



FOCUS

ON PLANNED PARENTHOOD

Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest

Winter 2009

Northwest Planned Parenthood Organizations Merge

What started as ideas and discussions more than a year ago has come to its full fruition. Last summer, the Volunteer Boards of Planned Parenthood of Alaska, Planned Parenthood of Idaho, and Planned Parenthood of Western Washington voted for their intent to merge into a single entity. The new combined Board met for the first time in early November. Then, on November 24th, a new non-profit designation was filed at Washington’s capitol in Olympia and signed by the Secretary of State.

And on January 1st, the three affiliates were unified, creating Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW). It is the largest geographical affiliate in the country and second largest in terms of budget. PPGNW runs 29 health centers, has 487 full time and part time employees, coordinates

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New Health Center Opens in Alaska State Capital



The first new health center to be opened under the banner of Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW) will welcome patients in mid-February. The location, in Alaska’s capital city of Juneau, is both practical and symbolic.

With approximately 1,850 square feet of space, three exam rooms, a recovery room, a small lab, and an area for reception and waiting, the new health center will offer a variety of services for the city’s 30 thousand-plus citizens. Services include breast and pelvic exams, cancer-screening Pap smears, high-blood pressure screening, diabetes screening, testing for sexually transmitted infections, emergency contraception, pregnancy testing, hormone-replacement therapy for mid-life women, colposcopy, cryotherapy, limited family practice, family planning education and appropriate medical and social-service referrals. The new health

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The Formation of a New Board

Board Update

By Han Nachtrieb

It became quite clear early on, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest would become much more than the sum of its parts.

Driven by a common mission and pre-existing relationships, our merger discussions quickly felt like high-function teamwork sessions. Long before the merger documents were drafted, boards and staffs alike started behaving as one. It was easy because we wanted the same things:

- The financial strength of combined resources;
- Shared public affairs and communications strategies for three states;
- Access to medication abortion;
- Telemedicine options for remote and underserved areas;
- Family planning funding for low income people in Alaska, Idaho, and Washington.

Running a Planned Parenthood State affiliate has never been an easy job; it has been particularly difficult over the last eight years. Pooling our talented staff, and I can assure you – there are amazing staff across our three states - we are able to give each other some respite from all consuming roles.

We knew our combined resources would increase our ability to respond to a wider variety of communities. So many of our residents rely on us for care and trust us for accurate information. It's our responsibility to push the boundaries of medicine and knowledge further.

So, please join me in celebrating an important moment in the Planned Parenthood movement as we now are politically, medically and operationally better poised to rise to the challenges of future.

On behalf of the staff, the board, and the men and women who walk, call, and log in, to our health centers every day, thank you for your continued support and involvement in this amazing organization.

Executive Update



A New Beginning

The New Year is all about starting over.

Never has that seemed more true than when 2008 clicked over to 2009. Last month, a new president was sworn

in at our nation's capitol. New legislatures in Washington D.C. and all 50 statehouses were seated. And in Alaska, Idaho, and western Washington, a new era dawns for those of us who believe reproductive health lies at the core of our well being as a community and a nation. The manifestation of that belief is Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest.

The reasonable question you might be asking is, "why did these three Planned Parenthood affiliates want to merge?" The most concise answer can be summed up in one word—responsibility.

Our primary responsibility is to the patients we serve and the overarching mission of Planned Parenthood. In this economic climate, medical organizations need to be larger in order to survive. And patients are depending on our survival for their reproductive healthcare. By merging at this time, we are able to streamline duplicate job duties, make health care records digital and transferrable, and concentrate our medical efforts where they are most effective.

From there, our responsibility branches out to you, the people who support our efforts in myriad ways. The investment you make in Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest is repaid in healthier citizens, stronger families, and better communities. The success of our mission will be directly tied to the willingness of the best people from all three states to bring their energy, creativity, and support into this new era.

Christine R. Charbonneau
Christine R. Charbonneau,
President/CEO



PPGNW Legislative Update

The 2009 legislative sessions are underway in Alaska, Idaho, and Washington State. This year brings great opportunities for us to focus on prevention, proven programs, and fertility protection- but we also face serious challenges. The economic crisis looms large over our efforts, and both Idaho and Washington face budget deficits. We have our work cut out for us, but our expanded Public Affairs team is up for the challenge.

Alaska

This session PPGNW is working on pro-active measures to support fertility protection and raise awareness about the links between common sexually transmitted infections (STI) and infertility. The fertility protection legislation will expand services and funding for STI prevention programs and will allow expedited partner therapy to more effectively treat STIs, like chlamydia. Unfortunately, we will also be defending against many anti-choice bills, from parental consent mandates to a “partial-birth” abortion ban that is so broad it would essentially ban most abortions, regardless of the health or safety of the woman.

Idaho

In Idaho, our Public Affairs team will focus on building relationships with legislators and coalition partners. Idaho has an anti-choice majority in the legislature, so we will likely defend against anti-choice bills this year. We will also work to stop a bill to overturn Idaho’s no-fault divorce law, and will support equality measures. We are laying the ground work in our communities to introduce comprehensive sex education legislation in the 2010 session.

Washington State

In Washington State, we are proud to have a pro-choice governor and pro-choice legislature. However, our state faces a budget deficit of at least \$6 billion, which will force lawmakers to make program cuts. We want to ensure that family planning programs see as few cuts as possible. We are fighting to retain \$10 million in funding for essential family planning services, and hopefully save the CSO family planning nurse program, which operates in low-income and underserved communities. We also support a bill that requires Washington State to seek federal sex ed funding only for proven programs.

Teen Lobby Day

For the sixth year in a row, over 100 teens from across Washington traveled to Olympia to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr. Day and to advocate for reproductive health and individual rights.

Prior to Teen Lobby Day, they participated in training sessions designed to help them understand how laws are made, become educated on current legislative issues, and practice being effective citizen lobbyists. On Monday, they celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day and met with their district legislators.

The focus of the teens’ lobbying efforts this year was maintaining funding for family planning services for low-income people. Public funding for family planning helps thousands of teens get the services they need every year. They also advocated to change a current state law which mandates that the State Department of Health apply for federal abstinence-only-sex education funds. The law is inconsistent with the Healthy Youth Act of 2007, which makes comprehensive sex education the Washington state standard.

At Planned Parenthood, we are very proud of our teen advocates! Not only are they actively engaged in reproductive health issues, they’ve initiated a lifetime of involvement in the political process.

Lobby Day for Adults

If you think the efforts of our teen lobbyists are admirable, we hope you will consider joining us in Olympia too! February 23rd, 2009 is Reproductive Health & Rights Lobby Day. Sponsored by Planned Parenthood and NARAL Pro-Choice Washington, this annual event is an opportunity for supporters from all over the state to join at the capitol.

You can meet with your legislators to advocate for every person’s right to access reproductive health services and information. No Experience Necessary: We provide transportation, food, and training. Bonus: This year’s Lobby Day will be followed with a Legislative Reception – a fun and informal way to interact with your legislators and other members of the reproductive health and rights community. To find out how you can join with us in Olympia, please visit www.ppww.org.

New Affiliate Establishes New Protocols: Medical Standards and Guidelines

As our 29 health centers in three western states take on the name, Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, a new document is present at each location. It is the PPGNW Medical Standards and Guidelines and its purpose is to make sure procedures are followed in accordance with agreed upon protocols.

All Planned Parenthood affiliates across the country must conform to the Standards and Guidelines established by the National Medical committee of PP Federation of America. Planned Parenthood was among the first medical non-profits to adopt such standardization, due to the many nurse practitioners who have historically worked for the agency. But these guidelines vary slightly from region to region, and the new edition brings all three of the PPGNW states into conformity.

The benefit to the patient is consistency and quality in the way their health care is managed at any of our health centers. Couple this with the integration of our planned electronic health records system in Alaska, Idaho and Washington, and our excellent quality improvement program and you can be sure that PPGNW patients experience an unprecedented transparency and quality in their care.

Much of the Medical Standards and Guidelines is updated information on the many procedures Planned Parenthood has been doing for a long time. But it also contains some new guidelines that deal with issues we realize are part and parcel of the healthcare landscape. For instance, a newly written section on “Screening and Referral for Intimate Partner Violence” seeks to identify this destructive pattern in the lives of our patients. When a healthcare professional knows that a patient is being abused, steps can be taken to mitigate or even stop the situation altogether. Intimate partner violence, of course, is nothing new. This updated guideline outlines current information on the best ways to screen and manage this problem.

