



Tukwila Quarterly Membership Meeting

Coalition convenes quarterly membership meeting in Washington for first time, page 3.

Coalition Enjoys Steady Growth

Plans joining from the Pacific Northwest keeping pace with Alaska, page 4.

Proven Health Care Cost Reduction Through Strength in Numbers



ONLINE HEALTHCARE ADVICE AND SERVICES GAIN GROUND

These days, going to the doctor means you are just as likely to get online as you are to get in your car and drive there.

Ninety-three million Americans (80% of internet users) have searched online for a health-related topic, according to a recent study conducted by the Pew Internet & American Life Project. And the American Hospital Association, reports that 76% of hospitals in the US are connected to some kind of telemedicine service.

Coalition member plans can use Teladoc—a global leader in virtual care. Through Teladoc, individuals can connect with a board-certified physician using their computer, phone or smartphone, 24/7, every day of the year. Teladoc's board certified physicians can prescribe treatment for everything from

acne and allergies to colds and the flu, and bronchitis to skin rashes. Teladoc physicians also can help people cope with behavioral health issues like depression, domestic abuse and stress.

Coalition member plans can access Teladoc in two ways:

- Member plans that use the Aetna PPO network though the Coalition can add Teladoc.
- Member plans also can use the Coalition's membership in the National Labor Alliance of Health Care Coalitions (NLAHCC).

Under the Aetna contract, there were more than 3,700 visits and nearly a half-million dollars in estimated savings in 2018. The National Labor Alliance of Health Care Coalitions issued a request for proposals (RFP) to other telemedicine providers,

further expanding access to online healthcare. Responses to the RFP have been received and are under final review.

“The ability to get services from a trustworthy source like Teladoc is a big advantage, and we encourage member plans to communicate those advantages to their participants,” said Fred Brown, the Pacific Health Coalition executive director. “The Teladoc website offers information that you can use to communicate with your plan participants. Its online Reference Center features success stories, infographics and white papers you can use and adapt to your audience.”

Want to know more? Contact the Coalition by phone at (907) 474-4226 or (888) 474-4226 or by email at info@phcoalition.org. □

COALITION DELIVERS VALUE TO OUR MEMBER COMMUNITY AND THE LARGER COMMUNITY

Some impressive numbers illustrate the value the Pacific Health Coalition delivers to member plans. For example:

- \$424 million saved in 2018 by Coalition member plans using the Aetna PPO contract
- \$7 million saved in 2018 for plans using the Renalogic dialysis cost containment service
- 13 Health Fairs conducted in 11 locations, attended by over 6,600 member plan participants and their eligible dependents in 2019

But for Executive Director Fred Brown, the most significant numbers are 25, 48 and 250,000. “In 2019, the Coalition celebrated our 25th anniversary, and we are proud to have 48 member plans, representing nearly 250,000 covered lives,” Brown said.

Member plans range in size from 100 to nearly 29,000 covered lives, and represent a variety of plan types, including Taft-Hartley Trust funds, government health plans, public sector health trusts and single employer plans. “Our mission is to ensure that workers and their families have access to value- and quality-based health care benefits and services,” Brown continued. “Just as importantly, we offer a forum for our members to share information about common problems, issues and best practices.”

Power in Numbers

The union members who are the original beneficiaries of the Coalition’s services understand the power of uniting for the common benefit. After all, solidarity is the bedrock of the union movement. The Coalition embodies this ideal



by encouraging health plans of all types to join and participate.

“Our success is grounded in encouraging organizations to work together to maximize their benefit programs and take full advantage of savings opportunities,” said Randy Scott, Washington member services representative. “We also put decision-making in the hands of the people who know their needs best: representatives of the trusts, public entities and private employers that form our membership.”

Quarterly membership meetings are the venue to learn how the Coalition’s services are performing in service delivery and cost-savings. Guest speakers and Coalition members discuss trends and data to help members traverse the healthcare landscape and make better decisions. The meetings also serve as a forum to consider additional value-added services and air concerns.

Service to the Larger Community

The Coalition’s 250,000 covered lives have saved a combined \$500 million a year in healthcare costs compared to typical hospital and provider

fees. “Because the PHC is a non-profit organization, those savings are realized by our member plans,” said Pat Shier, Alaska member services representative, “protecting them from high plan cost increases year after year.”

