

# CHOICE

Regional Health Network



## ANNUAL REPORT 2011

# Mission

CHOICE is the place where organizational leaders with regional interdependencies jointly plan and act to the mutual benefit of one another, their organizations and their communities.



Better health for everyone at less cost

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# A Letter from the Executive Director

2011 has been another tough year as state budget shortfalls, rising unemployment, and a poor economy have taken a toll on our community, partners and members. Our safety net providers are being stretched to the breaking point trying to keep up with the increasing demand for their services. CHOICE has seen a significant increase in the numbers of people looking for basic resources such as health care, food and stable housing. However limited the resources, CHOICE has moved forward to meet its vision of better health for everyone at less cost. And, CHOICE is committed to community collaboration to improve the quality of health care resources that are still available.

The *Emergency Department Consistent Care Program* was recognized repeatedly throughout 2011 (by the American Hospital Association and other organizations) for its groundbreaking work of reducing costs and improving coordination. Our continued work with hospitals and EMS providers on stroke and cardiac protocols resulted in all eight hospitals in the region receiving categorization from the Dept. of Health as cardiac and stroke centers. We are pleased that the planning conducted by the Safety-Net Council has resulted in CHOICE's successful launch of the *Bridge to Primary Care* pilot, which aims to bridge the gap in primary care for adults who are uninsured now but will have access to coverage by 2014 when health reform implementation begins. The Council also helped develop a partnership with other providers to conduct Stanford University's *Chronic Disease Self-Management Program* for local residents dealing with chronic medical issues. We organized and coordinated the work of 250 clinical volunteers for our donated care programs, *Thurston County Project Access* and the *Mental Health Access Program*, which resulted in over \$2 million in care for uninsured individuals.

With all the successes, there are also times of stress. Towards the end of the year, CHOICE saw our first Executive Director depart for a position in philanthropy. Funding streams are drying up at the state and elsewhere for work that we do. But with change comes new opportunities: Budgeting lean drives focus in our work and efficiencies in our community efforts. We are seeing early planning for 2014, when health reform implementation begins, which is truly exciting. These are challenging times, and it has never been more important for CHOICE to continue the work that means so much to health care in this region.

Sincerely,

Holly Greenwood,  
Interim Executive Director



## CHOICE Staff

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Communications and Member Services Specialist

**Amy Faulk**

Assistant Director, Finance

**Ann Edington**

Assistant Director, Client Services

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**Sarah Sanders**

Health Resources Coordinator

**Scott Douglas**

Grants and Contract Development Specialist

# Who We Are

CHOICE is a non-profit that formed in 1995 to help hospitals and patients in our community have a voice in discussions around improving the local health care delivery system. CHOICE provides direct services to patients and at the same time, we continue to drive regional health system improvements. The hospitals, behavioral health, public health, community health centers, and primary care in our region have maintained their strong commitment to our activities.