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New Health Center in Juneau from page 1

Another newly updated section is called “Treatment of Symptoms/ Conditions Related to Menopause.” Through these guidelines, our clinicians can address yet another phase of reproductive health for our middle aged patients using the latest evidenced based medical information. And while this service has been offered recently in Idaho and Alaska, its standardization creates opportunities for service expansion in western Washington.

Because there are so many different situations that are encountered by our medical staff, a unified source for procedures is vital. Birth control is a relatively simple thing, but the patient’s current medical condition is a factor in prescribing the most effective contraceptive method. This makes the examination and evaluation process very important, which also must be standardized.

An internal audit of sorts is conducted every four years when the Planned Parenthood Affiliate Accreditation process is completed. This is a thorough inspection of all aspects of running a PP affiliate, including medical practices. In the Fall 2007 edition of FOCUS, we reported that Western Washington’s last accreditation resulted in a perfect score. Because of the merger, PPGNW must go through another accreditation by the end of 2010. The early establishment and measurement of adherence to the PPGNW Medical Standards and Guidelines sets the foundation so we may enjoy yet another perfect score.

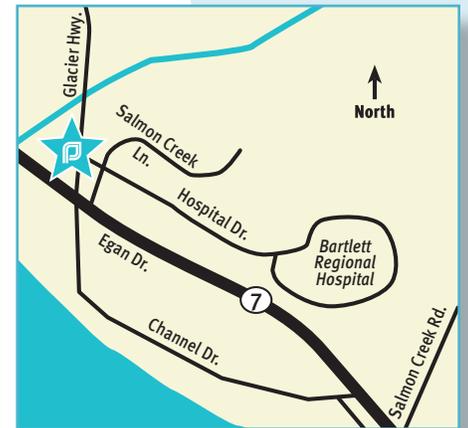
The Standards and Guidelines are updated each year because new testing, new discoveries, new medicines, and new therapies mean new protocols that must be followed to ensure our patients receive the best care possible.

center will also offer first trimester surgical and medication abortion services.

The new Juneau health center is located at 3241 Glacier Highway. “This is a perfect location,” says Clover Simon, Vice President-Alaska, “because it sits adjacent to the city’s other medical facilities.” Other Alaska locations with PPGNW health centers are in Anchorage, Fairbanks, Sitka, and Soldotna.

Placing a health center in Alaska’s capital city makes a statement. “Our first thought, naturally, was the patients,” says Chris Charbonneau, President and CEO of Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest, “This is a large population where medical and educational services are needed. But it also informs state and civic leaders that this is a new era for Planned Parenthood in the state of Alaska, and we’re here to stay.”

Appointments for services can be made online at www.ppgnw.org/appt or by calling (800) 230-PLAN.



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the efforts of over 700 volunteers, and projects to serve more than 100,000 patients in the coming year.

The new Board contains members from all three states, and in accordance with the new by-laws, will meet eleven times in the coming year; once in Alaska, once in Idaho, three times in Washington, and seven times as video conference calls or in other cities.

Teen Clinics Refunded

A western Washington foundation that wishes to remain anonymous has funded the Teen Clinics program for another year, and as a result, health care for teens will be more consistently available than they were in the past. Nine health centers in western Washington now have Teen Clinics once per week.

Here's how the program works: Teen Clinics is a few hours set aside when a health center accepts only teen patients for drop in visits for birth control, emergency contraception, STI checks, condoms, etc. Volunteers are on hand in the lobby to help provide the teens with information, answer questions about the paperwork, play educational games, and provide snacks. In fact, the volunteers who work at the Teen Clinics are the only volunteers at PPGNW who are also educators. Thanks to the volunteers, patients who use the Teen Clinic are more informed when they go in for their appointments. They are also more likely to remain patients of Planned Parenthood when they become adults.



Chantalle Blakesley-Swift, Teen Clinic volunteer

Katie Adamek, Teen Clinic Coordinator, says that the teens she talks to feel more comfortable when they are among their peers. Teens have told us in surveys they sometimes feel judged by adults in the lobby during regular hours. Having a time in our health centers that's only for teens creates an environment of trust and companionship.

