

Primary Link Hospital Inpatient Discharge Program:

Connecting hospital patients to primary providers for follow-up care

On June 1, we expanded our Primary Link services with a new Inpatient Discharge Program at Providence Regional Medical Center Everett. So far, the results are encouraging!

When a patient is discharged from the hospital, pursuing follow-up care with a primary provider within five days greatly improves recovery and long-term health outcomes. Having a primary care home also reduces patient readmission rates and emergency department visits. That's why **Providence Regional Medical Center Everett** reached out to Project Access Northwest late last year to help provide these same positive outcomes for its low-income, uninsured and Medicaid patients, who may struggle to find care. Following a six-month planning period, the new **Hospital Inpatient Discharge Program** was launched on June 1.

Primary Link Coordinators contact the patients by telephone prior to their inpatient hospital discharge and work to schedule convenient primary care follow-up appointments for them with **Community Health Center of Snohomish County, Sea Mar Community Health Centers, International Community Health Centers, Molina Medical in Everett** or **Providence Medical Group**, among others. This program works with both the Colby and Pacific hospital campuses in Everett. Once these initial appointments are scheduled, patients receive reminder calls and care from the primary care provider.

"We're excited to see our Primary Link concept expanded to new sites, in new ways," says Sallie Neillie, executive director of Project Access Northwest. "So far, the numbers we're tracking are encouraging; we're making appointments, and patients are getting the follow-up care they need. I think this is a model that can be adapted to meet the needs of any hospital system."

The **Hospital Inpatient Discharge Program** operates six days a week. We are carefully tracking patient data to assess the program's impact.

« Primary Link Coordinator Armani' O'Neal coordinates follow-up care for patients by phone. This approach allows the program to be expanded easily to remote locations.



Seattle King County Dental Society: Care coordination is the key to success

This month we spotlight Seattle King County Dental Society, a longtime partner of Project Access Northwest in providing dental care. Executive Director Jennifer Freimund discusses our partnership, the challenges in voluntary dental treatment and the critical role care managers play in helping patients.



Seattle King County
Dental Society

Dental care currently represents well over half of Project Access Northwest's specialty care referrals, thanks in large part to its successful and long-standing partnership with **Seattle King County Dental Society (SKCDS)**. SKCDS has been seeking the best way to increase access to dental care and to enable and encourage its members to provide free care for patients in need. After studying the issue years ago, SKCDS identified a narrow focus for its efforts and quickly identified care coordination as the key to success.

"Our focus became addressing adult dental care, particularly in situations that are emergent or life-threatening," explains Executive Director Jennifer Freimund. At the time, the state of Washington had cut all adult dental Medicaid funding except emergency extractions.

"In talking to social service agencies and providers, it became clear that in order to provide free care, the low no-show rate was critical," she continues. That's when Freimund was introduced to Sallie Neillie and Project Access Northwest, and the two explored how their programs could work together — starting with a program through **Northwest Kidney Centers** and later through the **Swedish Community Specialty Clinic**.

"We recognize that a significant piece of the success of those programs is the case management and the low no-show rate," says Freimund. "I do not believe we could do those two initiatives — nor any in the future — if we did not have that navigator role fulfilled."

"People who have trouble accessing dental care face barriers, either perceived or real," she explains. "A significant part of those barriers are often logistics or even just having the opportunity to discuss fears about dental care. And so we can arrange all the volunteer dentists in the world to do all the free treatment in the world, but if we don't have that piece that helps the patient solve the logistical issues and address their fears, then... the patients will not show up. And then the volunteers — who are all small business people — will have lost time and money."

Today, with the Affordable Care Act (ACA), funding for dentistry remains a critical issue.

"The ACA is decapitated health care," Freimund says. "It funds everything below the chin; it doesn't address teeth, it doesn't address mental health; and it doesn't address vision."

Until proper funding of dental care is addressed, many dentists find it easier to provide free care than to accept Medicaid and manage the administrative burden of billing, pre-approvals, etc. But patients must do their part. Care coordinators play a critical role in prescreening patients, reducing the no-show rate, and improving outcomes of charity care.

"Oral disease is 100% preventable... but when you are facing a lot of challenges in life, dentistry does not appear at the top of the list."

— Jennifer Freimund,
Executive Director,
Seattle King County
Dental Society

WOW! Matching grant kicks off a new \$15,000 Fall Fundraising Challenge

Ash
CONSULTING LLC

Finance & Accounting Professionals

Our accounting firm **Ash Consulting** — *which knows the value of a dollar* — has stepped up in a big way with a \$15,000 matching grant to help us kick off a new **Fall Fundraising Challenge**.

"We're committed to supporting Puget Sound area non-profits that resonate with our philanthropic interests," explains Erica Ash. "We've worked with Project Access Northwest for years and are excited about the work they do with limited funding. We're so excited in fact that we've decided to challenge the community to raise \$15,000, and we'll match it!"

Join us in our race to 15K IN 15 DAYS! See back panel.