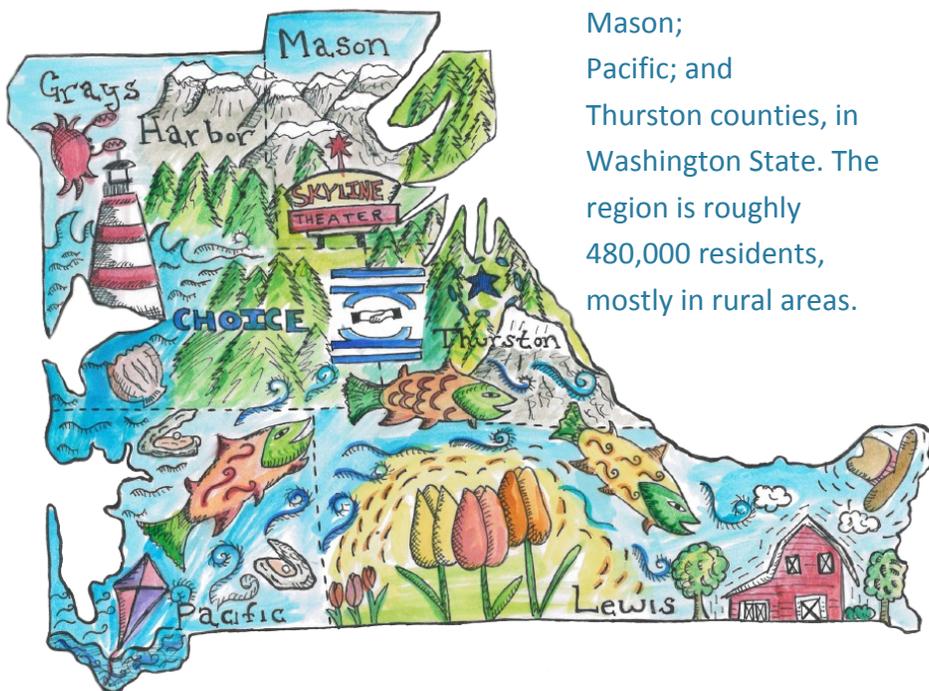
# Our Philosophy

CHOICE brings the right partners to the table and helps them activate their shared vision for a healthier region. At CHOICE, we are committed to collaboration in the belief that individual organizations' capacity, effectiveness, and efficiency is greatly increased by shared expertise and systems and collective decision-making and action.

CHOICE has four core areas of work:

- 1. Quality improvement
- 2. Access to services
- 3. Community development
- 4. Advocacy

# Our Region



Grays Harbor;  
Lewis;  
Mason;  
Pacific; and  
Thurston counties, in  
Washington State. The  
region is roughly  
480,000 residents,  
mostly in rural areas.

## 2272

The number of clients served by CHOICE in FY 2011.

## 444

The number of clients who received health care insurance assistance in FY 2011.

## 678

The number of clients who received donated medical services through Thurston County Project Access in FY 2011.

## 289

The number of children, ages 0-5, that received dental care in FY 2011 through the Access to Baby and Child Dentistry program in Thurston County.

## \$2,004,263\*

The value of donated care delivered by the volunteers of Thurston County Project Access and the Mental Health Access Program to the uninsured.

\* Donated "charges" for that period continue to be received—this number may grow.

# The State of the Region

The CHOICE region has some of the poorest and sickest residents in the state, according to data developed by the Office of Financial Management. Key findings include:

- Individuals in our region are significantly more likely to not have a primary care physician and were more likely to forego care when needed because of costs as compared to the state as a whole.
- Individuals in our region are more likely to have higher smoking rates, obesity rates, and no-exercise rates than statewide rates. \*
- The region's uninsured percentage has almost doubled over the last decade despite some 25% of the region's adults, and 25% of children, now receiving Medicaid benefits.

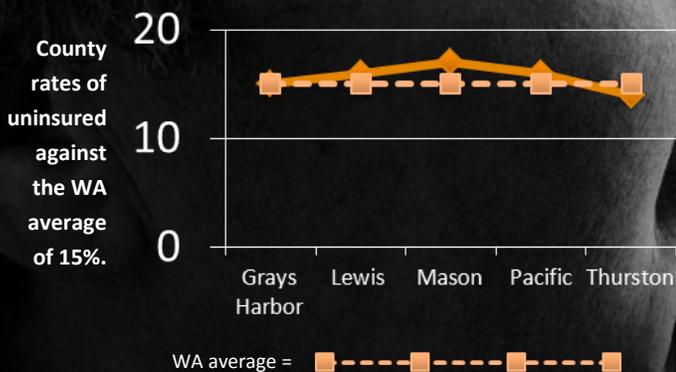


1 in 2 Americans are considered poor or low-income, according to the US Census. Income for low-income families are shrinking. Affordable housing is unavailable to over half of the low-income surveyed by the Census.

- Proposed state budget cuts to mental health total \$14.4 million statewide and reductions to chemical dependency services is slated at another \$16.6 million. This equates to perhaps \$2.2 million in revenue loss in our region.

\*Data compiled by Joe Campo, MPH, Healthcare Research Group, Forecasting Division, OFM

1 in 7 Washington State residents lack health insurance, according to the state Insurance Commissioner. Half of those are age 18-34. Uncompensated care at hospitals and health providers in the state has hit \$1 billion per year.



# Quality Improvement

**\$3.9 million**

Estimated savings in hospital charges in FY 2011 as a result of enrollment into the EDCCP.\*

**76%**

The number of Medicaid and Medicare in EDCCP that are “frequent flyers” to the ED in 2011. Very few patients in EDCCP are uninsured.

The Emergency Department Consistent Care Program has expanded to Grays Harbor Community Hospital, Mark Reed Hospital, and has been revitalized at Providence Centralia Hospital, serving the high-utilizers of area hospital’s Emergency Departments. The program has won the American Hospital Association’s NOVA Award, and has been featured in periodicals across the nation. Through coordination and convening of a multi-disciplinary team, patients who frequent Emergency Department’s but who are experiencing poor health outcomes are enrolled into the program and a plan of care is developed to improve the patient’s quality of life.