And a new program negotiated by the PHC with Aetna extends the Coalition’s negotiating power to smaller employers in Alaska. Aetna’s Anchorage Mat-Su Community Plan currently allows businesses with as few as fifty employees to participate in and take advantage of PHC’s considerable purchasing power and expertise. If approved by the Alaska Division of Insurance, it could soon provide cost savings for Alaska’s smaller private employers with as few as two employees.

“Over the years, we’ve demonstrated that private sector organizations like ours have the flexibility and member support to make an impact on healthcare costs,” said Brown. “Working across state borders in the Pacific Northwest, we have emerged as a strong voice on behalf of our members, our communities and people across the nation.” □

Tukwila Quarterly Membership Meeting a First

“Ten years ago, eight health-and-welfare trusts were trying to put together their own purchasing coalition in Washington State to improve their purchasing power; five of those groups joined what was then HCCMCA in September of 2009 and eventually all of them became members of what is now called the Pacific Health Coalition. From that beginning, we now have 48 plans and 250,000 covered lives here in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest,” Randy Scott said in his opening remarks at the first Coalition quarterly membership meeting convened in Washington.

In addition to reports on the cost savings achieved by the Coalition’s contracted service providers, the meeting agenda provided opportunities for discussing how the Coalition can expand its services to member plans with participants throughout the Pacific Northwest. The Coalition has already negotiated with Aetna to obtain better deals for Washington-based members. Other ideas for future consideration include new PPO contracts like the Coalition’s contract with Alaska Regional Hospital and opening Coalition Health Centers in Washington, building on the success of the centers in Fairbanks and Anchorage.

“We’re pleased to offer our members services ranging from vision benefits (through VSP) to disease management benefits and hospital balance recovery services (through Optum),” said Fred Brown, executive director.

“These services are often cost-prohibitive for a small plan and we benefit from the Coalition’s negotiating power.”

“Our members rely on the Health Fairs as a one-stop shop for a lot of valuable services,” said Coalition Board President Joey Merrick, who is also the business manager/secretary-treasurer of the Alaska Laborers Local #341. “And we’re happy to be able to offer this benefit to our plan participants each year.” □

Scott serves as the Coalition’s member services representative in the Pacific Northwest (Washington, Oregon and Idaho.) Having served as a plan trustee, he knows first-hand that “there was nothing more discouraging than negotiating a raise, only to see it go toward increased health insurance costs. When plans join the Coalition, they can instead deliver real cost savings to their participants.”



CALENDAR

2020 MEETING DATES

The Pacific Health Coalition / National CooperativeRx Annual Meeting

March 31 and April 1, 2020
Hotel Captain Cook
Anchorage, Alaska

- Reception - Evening of March 31, 2020
- Annual Meeting April 1, 2020 □

THE PACIFIC HEALTH COALITION QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

June 10

September 24 (to convene in Washington - location TBD)

November 10 □

INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION OF EMPLOYEE BENEFITS (IFEBC) 66TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE

November 15–18, 2020
Honolulu, HI □



3000 A Street, Suite 300
Anchorage, AK 99503

READ ABOUT SOME IMPRESSIVE NUMBERS ILLUSTRATE THE VALUE THE PACIFIC HEALTH COALITION DELIVERS, P. 2.

Since 1994, the Pacific Health Coalition (aka HCCMCA) has been helping member health plans control health care costs by negotiating better pricing on health benefits and services than these same plans could achieve on their own. Currently, there are 48 member health plans throughout Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

Member Plans Join Growing Coalition

The 21st century has been good for growth in the Pacific Health Coalition. In 2003, the Coalition consisted of 16 plans covering approximately 58,000 lives. Now, there are 48 plans covering nearly 250,000 lives in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest.

Membership for plans in the Pacific Northwest alone has increased from just one plan in 2003 to 23 plans currently in the Coalition. And, we already have one plan in Alaska set to join in 2020. Let's keep the growth curve trending upwards! Spread

the word about the advantages of membership in the Pacific Health Coalition. If you'd like more information about the PHC, please contact us by phone at (907) 474-4226 or (888) 474-4226 or by email at info@phcoalition.org.

