

UW Medicine Overview



UW Medicine is an integrated clinical, research and learning health system with a single mission to improve the health of the public.

UW Medicine faculty, nonfaculty practitioners and staff work to improve health for all people through excellence in clinical, research and education/training programs. With these integrated programs, UW Medicine health professionals provide the most up-to-date care for each individual patient, lead one of the world's largest and most comprehensive medical research programs and provide innovative learning programs for students, trainees and practitioners in the health professions. As the only comprehensive clinical, research and learning health system in the five-state WWAMI (Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, Idaho) region, UW Medicine provides a higher degree of healthcare, ranging from primary and preventive care to the most highly specialized care for the most complex medical conditions.

UW Medicine is a family of organizations (some public and some private nonprofit) that are operated or managed as part of an integrated health system. The clinically integrated parts of UW Medicine include Harborview Medical Center, University of Washington Medical Center (Montlake and Northwest campuses, collectively "UW Medical Center"), Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, UW Medicine Primary Care, UW Physicians, University of Washington School of Medicine, Valley Medical Center and Airlift Northwest. Each of these organizations has a different relationship to the University of Washington.

In addition, UW Medicine has affiliations with and interests in other healthcare organizations in the Pacific Northwest, including multiple entities in which the University of Washington on behalf of UW Medicine has an ownership or membership interest. Each of these relationships advances UW Medicine's mission to improve the health of the public.

For more information, visit uwmedicine.org.

UW Medicine FAQs

What is UW Medicine?

The most concise answer to this question is that UW Medicine is an integrated health system. As described in more detail below, UW Medicine is an integrated clinical, research and learning health system with a single mission to improve the health of the public.

Is UW Medicine our name/brand?

Yes. The name “UW Medicine” is our nationally trademarked brand. We are not branded or trademarked as “University of Washington Medicine.” The University of Washington Board of Regents approved “UW Medicine” as the name for the integrated clinical, research and learning health system in 2003.

Is UW Medicine a legal entity?

No. UW Medicine is not a single legal entity. UW Medicine is comprised of multiple legal entities that have come together to advance UW Medicine’s mission to improve the health of the public. Leaders of the central UW Medicine team and across the organizations work together in a coordinated and clinically integrated way to provide care to UW Medicine patients and advance research, training and education.

Why is it important for UW Medicine to be an integrated health system?

The structure of UW Medicine as an integrated health system results in interdisciplinary approaches that are essential to advance the excellence of the clinical, research and learning programs. Rapid changes in medical research are changing fundamental approaches to diagnosis, treatment and prevention of human diseases. To advance the mission of improving the health of the public, it is important to connect the most up-to-date research with patient care and the learning programs for students, trainees and practitioners. This close connection results in better care for each individual patient and serves to guide the direction of one of the world’s largest and most comprehensive medical research programs.

Which organizations are clinically integrated parts of UW Medicine?

UW Medicine currently includes the University of Washington School of Medicine, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center (research and cancer care institution), three acute care hospitals (UW Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center and Valley Medical Center), UW Physicians (a not-for-profit professional practice plan), UW Medicine Primary Care (network of primary care clinics) and Airlift Northwest (a regional critical care air transport service).

- **University of Washington School of Medicine**

The School of Medicine is a school of the University of Washington and serves a five-state region: Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana and Idaho (WWAMI). U.S. News & World Report currently ranks the University of Washington School of Medicine as best in the nation for primary care education and training and second in the nation for NIH research grants with \$1.3 billion in fiscal year 2020. There are approximately 4,800 students and trainees in the School of Medicine. uwmedicine.org/school-of-medicine

- **UW Medical Center**

UW Medical Center is an acute care hospital located in Seattle with two campuses: Montlake and Northwest. It is owned by the University of Washington and is one of the world's foremost medical centers for emergency and specialized inpatient and outpatient medical and surgical care. For the past 10 years, it has been ranked the No. 1 hospital in Washington state by U.S. News & World Report and is nationally ranked in six specialties: cancer; diabetes and endocrinology; ear, nose and throat; geriatrics; gynecology; and rehabilitation.

uwmedicine.org/locations/uw-medical-center (Montlake campus)

uwmedicine.org/locations/northwest-hospital (Northwest campus)