*“The primary intervention is to have a plan of care in the ED,” says Kara Elliott, the program’s administrative coordinator. “When an enrolled patient goes to one of our EDs, any provider seeing that patient will treat him or her consistently.”*

# Community Development

In early 2011, CHOICE developed what would later become known as the “Regional Pilot”, a blueprint for reorganizing health resources in our region to coordinate care and strengthen the healthcare delivery system, with a focus on the most vulnerable populations in our region. By holding numerous forums across the region to hear feedback and suggestions from public health, county governments, hospitals, and others, CHOICE continues to develop ideas on how to create a better working health system that focuses on prevention, care coordination, and delivery system improvements that result in a healthier southwest Washington population.

**1/3**

The number of the adult population under 250% of poverty (31,400) is uninsured.

**\$24,645**

The amount of gross yearly income a family of three makes at 133% of the federal poverty level.

\*Based on a formula developed in 2010 Emergency Department Consistent Care Program Evaluative Report



## Access to Services

CHOICE Client Services include work through our donated programs as well as our *Regional Access Program*, which connects low-income patients and families to access care and coverage. CHOICE Health Resources Coordinators offer a wide-range of knowledge and expertise in navigating the health system, as well as assistance with food, prescriptions, housing and other social services. *Thurston County Project Access* connects low-income uninsured adults with acute medical issues to specialty providers who donate their services. In FY 2011, Project Access served 678 individuals. Likewise, the *Mental Health Access Program* connected 59 people who lacked mental health coverage and were suffering from anxiety and/or depression to a donating licensed mental health counselor during the year. This year also marked the beginning of CHOICE coordinating Stanford's *Chronic Disease Self-Management* workshops in Thurston County (expansion to Lewis County occurs in FY 2012). These workshops are designed to give participants the tools they need to lead healthier lives while dealing with chronic issues, and have been very popular.

**239**

The number of mental health counseling sessions offered to the uninsured by donating licensed mental health therapists in Thurston County in FY 2011.

**385**

The average number of active patients per quarter receiving donated medical services while being in



