Senior Caucus
A Special Interest Group Affiliated with
Group Health Cooperative

2015 Annual Report

Senior Caucus Officers
Carlye Teel, Chair
Jay Sundahl, Vice Chair
Doug Beeman, Secretary
Janet Claypool, Treasurer

Executive Committee Members
Doug Beeman  Caucus Secretary, Coverage and Legislation Vice Chair and Caucus Development Committee Chair
Susan Casey  Coverage and Legislation Program Chair
Janet Claypool  Caucus Treasurer
Pat Kenney  Health Care Program Chair
Rick Rice  Immediate Past Caucus Chair
Gayle Sharp  Nominating Committee Chair
Jay Sundahl  Caucus Vice Chair
Carlye Teel  Caucus Chair
Margaret Thue
Dorothy Watson

Senior Caucus Overview

The Senior Caucus continues to strive for a working partnership with the Board of Trustees, GHC management and medical staff. We are a special interest group providing open forums for discussion that lead to useful advice to the organization’s leaders in order to improve quality of care and coverage for all senior enrollees.

The Caucus submitted its annual goals and objectives for review at the Cooperative Development Committee (CDC) meeting in March 2015. However based on CDC feedback the Executive Committee determined the goals should be revised and tasked the Development Committee to recommend changes. With the work done by the Development committee, the Caucus continued its transition on its future direction.

Major functional changes included changing the meeting dates to Friday so as to have a larger meeting space in CMB D 649; Established Program meetings separate and less formal from Executive business meetings; advanced time between meetings to encourage socialization—which was not successful
Group Health Senior Caucus
Development Committee
Report For The
Group Health Senior Caucus 2015 Annual Report
Doug Beeman, Chair

The Group Health Senior Caucus Development Committee was established and began work on March 6, 2014. The assignment of the new committee was to chart a new course for the Group Health Senior Caucus (GHSC), to broaden the reach of the GHSC, and to encourage leadership development within the GHSC.

During 2015 the GHSC Development Committee:

- Submitted recommendations to the GHSC Executive Committee for future direction of the GHSC and they were approved as submitted.
- Submitted the following GHSC restructuring recommendations:
  - The GHSC Executive Committee will be the forum for conducting the business of the GHSC.
  - Educational Programs will be presented at the newly formed GHSC Program Committee Meetings –[to work on tasks that can lead to outcomes.] focusing on Healthy Aging and Challenges of Aging with the goal of attracting a broader and younger participant base.
  - Retire the GHSC Health Care Committee and the Coverage & Legislation Committee.
  - [The GHSC Executive Committee approved these recommendations.]
- Developed and submitted a GHSC Executive Committee Retreat Plan, which was approved and implemented.
- Developed and implemented a plan to save the EnhanceFitness Program at the GHC Capitol Hill campus.
- Developed a GHSC Common Theme – Taking Charge of Aging. After further discussion the GHSC Executive Committee approved – Advocates for Healthy Aging
- Developed and submitted for approval the following documents to support the new GHSC Structure.
  - GHSC Mission Statement
  - GHSC Operating Guidelines
  - GHSC Goals and Actions
  - GHSC Action Plan Dashboard
  - GHSC 2016 Calendar
- Recommended establishing a new Membership/Communications Committee for 2016
- Created and submitted to the GHSC Executive Committee [for approval] a GHSC business card design, which was approved and cards were ordered, received, and put into use.
The Executive Committee met nine times in 2015 including a day-long retreat to discuss the future direction of the Caucus.

Caucus leadership dealt with an issue regarding the EnhanceFitness classes at Capitol Hill. Late in December 2014 members who attended the EnhanceFitness classes at the Capitol Hill Medical Center were notified that Group Health would no longer sponsor them and the classes would be discontinued. The Capitol Hill campus EnhanceFitness members asked the Senior Caucus to mitigate this problem, and in January Group Health managers attended the Caucus Program and Executive Committee meetings to discuss the issue. In February management announced that the program will continue at the GHC Central Facility under the direction and management by the Seattle Parks and Recreation Department with the same instructors.

The annual Spring Meeting that was held in April began with an EnhanceFitness demonstration, followed by the topic, “The Annual Well Visit for Older Adults: Why should I do it, and what does it involve?” which was led by Christine Fordyce, MD.

During the Caucus’s Fall Meeting and Candidate Forum, Jay Sundahl was elected as chair and Janet Claypool as vice chair. The Inspiration Award was presented to Gordon Harper who inspired the Caucus with his efforts in fulfilling its mission and support of the Caucus as a member of the Development Committee.

