

Joint replacement surgery highlights teamwork and coordination

Just as the Seattle Seahawks demonstrated outstanding teamwork for their Super Bowl XLVIII win, helping a Project Access Northwest patient find life-changing orthopedic surgery requires smooth handoffs, anticipating the next play and working with a variety of “special teams.”

“Joint replacement surgery can be life-changing for people living with limited mobility and chronic pain,” explains Sallie Neillie, Project Access Northwest executive director. “But if you don’t have health insurance, it is almost impossible to afford.”

Project Access Northwest case managers and staff coordinate all of those handoffs between the primary care provider, the surgeon, the joint manufacturer and the uninsured patient.

“We want the process to be seamless for the providers who donate their care,” Neillie

“I’m pleased and tickled pink... I was up and walking on crutches the day of the surgery. The pain of the surgery was nothing compared to the pain I’ve been living with every day.”

—Gregory Arnold, patient, recipient of new hip joint



Gregory Arnold is the recent recipient of a new hip joint through Operation Walk 2013, a national project featuring the work of Project Access Northwest and Swedish.

explains. “We interviewed orthopedic specialists about what they need for an efficient visit. We follow those guidelines, working with primary care providers to ensure that referred patients have the necessary documentation and diagnostic information **before** seeing the volunteer specialist.”

In December 2013, Project Access Northwest partnered with [Swedish Orthopedic Institute](#), [Orthopedic Physician Associates](#) and [Physicians Anesthesia Service](#) to provide 11 local patients with life-changing orthopedic care as part of a nationwide campaign known as [Operation Walk USA](#) during the week of Dec. 2–7.

All 11 patients were referred through Project Access Northwest, where case managers coordinated their pre-surgery check-ups, appointments and follow-up care. Thanks to *continued on page 2*

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Arthrex, BioMet, DePuy, Exactech, Smith & Nephew and Zimmer, the necessary replacement joints were donated as well.

For patients like Gregory Arnold, age 61, a hip replacement will enable him to return to work as a carpenter.

“I can hardly imagine what it will be like to walk again. It will extend my life by years,” he said before the surgery. Just eight weeks later, Arnold was enthusiastic about the whole process and starting physical therapy.

“I’m pleased and tickled pink,” he says. “I was up and walking on crutches the day of the surgery. The pain of the surgery was nothing compared to the pain I’ve been living with every day.”

For patients like Arnold, joint replacement surgery means a return to his active lifestyle and meaningful work. For Project Access Northwest staff, it is an acknowledgement of the work they do every day to help uninsured patients get the specialty medical and dental care they need.

“We’re delighted we could help these patients, but it really does take

“The orthopedic surgeons, anesthesiologists, hospital staff, joint manufacturers and others all came together to find a way to provide this surgery during one week, but the demand is there every day.”

—Sallie Neillie, Project Access Northwest executive director

a dedicated community to make it happen year-round,” explains Neillie. “The orthopedic surgeons, anesthesiologists, hospital staff, joint manufacturers and others all came together to find a way to provide this surgery during one week, but the demand is there every day.”

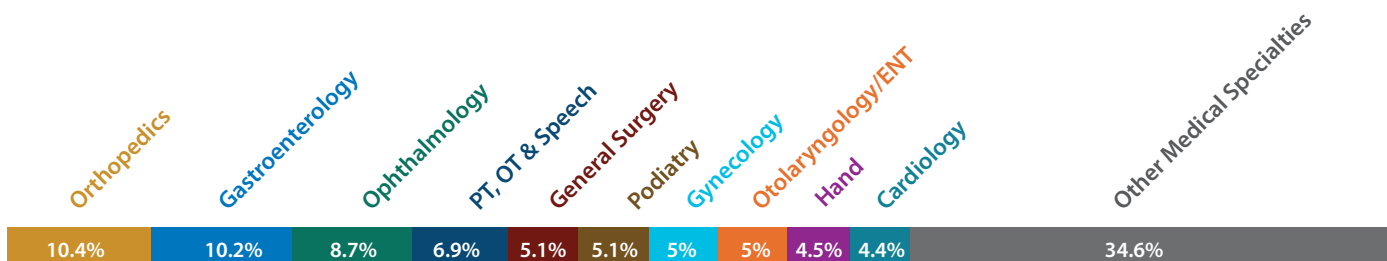
Neillie emphasizes that in addition to Swedish, other providers like [Group Health Cooperative](#), [Minor & James](#), [The Everett Clinic](#), [The Polyclinic](#), [Providence Everett](#), [Valley Medical Center](#) and [Virginia Mason Medical Center](#) also donate orthopedic specialty services and provided 101 orthopedic surgeries throughout the year.

This kind of teamwork is what makes Project Access Northwest patients’

no-show rate a remarkable 5 percent, with close to 1,300 specialty providers volunteering. In health care, it’s a remarkable demonstration of teamwork—kind of like winning the Super Bowl.