## Health System Coordination

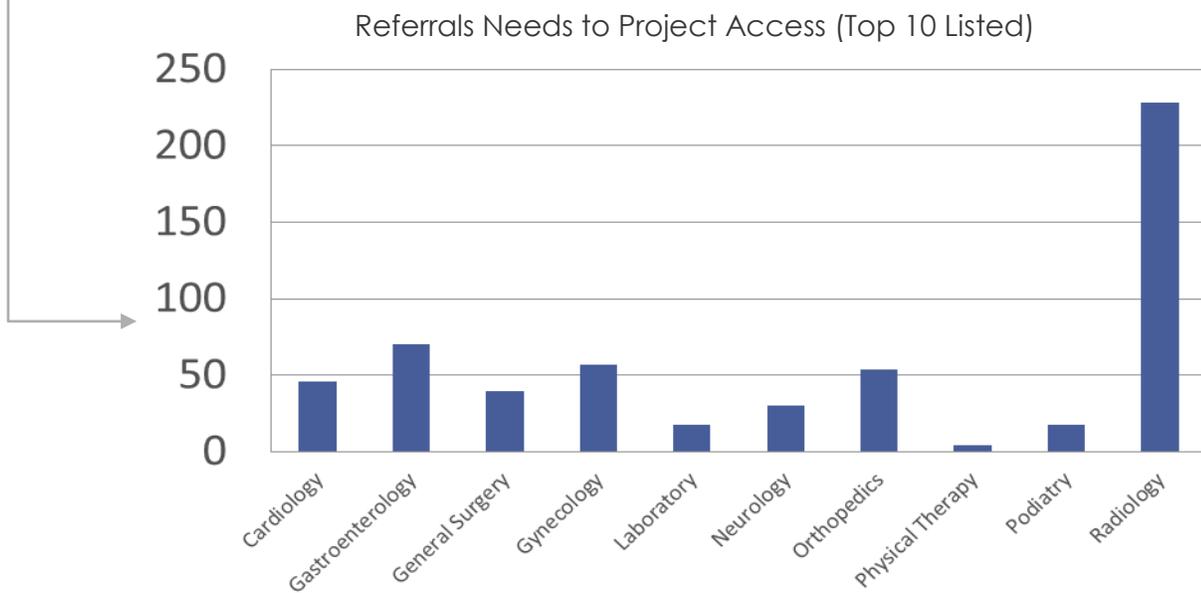
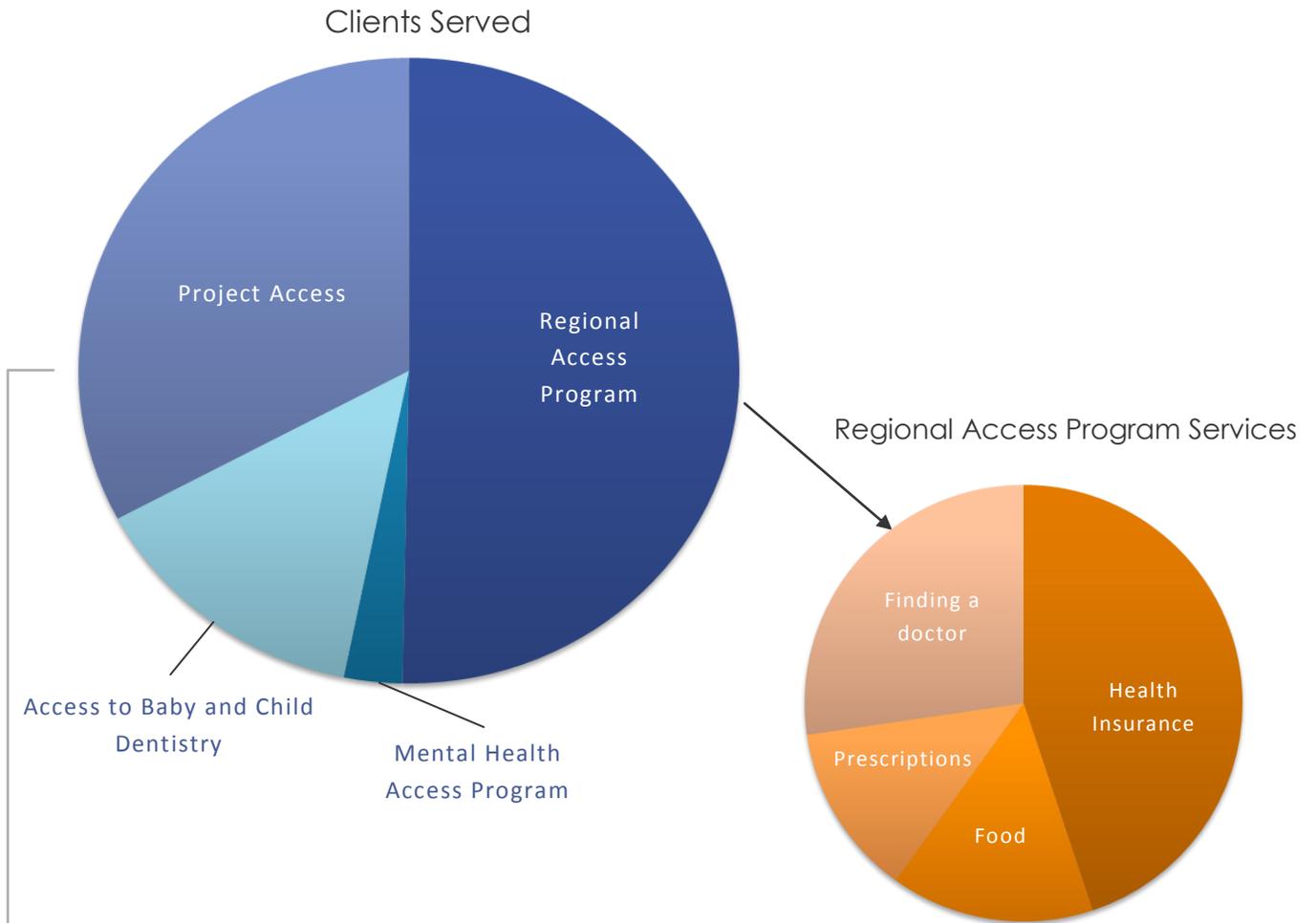
All eight hospitals in the region, which includes Grays Harbor Community Hospital, Mark Reed, Mason General Hospital, Willapa Harbor Hospital, Providence Centralia Hospital, Morton General Hospital, Capital Medical Center, and Providence St. Peter Hospital, received stroke and cardiac certification as a result of CHOICE's development efforts around stroke and cardiac protocols. Based on best practices and leadership among multiple providers, including Emergency Management System (EMS) and the hospitals, patient care for stroke and cardiac victims has been advanced in the region.

