians in achieving the highest levels of patient care and outcomes.”

Get in touch with Kristin Sitcov
KSitcov@qualityhealth.org



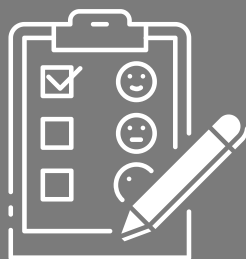
CLINICAL DATA TO IMPROVE LABOR AND DELIVERY MANAGEMENT AND OUTCOMES

Get in touch with Kristin Sitcov
KSitcov@qualityhealth.org

Obstetrical Care Outcomes Assessment Program

We cannot improve what we don't measure; to improve care we need all those involved in providing birthing care to participate in measurement. We use granular, stratified, clinical data to pinpoint specific clinical areas where opportunities for change exist within the process of care given during labor, delivery, and the postpartum period. Balancing measures including newborn outcomes are a critical component. Built-in reporting tools provide real-time access to a participant's own data. Comparative reports are reviewed and distributed quarterly and include an assessment of results, allowing participants to focus on targeted strategies for change aimed at reducing variation and ensuring equity.

Patient-Reported Outcomes



A birthing person's experience of their care can be as important as the clinical outcome. OB COAP has been funded by the Ballmer Group to allow participating sites to distribute a brief, online survey to birthing people, which is then matched with clinical outcomes. Patient experience data will be linked to a selection of clinical measures to better understand the relationship between patient experience and outcomes. The site launch is being aligned with TeamBirth implementation, supporting a goal to build on existing strategies and workflow for quality improvement.

Papers & Letters Published 2025

- Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Low-Risk Unplanned Cesarean Birth: Disaggregating Asian Data; Spencer SM; Journal Racial Ethnic Health Disparities, March 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40615-025-02401-0>.
- Comparison of an Externally Validated Interpretable Machine Learning Model with the US Preventive Services Task Force Approach to Preeclampsia Risk Assessment; Bosschieter T; Ultrasound in Obstetrics & Gynecology, July 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1002/uog.29264>
- Episiotomy and Obstetric Anal Sphincter Injury in Operative Vaginal Birth; Souter V; Letter to the Editor, American Journal Obstetrics & Gynecology, Oct 2025. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ajog.2025.10.011>.

Abstracts Presented 2025

- Comparison of an Externally Validated Interpretable Machine Learning Model with the US Preventive Services Task Force Approach to Preeclampsia Risk Assessment; Bosschieter T
- Episiotomy in the US: Have We Got it Right?; Souter V, Painter I, Sitcov K, Khalil A, Caughey AB
- Community-Level Social Risk Predicts Severe Maternal Morbidity Independent of Clinical Factors; Stewart N

Manuscripts Under Review

- Maternal Vulnerability Index Predicts Severe Maternal Morbidity Independent of Clinical Risk



DEEP DIVES INTO IMPROVING SURGICAL CARE



Spine Care Outcomes Assessment Program

Spine COAP data includes elective cervical and lumbar procedures on four or fewer spinal levels, with an emphasis on fusion, excluding trauma, tumor and infection diagnoses.

Surgical Care Outcomes Assessment Program

Surgical COAP data includes colorectal procedures (both elective and non-elective), bariatric surgery, appendectomies (adult and for pediatric—both medically and surgically managed appendicitis), and small bowel obstruction.



Updating our Data Collection Tools

Improvements to our data collection include making data abstraction easier by standardizing variables in pre-, intra- and post-op periods (e.g., analgesic regimens, glucose control) and systematically eliminating free text fields (e.g., reclassifying erroneous entries).



Patient Optimization

Improving patients' fitness for surgery can be done by using standardized protocols for optimization prior to procedures and unifying use of enhanced recovery process scores post-procedure. This can reduce complications associated with surgery, improve patient outcomes, and reduce cost of care through decreasing required interventions and length of stay.



Quarterly Community of Practice Meetings

Learning is a social process that occurs primarily through our interactions with others in real-world contexts. In our quarterly community of practice meetings agendas included risk standardization vs. risk adjustment, readmission, prolonged length of stay, post-operative infection, and other topics of intervention that allow providers to share learning and best practices.