- **Harborview Medical Center**

Harborview Medical Center is an acute care hospital located in Seattle, providing specialized care for a broad spectrum of patients throughout the Pacific Northwest. It is the only Level 1 trauma center in the five-state WWAMI region and is the result of a successful partnership between King County, which owns the hospital, and UW, through which UW Medicine manages the hospital. Faculty and staff are UW employees.

uwmedicine.org/locations/harborview-medical-center

- **Valley Medical Center**

Valley Medical Center is an acute care community hospital located in South King County and is the oldest and largest public hospital district system in the state of Washington. It operates a network of more than four dozen primary, urgent and specialty care clinics and has one of the busiest emergency departments in the state. UW Medicine and Valley are integrated through a Strategic Alliance Agreement. valleymed.org

- **Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center**

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center is an independent, nonprofit, unified adult cancer care and research center that is clinically integrated with UW Medicine, a world leader in clinical care, research and learning. The only National Cancer Institute-designated cancer center in the Pacific Northwest, Fred Hutch's global leadership in bone marrow transplantation, HIV/AIDS prevention, immunotherapy, and COVID-19 vaccines has confirmed its reputation as one of the world's leading cancer, infectious disease and biomedical research centers. Based in Seattle, Fred Hutch operates eight clinical care sites that provide medical oncology, infusion, radiation, proton therapy, and related services, and network affiliations with hospitals in five states. Together, its fully integrated research and clinical care teams seek to discover new cures to the world's deadliest diseases and make life beyond cancer a reality. fhcc.org

- **UW Physicians**

UW Physicians is the adult practice group for more than 2,800 physicians and other healthcare professionals who care for patients throughout the WWAMI region. Members of UW Physicians are active faculty in the UW School of Medicine and teach future healthcare professionals in one of the most highly regarded and competitive medical schools in the nation. UW is the sole corporate member of UW Physicians.
one.uwmedicine.org/sites/uwp (Login required)

- **UW Medicine Primary Care**

UW Neighborhood Clinics doing business as UW Medicine Primary Care is a network of community-based primary and urgent care clinics located throughout the Puget Sound region. The clinics provide a wide spectrum of primary and secondary care services and include ancillary services on-site, such as laboratories and digital radiology facilities. UW is the sole corporate member of the UW Neighborhood Clinics, which operates under the UW Medicine Primary Care brand. uwmedicine.org/specialties/primary-care

- **Airlift Northwest**

Airlift Northwest is an air transport service dedicated to providing safe, compassionate and efficient air medical transport for critically ill and injured infants, children and adults. Its aircraft are strategically located at eight bases throughout the Pacific Northwest and Southeast Alaska for rapid deployment. Airlift is owned by the University of Washington.
uwmedicine.org/airliftnw

How are these organizations related to the University of Washington?

Some of the organizations in the UW Medicine family are legally part of the University of Washington, and others are not but are operated or managed consistent with the UW Medicine mission and strategic plan.

University of Washington Organizations:

- University of Washington School of Medicine
- UW Medical Center
- Airlift Northwest

Public, Non-University of Washington Organizations:

- Harborview Medical Center, owned by King County and managed by UW Medicine under a long-term Hospital Services Agreement
- Valley Medical Center, a public hospital district-operated pursuant to a Strategic Alliance Agreement with UW Medicine

Private, Not-For-Profit Organizations:

- Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center
- UW Physicians
- UW Neighborhood Clinics doing business as UW Medicine Primary Care

How big is UW Medicine?

There are approximately 35,000 people (including faculty, nonfaculty practitioners and staff) employed by the various public and nonprofit UW Medicine clinically integrated organizations. Over half of these individuals are employed by the University of Washington and are state employees; others are not. In fiscal year 2021, UW Medical Center, Harborview Medical Center and Valley Medical Center admitted 58,530 patients, and their primary, specialty and urgent care clinics had approximately 1.7 million patient visits. UW Medicine serves a diverse patient population and provided \$760 million in uncompensated care in 2020.

Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center became a clinically integrated part of UW Medicine in 2022 as part of an oncology restructuring that included the merger of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center and Seattle Cancer Care Alliance to form one organization, renamed Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center.

