

Aging Services of Washington Committee Spotlight: Health Care Committee

A message from committee chair, Doug Bault

What I enjoy most about the Health Care committee is that we have a collection of passionate and extremely competent individuals. They can immediately articulate the fiscal and operational impacts of legislative and regulatory proposals to their organizations while maintaining a collective sense of association protection and advocacy. And, sometimes when not in their own organizations' best interests, they stay focused on the overall policy and the common good of the association membership. I am proud of this committee and appreciate its work on behalf of all members.

The Health Care Committee is working towards improving Medicaid and Medicare payment rates. This includes the analysis of current and proposed systems and processes and assessing the practices of compliance with current and proposed operational regulations. Currently the committee is formulating legislative priority concepts and strategies to pursue during the legislative session in Olympia. A few of the key legislative messages are: protect Medicaid payment rates from further erosion and/or vulnerability and restore certain sections of the Medicaid payment statute that were revised last session in the event the Safety Net Assessment mechanism was not approved by CMS. The committee is also coordinating with other Aging Services of Washington committees and members to develop guidelines for member implementation of SB 5708 (our reshaping the delivery of long term care services bill from last session) as we continue to identify additional opportunities to enhance care transitions and better serve all seniors regardless of where they live. Additionally, we recently met with member representatives of the Assisted Living, Senior Housing & Community Living, and Technology committees to discuss the value of understanding where our goals intersect as we better coordinate the transition of people and information, using technology, throughout the continuum. The committee provides feedback and proposes policy recommendations to the Aging Services' Board of Directors regarding a number of legislative proposals; many of which are controversial as they can determine the future viability of member organizations.

As a member of the committee, we learn the latest information about Medicare and Medicaid related payment issues.

The Health Care committee is comprised of a great member representation of organizational, cultural, geographical and professional experts whose range of expertise serves prominently for Aging Services and its members.