To find out Teen Clinic hours and locations, please click on www.ppgnw.org/tc or call 206-328-7715 for more information.

Youth Are “In The Know” in Idaho

Part of the excitement surrounding the merger that created Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest (PPGNW) is in the collaborative spirit with which each state is helping one another. A great example of this is in an Idaho educational program called *Youth in the Know (YTIK)*.



Youth In The Know educator Josie Evans

PPGNW believes that medical services have the most impact on our patients in the near term, but our educational efforts hold the most potential for making positive personal change. It is because of this belief that we invest so much of our resources, planning, and creative energy in education.

Public schools in Idaho have rarely allowed Planned Parenthood to teach in classrooms, and when they do, it is typically only for 1 or 2 hours. Research says to be truly effective, sex education needs to be comprehensive in nature and last long enough to impact knowledge, attitudes and behaviors. So the people who have worked for Planned Parenthood in Idaho have come up with innovative ways to get vital, comprehensive sexuality education information to teens and their parents. *Youth in the Know* is a six week course that teaches medically-accurate and age appropriate sex education to youth ages 13 -18. The course is taught at the Planned Parenthood administration building in Boise as well as in

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community settings in neighboring Canyon County. Parental permission is required for youth to attend. Teens benefit by having ample time outside of school to receive 12 hours of programming and they have the added benefit of learning with peers from neighboring schools.

Among the innovations for the program is the way the staff is assisted by social networking to spread the word about *Youth In the Know*. Teens use *Facebook*, *MySpace*, and texting to communicate, so news of the program has spread by way of “viral” marketing, and the classes have been filled up for over a year. The Boise education team has formed strong community partnerships in the delivery and promotion of *YITK*. Partners include Central District Health, Allies Linked for the Prevention of HIV and AIDS (ALPHA) and HIV Services. Partner agencies promote *YITK* and some assign youth outreach workers as co-facilitators.

The Planned Parenthood educators who work with the students are exceptional. Among them is Josie Evans, who is described by those around her as enthusiastic, connected to the community and overflowing with fresh ideas. Teachers like Josie are highly trained sex educators, but speak in the language that teens use today and bring real life examples and stories to the classroom.

The eventual goal for *Youth in the Know* is have it evolve over a three year period into something that more closely resembles the Teen Council model that has been so successful in western Washington. Teen Council is a group of peer educators—high school students themselves—assigned to a region as an effective resource for the students and parents in their community.

Our colleagues in Idaho have shown us an effective way to educate outside of the school districts, and our colleagues in Washington have introduced us to the concept of Teen Council. This bodes well for educational efforts all over Planned Parenthood of the Great Northwest.

Write in Me

We have placed “Write in Me” journals in the waiting rooms of our health centers hoping our patients would tell us their thoughts about Planned Parenthood and why they’re here. Their anonymous words show a wide range of emotion and remind us again how necessary our services are to the community.

“When no one else is taking care of my health, Planned Parenthood is.”

“I’m studying to be a high school ESL teacher. I can’t afford private health insurance so I’m waiting for my application to get through WA Basic Health, which could take a while.

I’ve been on Take Charge for almost two years now, so I’ve gotten 24 cycles of pills and two pelvic exams free and with no waiting. When no one else is taking care of my health, Planned Parenthood is. It is such a gift, financially and emotionally, to receive your care. Thank you, thanks to your donors, and thanks to the women who fight and fought for you. I now I speak for a lot of women when I say *we need you*.”

“If only every doctor and clinic could be so helpful”

“I finally got health insurance, but my new doctor’s office is giving me the run around. I’m out of birth control pills – the new doctor can’t prescribe them until next month and that is too late for me. Thank goodness Planned Parenthood was here and available to help, providing me with one more month of birth control. If only every doctor and clinic could be so helpful. When will women’s health become a priority?”

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Some Thoughts About Charitable Gift Annuities

If you've been thinking about a charitable gift annuity (CGA), now may be the time. A CGA can help stabilize your income during volatile economic times like we're going through right now.

For a stable, life-long income with a Planned Parenthood CGA, please contact Lu Arendt, VP of External Affairs, at (206) 328-7527 or lu.arendt@ppgnw.org for more information.

