



WENATCHEE VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER

Physician-owned and patient-centered since 1940

September 15, 2010

To Whom It May Concern:

As Medical Director of Wenatchee Valley Medical Center, I struggle with how we are going to meet the primary care shortage soon to be upon us. Our patient population is growing and most rapidly in geriatric patients, many of whom have chronic healthcare conditions requiring careful coordination of their medications.

More and more the care teams that we employ to take care of these patients include clinical Pharmacists. Our Pharmacists help us develop care algorithms and protocols that allow in a collaborative manner, our physicians, physician assistants and nurse teams to work together to provide the best evidence based medicine possible to our patients. However, to date, the services our Pharmacists have provided have been absorbed as a cost to the organization with no form of reimbursement, as a Pharmacist cannot charge for their services. Clearly, the Pharmacists is functioning as care providers in this realm and should be able to charge and be compensated for their work. We utilize the clinical Pharmacist to create care algorithms to assist patients with diabetes, congestive heart failure, HIV and in our anti-coagulation clinics. If we were able to charge for these services directly, we would be able expand the role of our Pharmacist even further to allow better access to patients, particularly in some of our most rural satellite clinics, where the physician shortage is being seen most acutely.

Clinical Pharmacists are already an integral part of our team and we would very much support the ability to expand them even further as team members, if their ability to be compensated for their work directly with patients comes to pass in Washington State.

Thank you,

Stuart Freed, MD
Medical Director
Wenatchee Valley Medical Center

SF/dp