

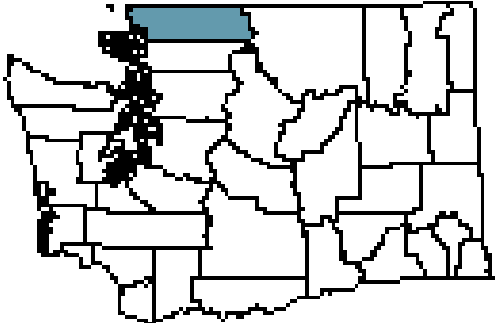
Primary Care Provider Survey Summary Report: Whatcom County

Survey year: 2010

The Department of Health (DOH) conducts the Primary Care Provider Survey to obtain health care access data. This data is used in the [Health Professional Shortage Area \(HPSA\)](#) designation analysis. HPSA is a federal program administered by the federal Office of [Health Resources and Services Administration \(HRSA\)](#). A HPSA designation identifies areas with provider shortages for underserved and uninsured populations. To learn more about the program please see the [HPSA Overview](#).

This summary report reflects provider survey responses. The department makes every attempt to establish a close to accurate number of providers by collecting lists from local health departments, the National Provider Identifier Registry and other sources. To meet federal guidelines in the analysis the target response rate is >75%. This report offers an aggregate summary of the survey responses.

For questions about the survey data, methodology, and related information please contact Phi Ly at Phi.Ly@doh.wa.gov or by phone at (360) 236-2825. Information on other counties can be found on the [Health Care Access Research Page](#).

GENERAL DEFINITIONS		
Primary Care Provider	Health care professionals who serve as the initial point of contact in the assessment and management of a patient's health care needs. This includes: preventative care; treatment of health ailments; management of chronic illness and conditions; and additional care defined by the practitioner's specialty.	
Provider Types and Credentials	Primary care providers are defined by HRSA and exclude naturopathic doctors. For survey purposes credentialing types licensed by the department were used.	
	<table style="width: 100%; border: none;"> <tr> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> Physicians: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) • Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.) </td> <td style="width: 50%; border: none;"> Mid-levels: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physician Assistant (P.A.-C.) • Certified Nurse Midwife (C.N.M.-A.R.N.P.) • Licensed Midwife (L.M.) • Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioners (A.R.N.P.) </td> </tr> </table>	Physicians: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) • Doctor of Osteopathy (D.O.)
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Primary Care Specialty	Primary care specialties are defined by HRSA and exclude specialized care for any of the below listed specialties as well as emergency room, locum tenens (substitutes), hospitalists, occupational medicine, urgent or walk-in clinics, free clinics, and Department of Corrections facilities.	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family Practice or General Practice • General Internal Medicine • General Pediatrics • General Geriatrics • General Obstetricians/Gynecology 	
COUNTY PROFILE		
Whatcom County	The 2009 Washington State Data Book supplied county data and can be found at: www.ofm.wa.gov/databook/default.asp	
Population (2009)	193,100	
Land area	2,119.53 sq. mi.	
Major City/Town (Population)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bellingham (76,130) • Lynden (11,690) • Ferndale (11,080) • Blaine (4,740) • Everson (2,285) 	
		

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Provider Headcount	The DOH determined the number of providers within the county by compiling listings from several sources.	
	Mid-level headcount is not readily available and is collected for other healthcare analysis. Mid-level capacity is excluded in the HPSA analysis.	
	Physicians: 118	Mid-levels: --
Survey Respondents	Respondent is the number of survey responses submitted. Responses were achieved by direct contact and mailings to clinics.	
	Physicians: 102 (86% of surveyed physicians)	Mid-levels: 23
Primary Care Specialty Some respondents did not select a specialty	Family Practice: 64 General Practice: 1 Internal Medicine: 14 General Pediatrics: 11 General Geriatrics: 7 OB/Gynecology: 9	Family Practice: 20 General Practice: - Internal Medicine: - General Pediatrics: - General Geriatrics: 2 OB/Gynecology: 1
Provider Full-Time Equivalency (FTE)	Full-time equivalent is the sum of reported primary care hours (weekly hours >40 were adjusted to 40) then divided by 40 to obtain the total FTE for the county.	
	One FTE = 40 hours direct patient care per week.	
	73.0 Physician FTE	18.1 Mid-level FTE
PROVIDER CHARACTERISTICS		
Proportion Calculations	Proportions are calculated with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Numerator: counts of respondent primary care providers who indicate the listed characteristic • Denominator: total respondents (physicians and mid-levels) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Whatcom County: n=124, unless noted 	
Hospital Admitting Privileges	71% of providers, or 89 physicians and 2 mid-levels, have hospital admitting privileges.	
Hospital(s)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PeaceHealth St. Joseph's Hospital (Bellingham) 	
Additional Languages	37% of providers, or 33 physicians and 13 mid-levels, offer additional spoken languages at their practice. Identified languages include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spanish • Russian • Norwegian • German • Tagalog • Hindi 	
Other Service	76% of providers, or 74 physicians and 20 mid-levels have other interpretive services that include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sign language • Language Exchange • On-site medical/telephone/appointment setting translation 	

