



Executive Director Report

March 2019

By Sharon Becker, Executive Director, March 5, 2019

Administration

WSHIP All-Vendor Meeting – I am hosting our second all-vendor summit on March 12 to provide an opportunity for WSHIP’s administrator, actuary, pharmacy benefit manager, and care management provider to discuss their respective roles and needs, and the current market environment and legislative activities in Washington. We will also be continuing our efforts to identify opportunities to enhance vendor reporting for WSHIP, and begin operational planning related to the Board’s Medicare Plans Evaluation project.

2020 Assessment Projections – Preliminary assessment projections for 2020 are currently being developed and will be sent to member plans this month. These projections will be based on current market conditions (i.e., individual health plans are offered in all counties in Washington State; therefore, WSHIP non-Medicare plans are closed to new enrollment).

Board

Election Nomination Process – The election process for Board member position 9 is underway. The Notice of Elections and Request for Nominations was sent to eligible member plans on March 4; additional nominations are open until March 29, 2019. The election will take place at the May 8, 2019 Member Plan meeting.

Governor Appointments – I have notified various statewide organizations regarding the June 1, 2019 Board position openings for a provider and consumer representative. I am also continuing to work with the Governor’s office on recruitment efforts for WSHIP’s small employer Board position.

New Meeting Venue Search – We have been notified by Talaris that it will no longer be available for our meetings after October 31, 2019. Anita is in the process of researching new meeting venues for WSHIP’s Board and Executive Committee meetings.

State of Reform Conference

I attended the Washington State of Reform Health Policy Conference on January 10, 2019, along with Anita, Sydney, and several Board members.

Washington Health Benefit Exchange (HBE)

On February 26, 2019, the HBE announced that 201,416 people purchased their 2019 health insurance coverage through *Washington Healthplanfinder*, which is a four percent decrease in total number of enrollments reported from February of 2018. The ratio between subsidized and unsubsidized enrollment is identical to 2018, with roughly 65 percent of *Washington Healthplanfinder* consumers receiving tax credits to help cover the cost of premium payments this year while the other 35 percent of consumers are not.

Washington State Government – Legislative Session

Olympia Visits – Sydney Zvara and I attended the January and February House HCW and Senate HLTC public hearings on the Public Option (Cascade Care) bills and are scheduled to meet with Representative Cody on March 26th to share WSHIP program updates.

Next Legislative Cut-Off Date – March 13th is the last day to pass bills in their house of origin. (Except the fiscal & transportation committees, whose cut-off date is April 3.)

Surprise Billing – Second substitute version of House Bill 1065 passed the House Chamber. Companion bill SB 5031 remains in the Senate HLTC Committee.

Medicare Supplements (MACRA) – Senate Bill 5032 unanimously passed the Senate Chamber. Companion bill HB 1484 has not been scheduled for a hearing.

Public Option (Cascade Care) – Second substitute House Bill 1523 was passed by House Appropriations and is now in Rules. A substitute version of companion bill SB 5526 was passed by Senate Ways & Means and is now in Rules. Both bills have been characterized as a work in progress.

Universal Health Care – Senate Bill 5822 was passed by Senate Ways & Means and is now in Rules. A hearing for companion bill HB 1877 has not been scheduled.

Single Payer – Senate Bill 5222 has not been scheduled for a hearing so far.

Bills that we are following as of March 5, 2019 are summarized below:

BILL NUMBER	PRIME SPONSOR	DESCRIPTION
SHB 1065 Surprise Billing	Cody OIC Request Bill	Seeks to protect patients from getting an additional bill, after the patient’s health plan has paid the normal rate and the patient has paid their portion when they receive medical care for an emergency at an out-of-network emergency hospital or surgery center but receive services from an out-of-network provider.
SB 5031 Surprise Billing	Cleveland OIC Request Bill	
HB 1484 Medicare Supplements (MACRA)	Thai OIC Request Bill	Aligns WA with recent changes to Medicare and Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP) statutes which seek to prevent overutilization of services. Two key changes are: 1) As of January 1, 2020, new enrollees will no longer be able to purchase a Medicare Supplement Plan which provides coverage for the Part B deductible; and 2) Allow but not require companies to offer a new Plan G with a High Deductible option.
SB 5032 Medicare Supplements (MACRA)	Cleveland OIC Request Bill	
HB 1523 Public Option (Cascade Care)	Cody Governor Request Bill	Seeks to increase the availability of quality, affordable health coverage in the individual market. Key changes include: 1) Requires Health Benefit Exchange to develop standardized health plans; 2) Health Care Authority (HCA) is required to contract with health carriers to offer standardized qualified health plans; and 3) HCA must develop a plan for premium subsidies for individuals purchasing coverage on the Exchange.
SB 5526 Public Option (Cascade Care)	Frockett Governor Request Bill	
HB 1877 Universal Health	Macri	Directs Health Care Authority to convene a stakeholder work group on establishing a universal health care system in WA.
SB 5822 Universal Health	Randall	
SB 5222 Single Payer	Hasegawa	Establishes the Whole WA Health Trust, a single nonprofit health care delivery system and financing entity that seeks to simplify health care financing and administration.