Staff and board member updates

Welcome new staff members



Primary Link Coordinator **Armani O'Neal** was excited about joining Project Access Northwest because of the opportunity to develop the Primary Link program. She also likes the culture of the organization.

She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology with a minor in statistics at the University of Central Florida. She is now working on her master's degree in industrial/organizational psychology at Seattle Pacific University.



Care Coordinator **Cindy Wang** was attracted to Project Access Northwest because we put people first and work for better and healthier communities. With bachelor's degrees in medical anthropology

and Chinese from the University of Washington, she is now pursuing a master's degree in public administration at Seattle University.



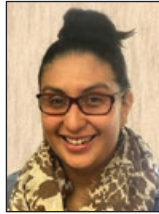
Dental Administrative Assistant **Navil Escarcega** is passionate about helping those in the community who need access to services that are otherwise unavailable to them. Navil attended Highline Community

College. She has always wanted to work in health care and thinks this is a great place to start.



Primary Link Coordinator **Peter Merritt** graduated from Evergreen State College with an emphasis on social justice. While he has worked in other nonprofits that focus on community and education, he wanted to learn more

about health care. He is passionate about helping members of the community who don't have access to services. He also works as a DJ on the side.



Primary Link Coordinator **Laura Meléndez** earned her health care administration degree from Bellevue College and is pursuing a degree in marketing from Shoreline Community College.

She came to us after seven years at HealthPoint because she liked what we did for the community. Bonus: Her best friends work here!

Welcome board member Scott Combs



Earlier this year, we welcomed to our board **Scott Combs**, chief financial officer for Pacific Medical Centers (PacMed).

"In my role at Pacific Medical Centers, I get to see

first hand the positive impacts that Project Access Northwest brings to our patients as they navigate the often complex health care system," says Combs. "Project Access Northwest plays a vital role in our community, connecting people to the care they need and improving access for diverse populations."

At PacMed, Combs oversees regional programs for planning, budgeting, revenue cycle, and capital allocation for the multi-specialty physician practice and health plan with annual revenues of \$200 million. He previously served as director of business development, working to create new service lines and strategic partnerships to expand the scope and geography of PacMed's delivery system. He began at PacMed in 2003 and has more than 20 years of health care finance experience in the Providence and Swedish health systems.

Project Access Northwest Board of Directors

President:

Chrissy Yamada
Former Senior Vice President,
Chief Financial Officer
EvergreenHealth

Vice-President; Chair, Development & Marketing Committee:

Susan Peskura
Retired, Associate Vice
President, Sales & Account
Management, Physicians
Insurance, A Mutual Company

Treasurer:

Scott Combs
Chief Financial Officer,
Pacific Medical Centers

Secretary:

Shannon Diede
Senior Leader in
Information Services

Pat Cooke

Founder and Lead Consultant
CIO Guidance

Jennifer Freeman

Vice President of Finance,
MCG Health, LLC

Sylvia Gil

Senior Public Policy Analyst
Community Health Plan of
Washington / Community Health
Network of Washington

Debra Gussin

Executive Director
University of Washington
Neighborhood Health Centers

Robin Larmer, JD

Of Counsel, Stoel Rives, LLP
Attorneys at Law

Laurel Lee

Vice President Network
Management & Operations,
Molina Healthcare of
Washington, Inc.

Sally Mildren

VP, Customer Experience,
Coordinated Care

Sarah Philp, M.D.

Family Practice Physician, Burién,
Group Health Cooperative

Kerry Radcliffe, JD

Deputy General Counsel,
PeaceHealth

Henry Veldman

Retired, Vice President of Operations,
PeaceHealth Medical Group

Grace Wang, M.D.

Family Practice Physician,
International Community
Health Services

Marcia M. Wharton, M.D.

Associate Medical Director,
Molina Medical Group

Ex-Officio

Board Member:

Kristina Larson

Executive Director,
King County Medical Society

Sallie Neillie

Executive Director
Project Access Northwest



1111 Harvard Avenue ■ Seattle, Washington 98122

NONPROFIT ORG.
US POSTAGE
PAID
SEATTLE, WA
PERMIT NO. 1267



READY, SET, GO! We're racing to \$15K in 15 days, and we need you on our team. For every donation we receive through Tuesday, September 20, **ASH CONSULTING** has offered a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$15,000! **Donate today and double your impact!**

Here are three great ways you can help:

- **Sponsor a patient for half-price!** With the matching grant, you can sponsor a patient for just \$162.50 — half our regular care coordination cost.
- **Set up monthly autopay** of just \$13.50 to change one patient's life this year.
- **Choose any amount you can give.** All gifts count toward our \$15,000 goal.

If we meet this challenge, we can serve more than 90 new patients! Please use enclosed envelope or visit projectaccessnw.org to donate. **THANK YOU!**

This newsletter is published by:



1111 Harvard Avenue ■ Seattle, WA 98122
Tel: 206.788.4204 ■ Fax: 206.382.3507
info@projectaccessnw.org

Sallie Neillie, Executive Director
Melissa Johnson, Development Director

We invite your comments and questions.
Visit www.projectaccessnw.org to learn more.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER.