

Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center and the Primary Care Liaison Role

ADS Advisory Council Meeting

March 14th, 2025

The NW GWEC is made possible by Grant Number U1QHP53066 from the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the investigators and do not necessarily represent the official views of HRSA or the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



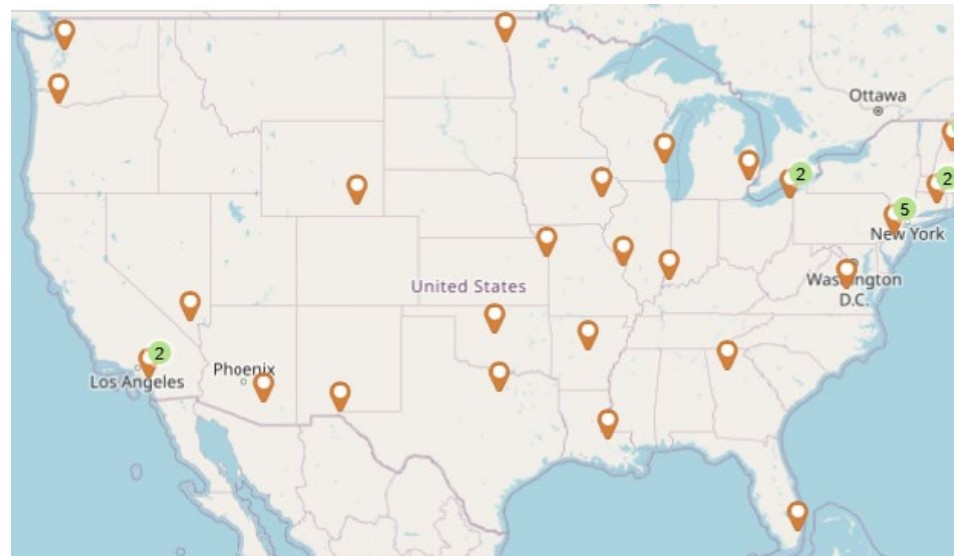
Land Acknowledgement

We acknowledge the Coast Salish peoples of this land, the land which touches the shared waters of all tribes and bands within the Suquamish, Tulalip and Muckleshoot nations.



Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center (NW GWEC)

- > One of 42 centers funded through Health Resources and Services Administration's (HRSA) Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) initiative
- > GWEP Goal: Educate and train the primary care and geriatrics workforces to provide age- and dementia-friendly care



GWEP Objectives

- > Develop reciprocal partnerships
- > Provide interprofessional geriatrics clinical training & education
- > Focus on tribal, tribal organizations, underserved and/or rural settings



Enduring Partners – Area Agencies on Aging



AREA AGENCY ON
Aging & Disabilities
OF SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON



Executive Team Members

- > Elizabeth Phelan (Medicine/Gerontology)
 - GWEP Project Director
- > Barbara Cochran (Nursing)
 - GWEP Co-Director
- > Katherine Bennett (Medicine/Gerontology)
 - Education Director
- > Leigh Ann Mike (Pharmacy)
 - Pharmacy Lead
- > Anita Souza (Nursing)
 - Age-Friendly Outreach Coordinator
- > Aimee Verrall (Public Health)
 - NW GWEC Program Manager



Our Regional Reach



Our Target Audience

- > Primary care workforce in Tribal, Tribal Organizations, Underserved and/or Rural locations
- > Supportive care workforce (patients, families, care partners, and non-medical service providers (e.g., housekeepers))



Origins of the Primary Care Liaison (PCL)

The Problem: “Silo-ing” of Care



Huntingford's farm, Chimacum, WA

- > Older adults, care partners and clinicians unaware of community resources
- > Community agency services and evidence-based programs undersubscribed

The Idea: Building Community-Clinic Bridges



Suspension bridge in Mount Rainier

- > Increase awareness
- > Encourage referrals to community-based programming
- > Encourage and facilitate bi-directional communication

PCL Approach

- > Employed by an Area Agency on Aging
- > Establishes community-clinical linkages through engaging healthcare teams
- > Facilitates referrals to AAA programs and services
- > Increases enrollment into evidence-based health promotion programs

