

Whatcom Project Access **Providers' Frequently Asked Questions**

Q: Can't patients get care through other programs, like Medicaid?

A: Patients are screened to see if they are eligible for other programs before they are invited to participate in Whatcom *Project Access*. However, most uninsured adults are not eligible for Medicaid unless they are pregnant or have a disability.

Q: The guidelines state that WPA does not accept urgent referrals. What does that mean exactly?

A: Because the screening and enrollment process may take several weeks, we cannot assist with patients who need care within a designated time frame. Patients with urgent needs should be referred directly to the specialist. In some cases, WPA may be able to assist with arranging donated care after a patient has already been referred.

Q: Who are the primary care doctors?

A: Most patients are either referred from local Community Health Centers (Interfaith and Sea Mar) or private practices. Patients referred directly from St. Joseph Hospital Emergency Department will be assisted with establishing a medical home. All WPA patients will be asked to have a primary care doctor/Medical home.

Q: What about the cost of supplies and medication?

A: WPA helps patients identify ways to lower their medication costs. We also encourage patients to talk with their doctor about samples or other lower cost alternatives. For short-term needs, WPA has a small medication fund. For long-term needs, most WPA patients acquire Basic Health insurance coverage, which provides prescription coverage.

Q: For the patients I agree to see, what is the duration of my commitment?

A: Patients are enrolled in WPA for 3 months. Patients who get insured on Basic Health can stay enrolled for the 9 month pre-existing period if they need continued specialty care and still meet the program's eligibility criteria.

Q: How will you ensure that the patient shows up and complies with their doctor's suggested treatment?

A: The WPA Care Coordinator helps prevent no-shows through patient reminders and assistance with "access issues" such as transportation and interpreter services. All patients sign a *Patient Responsibility* agreement. Among other things, patients agree to keep all appointments and follow the treatment plan.

Q: What are the steps I take if a patient is not following the Patient Responsibility agreement?

A: We can help coach a patient if you let us know that there has been an issue, or we can withdraw them from the program if you feel it is necessary. Please contact the Administrative Coordinator to discuss these issues at 788-6534.