## Client Story

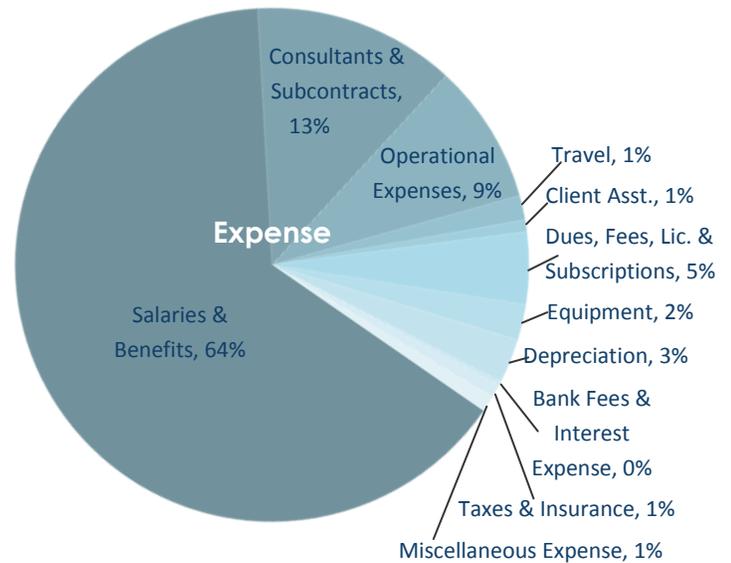
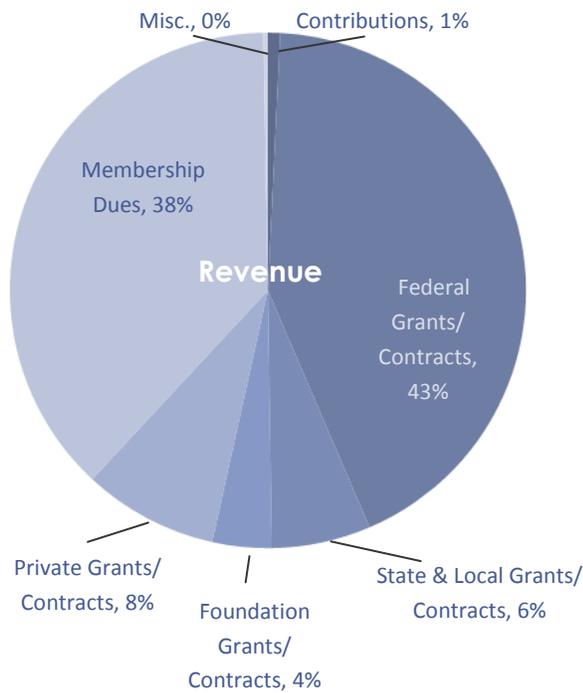
*The Mental Health Access Program (MHAP) assisted a young man in his 20s to receive therapy from a licensed mental health counselor who volunteers with the program. The man was without job, without health insurance, living with others, and unable to get up off the couch on most days; he came to the Mental Health Access Program seriously depressed. He completed four therapy sessions in August. In September he got a new job, moved to his own apartment, and was accepted to The Evergreen State College to complete his education evenings and weekends. He returned to MHAP for four sessions in October to review his mental health issues and to strengthen his ability to maintain his independence. He left feeling that he had learned new coping skills and that he was prepared to be successful with his new life.*

# Client Program Data

For Fiscal Year 2011



# Financials



## CHOICE was funded in 2011 by these organizations:

### Member Organizations

- Behavioral Health Resources
- Sea Mar Community Health Center
- Capital Medical Center
- Pacific County Health Department
- Providence St. Peter Hospital
- Providence Centralia Hospital
- Mark Reed Hospital
- Grays Harbor Community Hospital
- Willapa Harbor Hospital
- Mason General Hospital

### Federal Grants and Contracts

- HRSA
- Thurston-Mason RSN
- Basic Food Education and Outreach
- Medicaid Administrative Match

### State and Local Government Grants and Contracts

- State of Washington
- Cities of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater
- United Way
- Thurston County Public Health and Social Services Department

### Foundation Grants and Contracts

- Susan G. Komen Foundation
- Empire Health Foundation
- The Regence Fund of the Oregon Community Foundation

### Private Grants and Contracts

- Southwest Washington Medical Center
- Washington Dental Service Fund
- Molina Healthcare

*Special thanks to the generous support from individual donors*

# CHOICE

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