Results of our Feasibility Study

American Journal of
Preventive Medicine

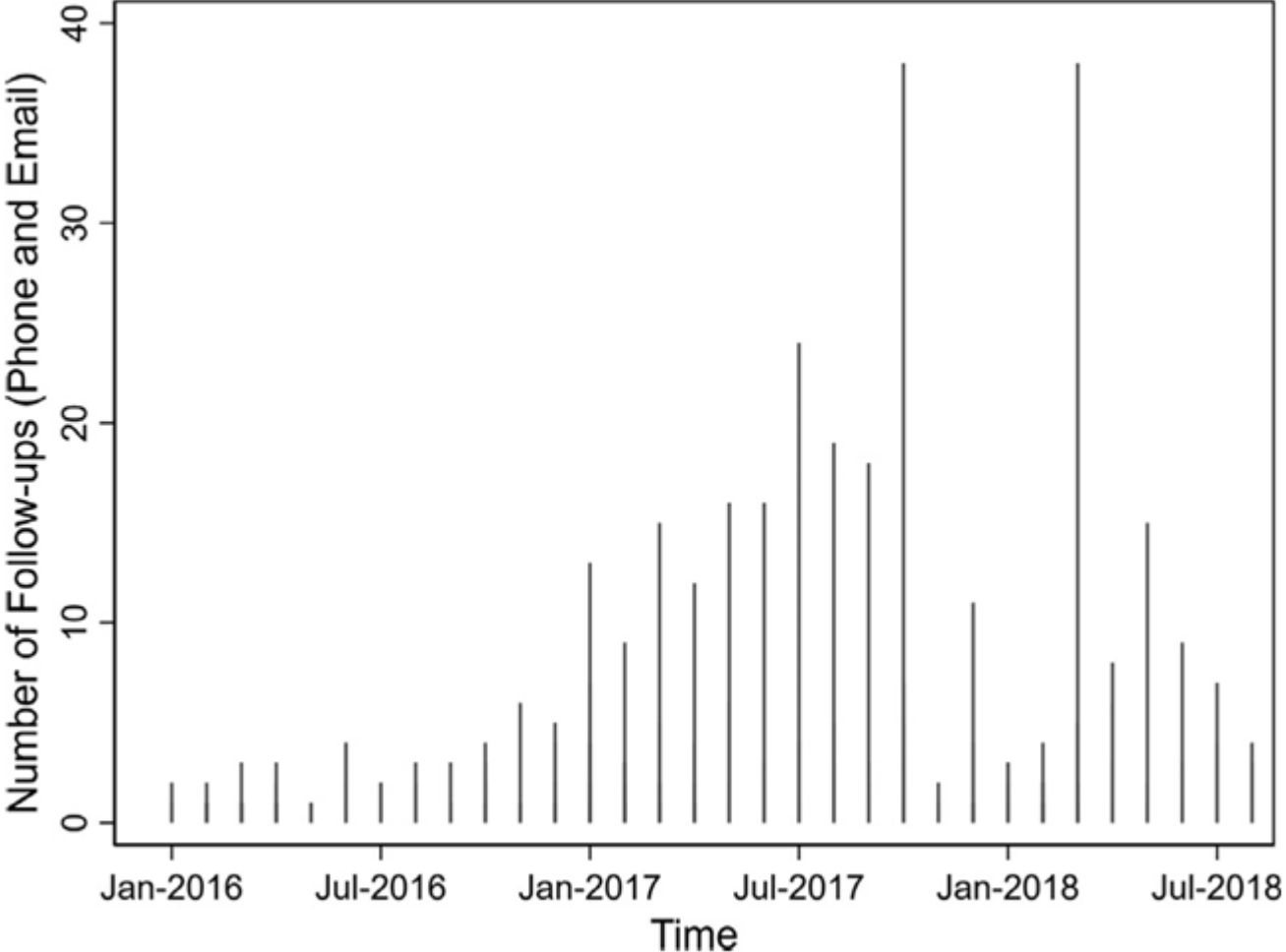
TOPICS IN EDUCATION

A Feasibility Study of Primary Care Liaisons: Linking Older Adults to Community Resources