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Transitory agricultural migrant farm workers	Patients and their dependents defined as not having a permanent local address in the area as the practice.
	11% of providers, or 14 physicians, indicate having patients and their dependents defined as transitory agricultural migrant farm workers.
Homeless persons	Patients and their dependents defined as those living in unstable, nonpermanent locations such as in shelters, transitional housing, in tents, in cars, or on the streets.
	37% of providers, or 35 physicians and 11 mid-levels, indicate having patients and their dependents defined as homeless.
PAYER TYPES	
Private Insurance	Insurance through work or self-purchased includes Basic Health and other third party subsidies that are not Medicaid and Medicare.
	92% of providers, or 94 physicians and 20 mid-levels, treat private insurance patients. 60% is the average proportion of private insurance patients. (n=114)
Accepting new patients:	50% of providers, or 50 physicians and 12 mid-levels, accept new private insurance patients Restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No chronic pain • Obstetrics only
Medicaid	Federal and state administered payment for low income persons and includes Healthy Options.
	93% of providers, or 95 physicians and 20 mid-levels, treat Medicaid patients. 18% is the average proportion of Medicaid patients. (n=115)
Accepting new patients:	41% of providers, or 39 physicians and 12 mid-levels, accept new Medicaid patients Restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No chronic pain • Open to some Obstetrics
Medicare	Federally administered payment for senior citizens and some disabled persons under age 65. This includes Fee-for-Service and Managed Care.
	83% of providers, or 84 physicians and 19 mid-levels, treat Medicare patients 24% is the average proportion of Medicare patients. (n=104)
Accepting new patients:	44% of providers, or 40 physicians and 14 mid-levels, accept new Medicare patients Restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open to some new patients • No chronic pain
Sliding Fee Scale (SFS)	No insurance or subsidies and fees are discounted according to income level. Includes charity.
	23% of providers, or 17 physicians and 12 mid-levels, treat SFS patients 7% is the average proportion of SFS patients, n=29.
Accepting new patients:	18% of providers, or 15 physicians and 7 mid-levels, accept new SFS patients Restrictions include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on patient income • Charity • DOS discounts

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Other Payer types	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L&I (Workers Compensation): 24 physicians and 9 mid-levels
ADDITIONAL FACILITIES	
<u>Federally Qualified Health Center or Community Health Center (FQHC or CHC)</u>	<p>FQHCs, also known as CHCs, are health care facilities that provide primary care services to all persons regardless of ability to pay. Centers providing primary care are surveyed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Interfaith Community Health Center-Point Roberts Wellness Clinic Interfaith Community Health Center-Bellingham Interfaith Community Health Center-Ferndale Sea-Mar Community Health Center-Bellingham Sea-Mar Community Health Center-Ferndale
<u>Rural Health Clinic (RHC)</u>	<p>The U.S. Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services designates clinics meeting specific conditions for certification as a Rural Health Clinic. RHCs are eligible for enhanced Medicare and Medicaid reimbursement. These clinics are surveyed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Birch Bay Family Medicine (Blaine) Everson Family Medicine Ferndale Family Medical Center Lynden Family Medicine
<u>Tribal Health Clinic</u>	<p>Tribal Health Clinics that do not serve non-tribal patients were excluded in the survey and HPSA analysis.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lummi Nation Tribal Center (Bellingham) Nooksack Community Health Center (Everson)
<u>Free Clinic</u>	<p>Free clinics are medical facilities providing health services for little to no cost. These clinics are not surveyed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> None
College/University	<p>Western Washington University Student Health Center</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1.0 Physician FTE

For additional questions or inquiries:

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