

August 2017



I hope you are all having a great summer, filled with activities and adventure. I, on the other hand, write you this message with my leg in a cast -- the victim of a bad turn on a tennis court. It's given me a chance to be a "secret shopper" at Harborview's operating room and surgical recovery floor. I want to start this note by reminding everyone of what I hope you already know -- the staff and facilities at Harborview are simply world-class. I thank the doctors, nurses and all the staff members who cared for me during my operation and recovery. More importantly, I want to recognize that I observed the same excellent level of service given to every patient I saw around me -- the same respect, care, compassion and joy of practice. This, like almost all my interactions as a patient in UW Medicine, has left me more inspired than ever to serve as your CMO.

This quality of care is being recognized by others as well. U.S. News & World Report has just given high marks for UW Medicine hospitals in its newly released list of Best Hospitals 2017-2018. For the 6th consecutive year, UW Medical Center is ranked the #1 hospital in Washington State and the Seattle metro area. Harborview Medical Center and Valley Medical Center are tied at #6 in the Seattle area and #8 in the state. UWMC and HMC are also nationally ranked in key specialty areas and those hospitals, as well as Northwest Hospital, are rated high-performing in an additional nine specialty areas. The ranking includes risk-adjusted survival and readmission rates, volume, patient experience, patient safety, and quality of nursing care. Thanks to all -- nurses, clinicians and support teams -- for once again performing at the highest level.

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Care Transformation Updates

Patient Reported Outcomes

UW Medicine is increasingly asking our patients to answer online or paper surveys about pain, function and quality of life. These patient reported outcomes (PROs) are an important complement to clinical assessments and allow us to "hear our patient's voice" in all that we do. There is growing evidence in primary care, orthopedics, and oncology that building a system that can ask about and act on PROs improves the treatment of chronic conditions and can more effectively prevent and treat complications of care. Additionally, this process can decrease patient distress and enhance the quality of communication within and across clinical teams. Danielle Lavalley, PharmD, is UW Medicine's newly named Medical Director for Patient Reported Outcomes. Working with colleagues across the system over the last year, she and her team have helped ensure that the patient's voice is central to our Care Transformation initiatives. Initial efforts have focused on using measures of depression to better connect patients with appropriate care, and using measurements of functional improvement to enhance care for patients undergoing lumbar fusion and total joint replacement. In collaboration with colleagues in information technology, the long-term goal is to establish PROs in as many care pathways as possible. The use of PROs has launched at several clinical sites across UW Medicine, and, to date, more than 500 patients have completed these PRO measures through eCare. These early steps are key to our success moving forward in PROs.

Strategic Prescribing

The rising cost of pharmaceuticals -- now 10% of U.S. health care costs, or about \$260 billion per year -- is a pressing concern for the healthcare system. Under Chief Pharmacy Officer Shabir Somani's leadership of the Department of Pharmacy, and in collaboration with clinical teams from across the system, UW Medicine is making great strides to increase value in pharmaceuticals. They have developed a process for reviewing medications/patients on high-cost drug therapies as well as assessing and promoting preferred and generic drug interchanges. Success has already been seen with Boeing/PEBB patients on specific diabetic agents -- an Epic-based intervention led to a 64% reduction in plan costs of this expensive drug, when a generic version was available. Filgrastim-sndz (a biosimilar for Neupogen, a myeloid growth factor) was another opportunity for interchange -- resulting in a dramatic difference in prescribing (84% utilization adoption) and a savings of \$371,785 over nine months in the inpatient setting at UWMC. Work has also been done to include preferred medications for ambulatory pathways, including diabetes, depression and hypertension. Efforts will continue in FY18 to analyze high-value strategic prescribing targets to accomplish the best possible outcomes at the lowest cost. Implementing these measures helps us be better stewards of our limited healthcare resources while providing better value for our patients.