On December 4, the Kaiser Permanente pending acquisition was announced at the Senior Caucus end-of-year meeting. Trustees Sue Byington, Porsche Everson, and CEO Scott Armstrong attended the meeting to answer questions and get feedback from the Caucus. Based on additional Caucus feedback, in January 2016 Donna Lynne, Kaiser Permanente executive and other Group Health leaders attended the Senior Caucus meeting to answer questions.

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**Senior Caucus Goals and Actions 2016-2017**

**GOAL 1:** Develop a strong program to educate and engage seniors in their own Healthy Aging and Challenges of Aging process with focus on what individual enrollees can do and how GHC can continue to expand services for its senior enrollees

**GOAL 2:** Establish a new standing committee- MEMBERSHIP & COMMUNICATION COMMITTEE: as described in the proposed Operating Guideline revision for 2016 to promote and manage membership activity in order to meet Article IV of the Constitution. Manage and enhance the communications of the Senior Caucus including partnerships with other parts of Group Health and the community in order to better meet Article III of the Constitution. (Leader appointed by the Senior Caucus chair)

**GOAL 3:** Improve financial operations of Senior Caucus
GOAL 4: The Executive Committee will follow a structured process to monitor and track progress toward Goals and Actions

GOAL 5: Explore (In partnership with Governance) a process for members to be heard and that replaces some of the process discontinued by Member Appeal to provide opportunities for GH to improve and member to air benefit and service concerns.

Annual Report 2015
Coverage and Legislation Topics
Susan Casey, Chair

The year 2015 was a year of change as the format for programs changed to reflect a new focus on Healthy Aging and Challenges of Aging and away from the older format and terminology of Coverage and Legislation. As a holdover from the earlier format, there were three programs that still reflected the legislation emphasis. These were

January 2015 Karen Merrikin and two other staff members from the Washington State Health Care Authority presented an in depth description of “Healthier Washington – State wins $65 million to help fund health innovation.”

February 2015 Walt Bowen, President of Washington State Senior Citizens Lobby, brought the Caucus up to date on the Senior Citizens Lobby, how it was formed, the 35 member organizations (including Group Health Senior Caucus), how legislative priorities for the Lobby are set, and several health care bills that are being pursued in the Legislature. (Note: in fall 2015 Susan Casey began attending the Lobby’s monthly meetings.)

Phil Haas, GHC Board Trustee member, gave an extensive update of the challenges GHC is facing in the current environment, including enrollment losses and staffing cuts that have been implemented to reduce operating costs.

November 2015 Melissa Putman, GHC Director of Federal Governmental Relations, gave an outstanding summary of what is happening on the national level in terms of funding for health care/Medicare, and possible changes that may play out in the coming year.

Annual Report 2015
Health Care Topics
Pat Kenney, Chair

March 2015 Group Heath physical therapists Jennifer Templeton, Jean Myers, and Janine Jordan led an engaging discussion on preventing falls and improving balance. The
presenters demonstrated simple ways of improving balance and attendees participated in the demonstration.

April 2015 Christine Fordyce, MD provided a discussion on the important aspects of annual well visits including immunizations, cancer screenings, medications, and other ways to communicate with your doctor during this exam. Attendees were also given the opportunity to see their own individual snapshots of their well visit results.

May 2015 The May meeting featured three different topics: Harry Harrison, MD, trustee, gave a trustee’s perspective on cost repositioning, customer engagement, and redefining quality. Dr. Fred Heidrich, MD led a presentation on staying healthy under adverse circumstances. Dr. Eric Larson, VP Group Health Research Institute gave a brief overview on an upcoming dementia study.

June 2015 Chair of the Cooperative Susan Byington and Trustee Katie Bell gave an update on current work on Group Health’s labor agreements. Eric Larson, Sascha Dublin, and Dori Rosenberg provided an overview of a dementia risk reduction trial and Senior Caucus members provided feedback.

September 2015 The Senior Caucus Fall Meeting and Trustee Candidate forum was well attended. Paul Sherman, MD gave an overview on Group Health doctors’ work in the changing medical landscape, followed by a trustee candidate forum featuring trustee candidates Katie Bell, Richard Conlin, Phil Haas, Harry Harrison, Jr., MD, and Hugh Straley, MD.

October 2015 Trustee Judy Schurke gave a high-level overview of the current state of the cooperative, and Jessica Kehoe and Susan Powell gave a talk on palliative care and the differences between palliative care, nursing home care, and hospice care.

December 2015 The December 4 meeting was originally scheduled to provide a trustee update, but a majority of the meeting time was devoted to the announcement of the pending Kaiser Permanente acquisition. Sue Byington, Porsche Everson, and CEO Scott Armstrong discussed the proposed acquisition and answered member questions. Beverly Green, MD also gave a brief overview of a blood pressure grant study and asked the Senior Caucus for feedback. Christine Fordyce, MD finished the meeting with an overview on important issues on aging.