Who are members of the UW Medicine senior leadership team?

UW Medicine is led by a Chief Executive Officer, a President of the UW Medicine Hospitals & Clinics, a Chief Medical Officer, a Chief Business Officer, a Chief Financial Officer and a Chief Advancement Officer.

The UW Medicine leadership team also includes the President & Director of Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center, executives of the three hospitals and the other clinical entities, and leaders within the School of Medicine (e.g., vice deans and associate and assistant deans, the School's department chairs and their faculty leaders and administrative leaders). Other senior leaders are responsible for enterprise functions, such as the Chief Equity Officer, Chief Compliance Officer, and leaders of business and regulatory affairs; clinical operations, strategy and transformation; financial planning; governmental relations; information technology; patient safety and quality improvement; philanthropy; primary care services; population health and value-based care; and strategic marketing and communications.

The University-employed leaders on the UW Medicine leadership team act on delegation of authority from the University of Washington. There are members of the UW Medicine senior leadership team who are not employed by the University of Washington, such as leaders at Valley Medical Center and Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center.

When did the University of Washington create the foundation for UW Medicine?

In 1992, the University of Washington Board of Regents, President and Provost made a decision to unify two previously separate University of Washington roles (i.e., Dean of the School of Medicine and the Vice President for Medical Affairs) into a single leadership position (what is now the UW Medicine Chief Executive Officer role). This position and an associated leadership team were charged with administrative responsibility, accountability and oversight for the University-owned organizations (University of Washington School of Medicine, UW Medical Center) and their relationships with the others (Harborview Medical Center, UW Physicians and Airlift Northwest). UW Medicine has grown since 1992 and now also includes Valley Medical Center, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Center and UW Medicine Primary Care. Also, Airlift Northwest has become part of the University.

What interests does UW Medicine have in other organizations?

UW Medicine, through the University, is one of two equal corporate members and founders of Children's University Medical Group (with Seattle Children's). This relationship is vitally important for the success of our pediatric clinical, research and education programs.

In addition, UW Medicine is a part owner of a limited liability company (LLC) created with LifePoint, which was established to own and operate community hospitals in Washington, Alaska and Idaho. Through this arrangement, UW Medicine provides expertise on quality and complex clinical care at LLC facilities, which are co-branded "A UW Medicine Community Health Partner."

UW Medicine, through the University, also is one of the three founding owners of a clinically integrated network called Embright (with MultiCare Health System and LifePoint) and the sole corporate member of UW Medicine Choice Care. These two organizations were created to enter into healthcare contracts to provide patient care. The contracts are typically value-based care agreements with payors, including the state and the federal government, and self-insured employers. The healthcare services are provided through a network of regional healthcare providers from UW Medicine organizations and other organizations. Each of these entities was created for a particular purpose that enables UW Medicine to advance its mission to improve the health of the public.

What are the major organizations with comprehensive affiliation agreements with UW Medicine?

UW Medicine has longstanding affiliations with many organizations. Among these are Seattle Children's, MultiCare Health System, VA Puget Sound Health Care and Boise VA Medical Center. While each is unique, these relationships enable activities and collaboration throughout the region that complement UW Medicine's strategic plan and advance UW Medicine's single mission.

Does UW Medicine have any contractual provider networks?

Yes. In 2014, UW Medicine formed the UW Medicine Accountable Care Network (UW Medicine ACN), which brought together a network of healthcare organizations and healthcare professionals to assume responsibility for the healthcare of patient populations. The UW Medicine ACN is not a legal entity; it is a contractual network through which UW Medicine has entered into value-based care agreements with payors and self-insured employers and provides covered services through a network of regional healthcare providers. The UW Medicine ACN, Embright and UW Medicine Choice Care are vehicles through which UW Medicine is able to engage in value-based care arrangements.

In addition to the UW Medicine ACN, UW Medicine established the UW Medicine Post-Acute Care Network (UW Medicine PAC Network) in 2017, through which UW Medicine contracts with a variety of post-acute care providers in the region to improve care for patients throughout the care continuum. This network includes skilled nursing facilities, home health and hospice, adult day health, and home care partners.