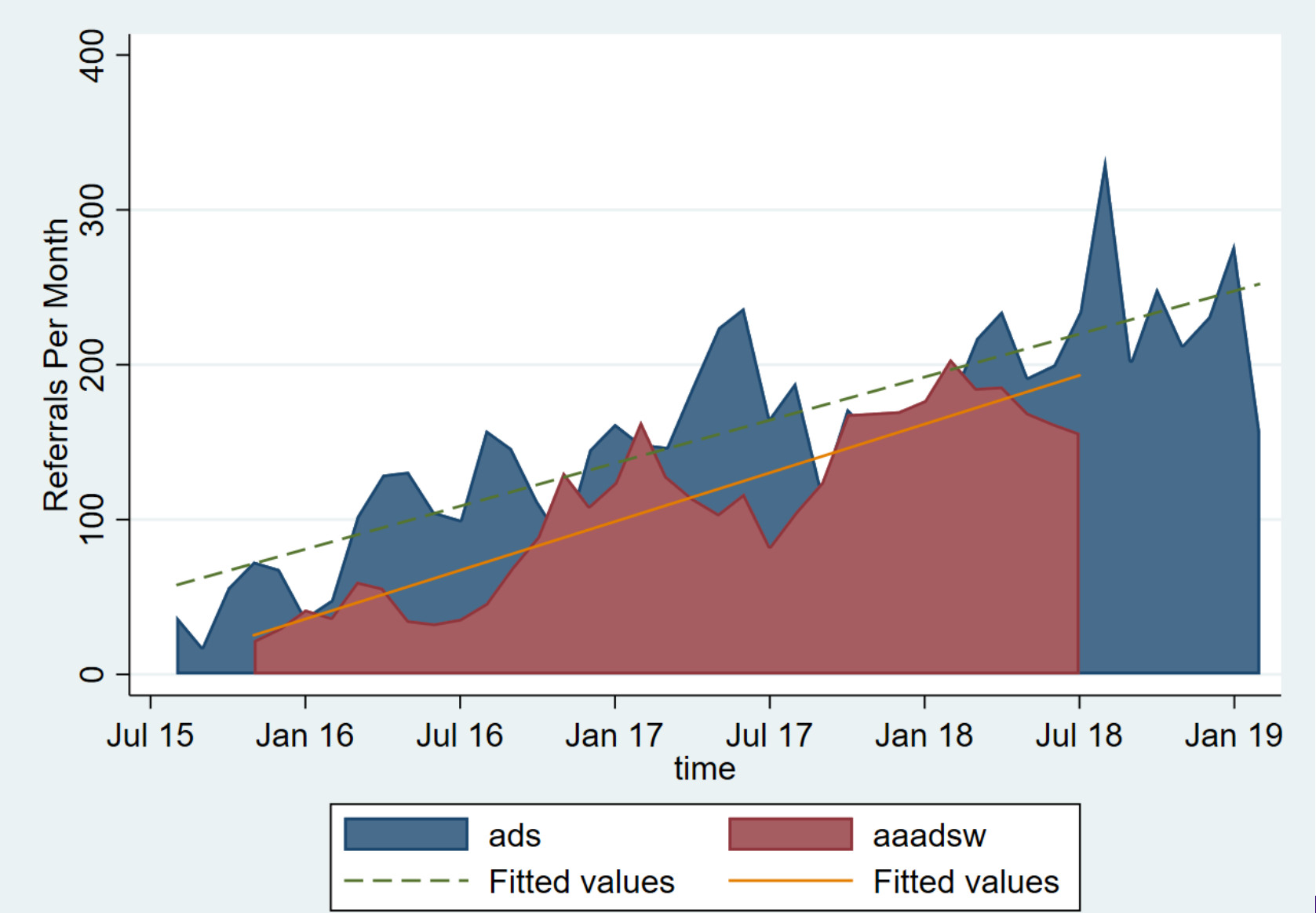


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PCL Outreach



Outcomes: PCL Driven Referrals



ADS Perspective on the Primary Care Liaison

Why a Primary Care Liaison Role at an AAA?

- > Build *sustained* linkages with clinics and health systems
- > Increase visibility and credibility of AAAs (AAAs become seen as part and parcel of primary care)
- > Encourage and facilitate ongoing communication
- > Increase awareness of AAA resources and facilitate their integration into an individual's primary care



ADS Success Story: Outreach during COVID-19

- > Meeting clinical contacts where they are at (virtual vs in-person).
- > Successful connection with a **Community Resource Specialist from Kaiser Northgate Clinic** during a virtual meeting hosted by our Community Living Connections network of providers, including healthcare teams.
- > This Community Resource Specialist (champion) opened doors that forged connections with all King County Kaiser clinics.



ADS Success Story: The Power of Existing Relationships

- Working with a known network of geriatrics champions (a former Swedish geriatric medicine fellow) who is now the **Specialty Director of Geriatrics at HealthPoint in Redmond.**
- We were able to meet quickly due to our partnership with NW GWEC. I was excited to be a part of the clinic's goal of developing ready access to the PCL's recorded Aging Programs & Services presentation available in a cloud-based location for others across HealthPoint (14 clinic locations).
- HealthPoint clinic reported, *"[Your presentation] was so informative. I already have patients I will be referring using the online form."*



ADS Success Story: Leveraging Social Media to Maintain Connections

- Working existing relationships in the Aging Network - Asian Counseling & Referral Services (ACRS) connections (daughter is a nurse).
- PCL's connection with a nurse who started at one clinic (HealthPoint), but moved to another clinic (ICHS) which restarted a connection that had dried up due to staff turn-over.
- Demonstrating the importance of maintaining relationships with one champion and leveraging social media (LinkedIn).



Phung's Approach to Outreach

- > Identify all healthcare systems in King County
- > Create list of clinics for outreach
- > Intro letter and info packet
- > Use existing relationships to connect with clinics
- > Drop-in clinic visits for follow-up contact
- > Ask an established clinic to connect with other clinics
- > Fellows/RN trainees make intro to their clinics
- > Connect with healthcare providers at resource fairs
- > Email/call to schedule team meetings
- > Respond to requests for info and mail out brochures

Implementation Guide

Implementing a Primary Care Liaison Role at an Area Agency on Aging

This guide and the Primary Care Liaison Role were developed by Aging and Disability Services of Seattle-King County, the Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington, and the Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center, as part of the mission of a 2015 Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Program (GWEP) award.



Download Guide:

Topics Covered

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Valuable Examples and Ideas

CALL-OUT IMAGES



**An idea for
practice**



**Refers to an
Appendix Item**



**An example
from practice**

What is a Primary Care Liaison?

Figure 1. How Primary Care Liaisons Build Clinical-Community Linkages



What Does a Primary Care Liaison Do?

Outreach:

- > One-on-one meetings
- > Team meetings or huddles
- > Drop-in and Drop-off visits
- > Visits with trainees
- > Virtual Visits

Figure 2. Primary Care Liaison Activities by Time Requirements



Organizational Readiness

- > Organizational support
- > Adequate funding
- > Organizational commitment
- > Technical assistance
- > Capacity for increased referrals
- > Long-term sustainability



Getting Started – Hiring a Primary Care Liaison

- > Outstanding verbal and written communication skills (messaging)
- > Outstanding interpersonal skills (rapport and connections)
- > Experience with outreach and engagement
- > In-depth knowledge of the AAA and Aging Network



See Appendix 1 for a sample PCL job description.

Developing a Referral Process

Community Living Connections Referral Form

Referring Agency Name: _____
 Staff Name Completing Form: _____
 Staff Contact Information (if follow up desired): _____
 Referral Date: _____

Fax completed forms to 206.436.2972
 or send via secure email to
 info@communitylivingconnections.org

CLIENT INFORMATION *required field

*Client Name: _____ *Age: _____ Gender: _____ *Zip Code: _____

Insurance: Medicaid Medicare Private/Other None Net Monthly Income: _____

Veteran: Yes No Household Size: _____ Needs Interpreter: Yes No

*Primary Contact Info: _____ Secondary Contact Info: _____

*Preferred Language: _____ Ethnicity: _____

If someone is helping the patient (friend, family, case manager/social worker), complete the following:

Support Person: _____ Need Caregiver Support? Yes No

Relationship: _____ Preferred Phone Number or Email: _____


UNMET NEEDS IDENTIFIED / REASON FOR REFERRAL

<input type="checkbox"/> Access to Food	<input type="checkbox"/> Help with ADLs - Activities of Daily Living (specify below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Housing Assistance	<input type="checkbox"/> Help with IADLs - Instrumental Activities of Daily Living (specify below)
<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation Information	<input type="checkbox"/> Home Safety Concerns or Fall Risk
<input type="checkbox"/> Financial Concerns	<input type="checkbox"/> Alzheimer's Disease and Dementia Resources
<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (please explain)	

Please indicate any other support services client or caregiver is receiving or has been referred to: _____


Individual consents to the use of confidential information about them to plan, provide, and coordinate services, payments, and benefits or for other purposes authorized by law. Individual further grants permission to agencies, providers, or persons to use confidential information and disclose it to each other for these purposes. Information may be shared verbally or electronically, mail, or hand delivery. Individual has been informed that they will be contacted by Community Living Connections and consents to this contact.