Today, Arnold is insured through the Affordable Care Act, the first time he’s had health insurance in more than three years. “I had to drop my health insurance several years ago when the premiums became more than \$550 per month with no pharmaceutical coverage and a high deductible. I have no idea what the costs would have been in 2013—probably more than \$850 per month.” Arnold now has health insurance, and he is paying a little more than \$300 per month.

Specialty Medical Referrals



Orthopedics is the most highly sought specialty medical care. Project Access Northwest patients often wait a year or more to find access to orthopedic specialties.

SOLUTION: Donor support

Grateful patient donates artwork

When **Kevin McHugh** moved to the Seattle area from Chicago two years ago, he was drawn by the beauty of the Pacific Northwest. In February 2013, he tore the tendon to his right thumb while helping a friend move. As a self-employed graphic designer and illustrator, Kevin couldn't work without his thumb, and he didn't have health insurance. He was referred to Project Access Northwest who helped him get the surgery he needed through one of our volunteer hand specialists. Today, Kevin has full use of his hand and is back to work. In gratitude, he created this illustration for Project Access Northwest's annual appeal in 2013. Thank you, Kevin! Your story and your art inspire us.



"Alki Snow" and
"The Keeper's House"
kevinmchughfineart.com

SOLUTION: Readers taking action... 1-2-3

Take these simple steps to support Project Access Northwest

Stuff the envelope:

There's a small envelope tucked into this newsletter. Right now it is empty. We invite you to fill it with something fun—like a donation—to support our work. Everything you need (except a stamp and your check) is on this little envelope, but like we said, right now it is empty.

Interact online:

- Visit our website at projectaccessnw.org. You can make a donation easily online.
- "Like" our Facebook page to learn more about the Project Access Northwest and our patients. Share our postings with your friends who care about health care access. Watch for information about GiveBIG 2014, and share it with your friends.

Opt for email:

Did you know that email can save money?

For Project Access Northwest, sending this newsletter via email will help us save thousands of dollars in printing and mailing costs, and it's good for the environment. If you're willing to help support our work and lessen your recycling load, let us know.

It just takes a minute... and we'll take care of the rest.

Call Aileen Delansig, **206-496-1593**, and let her know you want to receive this newsletter via email.

OR

Email info@projectaccessnw.org and let us know your preferred email address.

Thanks for your help with this important step!

We're 100 percent committed to protecting your privacy. Your email will never be used for any other purpose than communication from Project Access Northwest.

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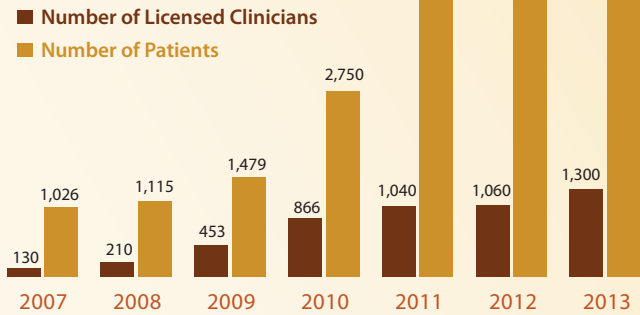
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2013 AT A GLANCE:

Service Growth



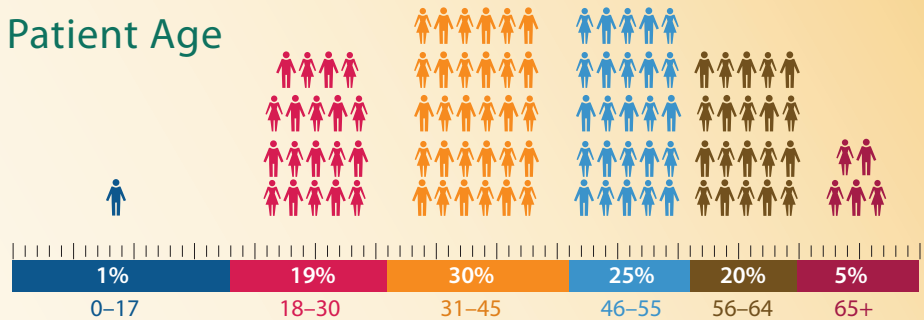
Fiscal Growth



Patient Gender



Patient Age



SOLUTION: Paying it forward... changing lives

Donor honors friend with \$20,000 gift

Project Access Northwest staff members were delighted to open our mail in early December and find a check for \$20,000 from an anonymous donor with this simple note:

"This last year, you helped out a friend of mine who needed surgery they couldn't afford. To show my appreciation, please accept this one-time donation of \$20,000."

Thank you to the Project Access Northwest sponsors and supporters and to our individual donors who recognize the work we do.

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

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