**“Data that sites
and surgeons *need*
to improve care
across the region.”**

Get in touch with Vickie Kolios-Morris
VKolios@qualityhealth.org



COLLABORATING ACROSS HEALTH CARE SECTORS

Bree Collaborative

2025 Guideline Topics



Blood Pressure Control

Improving care processes to decrease the number of people with undiagnosed and/or unmanaged hypertension.



Surgical Optimization

Optimizing patients with unmanaged or uncontrolled hyperglycemia and anemia to improve their post-surgical outcomes.



First Episode Psychosis

Defining and expanding coordinated specialty care services.

Established in 2011 by the Washington State Legislature to give public and private health care system organizations the opportunity to identify specific ways to improve health care quality, outcomes, affordability, and equity in Washington State, the Bree Collaborative has developed 40+ guidelines on a wide variety of topics.

Get in touch with Emily Nudelman, Beth Bojkov, and Karie Nicholas at bree@qualityhealth.org

Watch our three-part *Catalyst for Change* webinar series, our webinars on last year's guidelines, our hot topic series, *Measuring Change* evaluation series, and our *Health in Action Summit* [HERE](#).

Implement Bree Guidelines

- [Read our implementation guides and checklists](#)
- Talk to other implementers on our [message boards](#)
- [Submit](#) your data on adoption

Washington Patient Safety Coalition

2025 Northwest Patient Safety Conference



At the 22nd annual conference, "Navigating Rough Seas", speakers provided insight and actionable tools and techniques to help providers address challenging and unique times.

Virtual conference with 14 presentations over 2 days

498 conference attendees in the US & globally

Highlighted Speakers: Michael Millenson - Pulitzer Prize nomination, formerly at the Chicago Tribune; MK Haber - Those Nerdy Girls; Dannagal Young - author of *Wrong: How Media, Politics, and Identity Drive our Appetite for Misinformation*



Safety Initiatives

- Promoting Psychological Safety
- Improving the Diagnostic Process
- Addressing Stigma & Bias



Speak Up for Safety Workshops

Our dedicated patient advocate members have led six workshops for patients in libraries across our region, with many more planned for 2026!



Communication and Resolution

This two-part learning series focused on the new patient safety structural measure, identifying CRP as a best practice, and how to attest to CRP to receive the full financial benefit. The trainings included 143 individuals across state 20 and three countries.

Get in touch with Steve Levy
SLevy@qualityhealth.org

IMPROVING COMMUNITY BIRTH EXPERIENCE AND OUTCOMES

Community Birth Data Registry

The Community Birth Data Registry (CBDR), was created by midwives for midwives, to capture and measure perinatal care processes across all birth settings and provider types.



Welcoming new members

In 2025 we added 24 new provider groups from across Washington State, and from Texas and Virginia.

Get in touch with
Akane Sugimoto Storey
CBDR@qualityhealth.org



Providing hands-on training

The CBDR supports training for midwives on how to use our database, which is a key part of ensuring that we are working in partnership to support our community and allows us to measure and support improvement.

Smooth Transitions

Families who choose to give birth at home or in a freestanding birth center deserve the best possible care when plans change and they need to access hospital services. Smooth Transitions™ is a Washington state-based quality improvement program, enhancing the safety of these hospital transfers. We bring together community midwives, hospital providers and staff, and EMS personnel to build a collaborative model of care that puts birthing families at the center.

Get in touch with
Sarah Davidson
SDavidson@qualityhealth.org

"It was scary and overwhelming to have to go somewhere else and have treatments I didn't initially want... But the team made sure I had all the information to make a decision and gave me as much time and space as possible to decide what to do. Then they provided me with exceptional care once the decision was made."



Protected case review

Smooth transitions is currently developing the capacity for internal and external protected case review.



Transfer Surveys

In 2025, 1750+ transfer surveys were conducted, collecting qualitative data to provide a 360 degree view of the transfer process for holistic care improvement.



NEW PROJECTS TARGET INEFFICIENCY

Administrative Simplification

The Administrative Simplification program makes it easier for providers and payers in Washington state to do business together by reducing the cost and complexity of information exchange. Work groups bring together health plans, public payers, hospitals, practices, and public policy-makers to develop policies, best practices, and technology solutions in support of simplification. The Foundation for Health Care Quality is now designated as the Lead Organization for Administrative Simplification, taking over this role from OneHealthPort.

Workgroups

Behavioral Health Work Services
Over-the-Counter Contraceptives
ePre-Authorization Legislation

Business and technology
Pre-Service
Credentialing



The over-the-counter contraceptive work group provided information and established best practices around the “how to” of administering the contraceptive benefit. This increased awareness of covered services, enhanced consumer understanding, and provided information and training for pharmacists processing a claim.

Impacts

Future Work



In 2026, we will add a focus on optimizing the electronic medical record patient portal and helping our community prepare for new prior authorization data interface requirements before the January 1, 2027 deadline.

Get in touch with Heidi Steeves at
HSteeves@qualityhealth.org



Transformational Repository & Analytics eXchange (TRAX)

This year, we facilitated the Transformational Repository & Analytics eXchange (TRAX) governance committee. TRAX is a voluntary, opt-in, electronic health information exchange (HIE) system for data providers and users to provide health care and public health professionals with more timely, actionable chronic disease surveillance information using a shared platform model.

The administrative model would build on standard HIE agreements. Key goals include to:

- Build transparency and trust while seeking to limit administrative burden.
- Use existing public health resources to leverage early successes and identify new health care uses.
- Improved information exchange.

Join this critical work as a data trading partner!

Find out more: fhcq@qualityhealth.org



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- J. Richard Goss, MD, MPH, retired, Medical Director, Harborview Medical Center
- Ashok Reddy, MD, MS, Provider, Veterans Health Administration, Assistant Professor, Health Services, Medicine, University of Washington Medical Center

OUR STAFF

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- **Cardiac COAP:** Ravi Hira, MD, FACC, FAHA, FSCAI
- **Surgical and Spine COAP:** Nicholas J. Kassebaum, MD

CONSULTANTS & STATISTICIANS

- Strategic Advisor to OB COAP: Barbara Levy, MD, The Levy Group
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- Community Birth Data Registry Co-Director: Marit Bovbjerg, PhD, MS
- Administrative Simplification: Bill Campbell, VIA Consulting
- Cardiac COAP Statistician: Charles Maynard, PhD
- Cardiac COAP PCI Educator: Karen Young
- Statistician: Edwin Wong, PhD
- Statistician: Ian Painter, PhD
- Statistician: Nathaniel Henry, DPhil

Thank you to all who have volunteered time, knowledge and expertise to support our work.

Cardiac COAP Management Committee

- **Chair:** Jacob Doll, MD, VA Puget Sound Health Systems
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- Theodore Koutlas, MD, Providence Sacred Heart
- Eric Lehr, MD, FRCSC, PhD, Swedish Medical Center Cherry Hill
- Daniel Mumme, MD, MultiCare General Hospital
- Gautam Nayak, MD, Kittitas Valley Health
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- Colin Raelson, MD, Swedish Issaquah Campus
- Tariq Salam, MD, FACC, FHRS, MultiCare Health System
- Sarah Speck, MD, MPH, FACC, Swedish Medical Center
- Ashok Venkataraman, MD, PeaceHealth Sacred Heart

Obstetrical COAP Management Committee

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- Kandi Bauman, MPA, OB COAP Consumer Advisor
- Lisa Galbraith, DO, MPH, Multicare Health System
- Melissa Cheyney, PhD, Community Birth Data Registry
- Melissa Denmark, MS, LM, Smooth Transitions
- Peter Napolitano, MD, UW Medical Center

Spine COAP Management Committee

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- Jens Chapman, MD, Swedish Neuroscience Institute
- J. Richard Goss, MD MPH, Harborview Medical Center
- Anthony Harris, MD, MultiCare Health System
- Rod Oskouian, MD, FAANS, Swedish Neuroscience Institute
- Steven Stanos, DO, FAAPMR, Rehabilitation & Performance Medicine, Swedish Pain Services

Surgical COAP Management Committee

- **Chair:** Robert M. Rush, Jr., MD, FACS, PeaceHealth
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- David R. Flum, MD MPH, University of Washington Medical Center
- Joseph Frankhouse, MD, FASCRS, Legacy Health System
- W. Scott Helton, MD, Virginia Mason Franciscan Health
- Anjali Kumar, MD, MPH, FACS, FASCRS, Washington State University
- Avishai Meyer, MD, FACS Legacy Health System
- Thien Nguyen, MD, Overlake Hospital Medical Center
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- Mary Kay O'Neill, MD, MBA, retired
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Blood Pressure Workgroup

- **Chair:** Norris Kamo, MD, MPP, Virginia Mason Franciscan Health
- **Vice Chair:** Jake Berman, MD, University of Washington
- Mia Wise, MD, Kinwell Medical Group
- Asher Strauss, PsyD, Kinwell Health
- Albert Tsai, MD, AHA Puget Sound
- Elhami Hannan, MD, Kadlec Medical Center
- Nicholas P Koenig, MD, Kaiser Permanente
- Elizabeth C Slye, RN, Kaiser Permanente
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- Kristina Petsas, MD, UnitedHealthcare
- Theresa Kreiser, MS, Comagine
- Katrina Gangsaas, YMCA
- Mary Beth McAteer, Virginia Mason Franciscan Health
- Molly Parker, MD, MPH, Jefferson Healthcare
- Jessica Beach, MPH, MPA, Molina Healthcare
- Leo Morales, MD, University of Washington
- Chris Longnecker, MD, University of Washington
- Eugene Yang, MD, University of Washington

First Episode Psychosis Workgroup

- **Chair:** Darcy Jaffe, ARNP, Washington State Hospital Association
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- Anne Marie Patterson, ARNP, Thurston, Mason & Grays Harbor
- Rebekah Woods, MS, King County Behavioral Health and Recovery Division
- Brian Allender, MD, King County Behavioral Health and Recovery Division
- Lauren Farmer, Behavioral Health Resources
- Libby Hein, LMHC, Molina
- Tobias Dang, MD, Kaiser Permanente
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- Delika Steele, Washington Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- Dana Dean Deoring, ARNP, Dean Deoring & Associates
- Chris DeCou, PhD, Amazon
- Chivonne Mraz, LCSW, Regence Blue Shield
- Lucinda Sanchez, LICSW, Comprehensive Healthcare
- Oladunni Oluwoye, PhD, Washington State University
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- Thien Nguyen, MD, Overlake Medical Center
- Andrea Allen, RN, MHA, Health Care Authority
- Irl Hirsch, MD, University of Washington
- E. Patchen Dellinger, MD, University of Washington
- Ty Jones, MD, CPPS, CHPW, CAQSM, Regence
- Robert Rush, MD, PeaceHealth Saint Joseph
- Joe Frankhouse, MD, FACS, Legacy Health
- Scott Helton, MD, FACS, Virginia Mason Medical Center
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- Edie Shen, MD, Harborview Medical Center
- Judy Chen, MD, University of Washington
- Tony Roche, MD, Harborview Medical Center

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- Kristin Sitcov, Foundation for Health Care Quality
- Margie Bridges, DNP, ARNP-BC RNC-OB, Overlake Medical Center and Clinics
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- Tiffany Tibbs Christensen, MPH, Department of Health



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Diagnostic Accuracy

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- Jeff Goldenberg, Talias's Voice
- Jonathan Stewart, JC, MSc, MS, RN
- Sydney Edlund, MS, OPSC
- TJ Sheely, MPP, OPSC
- Valerie Harmon, MPH, OPSC
- Rex Johnson, Patient Advocate
- Yanling Yu, Patient Advocate

Health Equity, Stigma & Bias

- Chair: Anita Sulaiman
- LuAnn Chen, MD, CHPW
- Mylinh Nguyen, PharmD, WSPA
- Rosalee Allan, MHA
- Yolanda Frazier, MBA

Administrative Simplification

Over the Counter Contraceptives Workgroup

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- Omar Daoud, PharmD, Community Health Plan of Washington
- Petra E Eichelsdoerfer, RPh, MS, ND, UnitedHealthGroup
- Molly Firth, MPH, Consumer Advocate
- Yolanda Frazier, MBA, Wellpoint
- Lee Che Leong, MEd, Northwest Health Law Advocates
- James Lin, PharmD, QFC
- Noelle Redmond, PharmD, Cambia Health Solutions
- Sydney Rogalla, MPH, Washington State Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- Kathy Therrien, MBA, Lead Director, Market Compliance, Aetna
- Jennifer Wang, PharmD, Molina
- Sofiya Volynsky, Rite Aid
- Lorri Walmsley, PharmD, Walgreens

Breast Pump Access Workgroup

- Penny McKee, Wellpoint
- Molly Firth, MPH, Consumer Advocate
- Sydney Rogalla, MPH, Office of the Insurance Commissioner
- Megan Boardman, Community Health Plan of Washington
- Kimberly Brady, LICSW, Community Health Plan of Washington
- Jessica Beach, MPH, MPA, Molina
- Petra E Eichelsdoerfer, RPh, MS, ND, UnitedHealthGroup

Credentialing Workgroup

- **Chair:** Carianne Dockter, WA Association Medical Staff Services
- Laura St John, Aetna
- Kathy Therrien, Aetna
- Kristi Watts, Cigna
- Shawna Backman, Community Health Plan of WA
- Amy Condon, Coordinated Care
- Cindy Bergley, First Choice Health
- Kim Kenning, Kaiser
- Laurie Coleman, Optum
- Amanda Adams, Premera Blue Cross
- Kristen Nieman, Premera Blue Cross
- Shama Hughes, Providence
- Hattie Clabby, Regence
- Kim Sheldrake, United Healthcare
- Audrey Welch, United Healthcare
- Amanda Boyer, Benewah Community Hospital
- Aysia Arrell, Columbia Valley Community Health
- Erika Medina, Columbia Valley Community Health
- Lisa McKay, NW Pediatric Center
- Audra Merkle, Odessa Memorial
- Tanya McLaughlin, Neighborcare Health
- Jeb Shepard, WA State Medical Association
- Brett Vandenberg, Allegro Pediatrics

Business and Technology Workgroup

- Sarah Murphy, Seattle Children's
- Karen Franz, Evergreen Healthcare
- Jess Norris, Evergreen Healthcare
- Char Potter, Fred Hutch
- Michael D'Incecco, Fred Hutch
- Sarah Leverentz, UW Medicine
- Dana Thomas, UW Physicians
- Kevin Chambers, Virginia Mason Medical Center
- Cheryl Parkins, Confluence Health
- Esmeralda Bernal, Confluence Health
- Jamie Keisel, Multicare
- Scott Behe, Multicare
- Amy Lathan, Community Health Plan of Washington
- Don Cooley, First Choice
- Evelyn Erdley, First Choice
- Laurie Johnstonbaugh, Cigna
- Jennifer Benge, Kaiser Permanente
- Jonathan Celis, Kaiser Permanente
- Jodi Micas, Health Care Authority
- Alex Dufault, Premera
- Leslie Boyd, Regence
- Kevin Moore, Delta Dental
- Pam Cottrell, Consultant
- Gladys Jones, Consultant

Social Needs and Health Equity

- Jessica Beach, MPH, MHA, Molina
- Abigail Berube, MPH, Washington State Hospital Association
- Fawzi Belal, MS, Washington Nurses Association
- Leo S Morales, MD, University of Washington
- Yolanda Frazier, MBA, MA, Wellpoint
- Kristine Saludo, MBA, Molina
- Amy Brittan, MPH, Molina
- Kendra Peterson, Washington State Medical Association
- Beth Weitensteiner, DO, International Community Health
- Janice Tuft, Muslim Research Guide
- Jon Liu, MD, Amazon
- Cinthya Garcia, University of Washington
- Karma Kreizenbeck, MA, Fred Hutch Cancer Center
- Mary Fabrizio, MS, MultiCare
- Brittany St Clair, UnitedHealthCare
- Shirley Raltz, MSN, RN, UnitedHealthCare
- Allison Williams, Whatcom County Health Department
- Amy Rydel, Whatcom County Health Department
- Kylie Kingsbury, MPH, CHAS Health
- Nkem O Akinsoto, MA, University of Washington
- Emily Transue, MD, MHA, Comagine Health
- Linda Baggio, PhD, MPH, Health Care Authority
- Mylinh Nguyen, PharmD, Washington State Pharmacy Association
- JP Anderson, MSW, CHOICE
- Bindu Nayak, MD, Confluence Health
- Bertha Lopez, MBA, MultiCare Yakima Memorial