Staff Witness Name: _____ Date of Consent: _____



ads Aging and Disability Services
Area Agency on Aging for Seattle and King County

City of Seattle King County



COMMUNITY LIVING CONNECTIONS
Seattle & King County



Strategies for Success / Developing a Plan

- > Inventory and catalog AAA resources
- > Understand marketing the AAA
- > Compile a list of practices
- > Target engagement
- > Tailor outreach to the needs of the clinical setting



Reach out to established primary care contacts in the first few months of PCL work. This outreach can be an opportunity to practice your engagement approach, gain familiarity with clinical settings, and receive feedback from trusted partners.

Example Outreach Flyer for Primary Care Providers



AREA AGENCY ON
Aging & Disabilities
OF SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

**RESOURCES FOR
CLINICAL TEAMS**

*Access support and information through a
single point of contact for healthcare providers*

The Area Agency on Aging and Disabilities of Southwest Washington (AAADSW) is a public service agency that offers a wide variety of free and low-cost services designed to help older adults and people with disabilities thrive at home. AAADSW offers a Primary Care Liaison (PCL) who serves as a single point of contact for busy healthcare providers. The PCL is available to engage with clinical teams who would like to learn more about supporting older patients to remain at home.

"Partnering with AAADSW helps me take care of my patients better because I have new knowledge of community resources."
- Physician, PeaceHealth Family Medicine SW

**THE PRIMARY CARE LIAISON
HELPS CLINICAL TEAMS...**

- Easily refer a patient for services and learn the outcome of the patient's referral
- Connect to services and evidence-based programs for older adults and family caregivers
- Learn about Agency on Aging resources that can help address social determinants of health
- Gain answers to questions about long-term care services and staff challenging patients
- Access patient education tools, geriatric-focused education from regional experts, and dementia resources

Connect with our Primary Care Liaison
AAADSWLiaison@dshs.wa.gov or 360-735-5726
www.helpingelders.org/nwgwec

Brought to you by the HRSA grant funded Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center at the University of Washington's School of Medicine: Division of Gerontology & Geriatric Medicine

Real-Life Outreach Examples



Example of PCL outreach in-action: A PCL was contacted by a clinic about a 55-year-old patient who needed to apply for Social Security Disability Insurance and medical benefits. A senior center near the clinic had an AAA advocate, so the PCL provided information about the AAA advocate and local resources and connected the clinic with the advocate. The clinic helped the patient schedule a senior center visit to meet with the AAA advocate, which also connected the patient with their neighborhood senior center. The solution created by the PCL was tailored to the clinic, providing an available and geographically accessible resource.

Overcoming Outreach Challenges

- > Initiating contact
- > No response
- > No existing contact
- > Staff turnover
- > Combating “sales’ tactics”
- > Understanding critical shortages and burnout



Sustaining Established Relationships

- > Strive for periodic, meaningful communications
- > Assist clinic staff with getting answers to any questions
- > Offer to staff challenging patient cases
- > Arrange ongoing check-ins



Quality Assurance and Evaluation

Evaluate program delivery to ensure that effective, high-quality services are delivered and program goals are met

- > How to track outreach data
- > How to evaluate



How can we further spread the word about the PCL model and the implementation guide?

> Efforts thus far:

- Meeting with Cathy Knight to discuss dissemination strategies
 - > Cathy shared with ~12 AAA directors from across the US in a Director's Meeting
- Presentations to W4A audiences by PCLs
- PCL-led workshop accepted for 2025 USAging conference



Question and Answer Period



Evaluation Slide

Phelan: Northwest Geriatrics Workforce Enhancement Center and the Primary Care Liaison Role



Ongoing Benefits to the Area Agency on Aging

- > PCL as a source of momentum
- > Increased healthcare *and* CBO interest in new partnerships and enhancing existing collaborative efforts
- > Increased geriatric competency of professionals at the AAA and in the Aging Network
- > Decreased isolation of agency staff

