

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

Healthcare Policy Study



The Ruckelshaus Center provides collaborative problem-solving approaches for public policy development and multi-party conflict resolution. The Center is co-hosted at the University of Washington's Daniel J. Evans School of Public Affairs and at Washington State University by Washington State University Extension.

The Center envisions a future in which governmental leaders, policy makers, stakeholders and citizens in the state of Washington and the Pacific Northwest routinely employ the tools of collaborative decision making to design, conduct and implement successful public policy processes.

The Ruckelshaus Center is currently assessing opportunities to expand its services in the healthcare sector. Healthcare reform has complicated policy debate and challenges that affect a wide variety of stakeholders across Washington State and the Pacific Northwest. Combining Washington State University and University of Washington expertise and perspective into an effective, university-based neutral third party may help to resolve many policy issues that impact:

- Washington State Health and Human Service Agencies/ Departments
- Legislators and Legislative Committees
- Healthcare Providers and Associations
- Payers and Plans
- Consumer Advocates
- Unions
- Foundations and Community Partners

Healthcare policy conflicts are often inflated by differing stakeholder agendas, as well as finite public funding. Healthcare reform encourages new care delivery, coordination and payment methods, and a need for collaborative innovation. The Center may be able to provide a neutral forum that can help overcome historic differences, improve civil discourse and achieve collaborative policy development. Some topical examples include:

- Integration and streamlining of physical and behavioral health services
- Standardization of performance and outcomes measures
- Preventative health and wellness initiatives
- Environmental and public health conflicts
- Population health management
- State Innovation Model Initiatives
- Development of Value-Based Purchasing policies
- Task force/stakeholder workgroup facilitation



Examples of the Center's health policy projects include:

Nurse Staffing

The Center teamed with the University of Washington's School of Public Health and School of Nursing, and Washington State University's College of Nursing to attempt to resolve long-standing disagreements concerning hospital staffing decisions. Stakeholder concerns included the effects of nurse staffing levels in hospitals, patient safety, costs and working conditions for nurses.

Eldercare Workforce

The Center teamed with the University of Washington's Health Policy Center on a baseline assessment of eldercare workforce capacity in Washington State, including mapping the issues. This resulted in peer-reviewed fact sheets on *The Eldercare Workforce in Washington State* and *Aging in Place: A Policy Approach for Aging Well*. Future phases may include convening stakeholders statewide to listen and learn from one another about areas of conflict and consensus, and facilitating the creation of a Washington State Eldercare Workforce Alliance.

Kevin Harris, a national healthcare public policy expert, recently completed a 2015 Healthcare Policy Study assessing the Center's capacity to expand its involvement in collaborative healthcare policy development.

*For more information,
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