



Access to healthcare for all
members of our community

The ***Whatcom Alliance for Healthcare Access*** (WAHA) is a nonprofit organization dedicated to ensuring access to healthcare services for all members of our community. WAHA works with a wide range of partners, including interested citizens, healthcare organizations and leaders in the government, business and nonprofit sectors. WAHA is governed by a cohesive board of directors (see p.2).

WAHA's Mission: ***Connect community members to healthcare services, promote system improvements and foster public engagement to develop sound healthcare policies.***

Connect community members to healthcare services

WAHA has many programs & projects aimed at connecting residents of Whatcom County to health insurance & care. The main initiatives are:

Access Counseling is free insurance counseling to help individuals get, keep and use healthcare coverage. WAHA can also help patients find a medical provider and access other community resources.

School Outreach Project is a partnership with Whatcom County School Districts aimed at providing families with information about health insurance options and how to find a primary care provider.

Small Business Health Insurance Connection is a project to provide specialized information to small business owners and their employees regarding healthcare coverage.

Statewide Health Insurance Benefits Advisors (SHIBA) is a statewide network of trained volunteers who educate, assist and advocate for consumers about their rights and options regarding health insurance and healthcare access. WAHA is the Whatcom County SHIBA HelpLine sponsor.

Whatcom Project Access is a program in partnership with the Whatcom County Medical Society that coordinates donated specialty care to eligible, uninsured individuals and distributes care fairly among local providers while providing care coordination.

Promote system improvements

WAHA works with community partners to remove barriers to healthcare access. Current collaborations include:

Emergency Diversion Projects are collaborations between WAHA, St. Joseph Hospital and Interfaith Community Health Center to reduce Emergency Department usage for non-emergent situations.

Foster Public Engagement

WAHA's ***Community Education and Convener*** committee seeks to create dialog and educational forums addressing healthcare access issues, create strategic partnerships with organizations in the community, and develop resources and platforms for community education.

Sound Healthcare Policies

WAHA's ***Health Policy committee*** is a non-partisan group committed to developing prudent health policies that improve healthcare access locally. The Health Policy committee also collaborates with Communities Connect, a statewide access coalition, to promote improvements statewide.

WAHA Leadership Board

Name	Affiliation
Stephen Gockley, President	NW Justice Project
Regina Delahunt, Vice President	Whatcom County Health Dept.
Gil Thurston, Secretary	Consumer
Jim Stevens, Treasurer	Unity Group Insurance
Diane Beaman, Access Services Chair	Ferndale School District
Linda McCarthy, Community Education and Convener Chair	Mt. Baker Planned Parenthood
Sue Sharpe, Health Policy Chair	St. Luke's Foundation
Victoria Doerper, Member-at-Large	NW Regional Council
Charles Beard	Consumer
Cheryll Blair	Consumer
Sheila Brillson	DSHS
Rebecca Johnson	Interfaith Community Health Center
Don Keenan	Consumer
David Lynch	Family Care Network/WCMS
L. Ward Nelson	Whatcom County Council
Ken Oplinger	Bellingham Chamber of Commerce
Chris Phillips	St. Joseph Hospital
Marc Pierson	St. Joseph Hospital
Lori Polevoi	Interfaith Coalition
Susan Trimmingham	St. Luke's Foundation
Jim Wells	IGM LLC
Stephen Woods	Northwest Gastroenterology/WCMS

For More Information

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