



2024 ANNUAL REPORT



Letter from the President



Danny Low, MD
President
King County
Medical Society

As I reflect on 2024, it has been a challenging year for medicine. While we've moved beyond the COVID-19 pandemic, the pressures on our profession continue to mount. Budget cuts are widespread, with 85% of hospitals across Washington losing money. Every county in the state now qualifies as a health professional shortage area, highlighting the deepening physician shortage. Meanwhile, administrative burdens grow, forcing us to see more patients with fewer resources—fueling the ongoing crisis of physician burnout.

Amid these challenges, it can feel difficult to stay engaged. And yet, this work has never been more important. We are living in an era of deep division, both politically and within medicine, but KCMS remains committed to uniting physicians across ideologies to advocate for shared values. I am proud of how our members have worked together to shape a medical future that prioritizes physician voices and patient care.

This past year, we turned that commitment into action:

We awarded three grants to medical students in Washington, supporting their education despite financial barriers.

We wrote and advanced 21 resolutions at the Washington State Medical Association—the most by any county medical society in WA history.

We helped pass state policies on key healthcare issues, including prior authorization reform, expanded access to continuous glucose monitors, Medicaid reimbursement for telehealth, firearm injury prevention education, and reducing the climate impact of anesthetic gases.

These accomplishments reflect the dedication and tenacity of our physician community. The road ahead remains challenging, but our collective efforts continue to drive meaningful change. Thank you for your commitment—our profession, our patients, and the future of medicine depend on it.

Danny Low
Danny Low, MD

Letter from the Vice President



Amish Dave
MD, MPH
 Vice President,
 King County
 Medical Society

Every day, prior authorization creates stress for our clinical staff, physicians, and patients. Across Washington state, from Bellingham to Walla Walla, colleagues report similar challenges: delayed or denied medications, postponed surgeries, and burdensome processes for essential imaging like MRI and CT scans. These inefficiencies contribute to physician burnout, workforce shortages, and longer patient waits.

The rise of artificial intelligence in healthcare may exacerbate these issues, allowing insurers and pharmacy benefit managers (PBMs) to delay further or deny care. Healthcare workers struggle to speak with decision-makers about pending orders, and this will worsen without robust advocacy.

At the recent Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) House of Delegates, my co-authors, Dr. Rick Kaner and Dr. Kevin Johnson, and I testified to the overwhelming burden of prior authorization. While recent reforms in Olympia introduced electronic prior authorization and turnaround time requirements, insurers continue to exploit loopholes. Crucially, no enforcement mechanisms compel compliance with these laws.

King County Medical Society (KCMS) introduced a resolution at the WSMA conference to address these challenges, calling for:

- State-level regulations ensuring AI-based denials are reviewed by human physicians.
- Peer-to-peer reviews conducted by qualified specialists (e.g., urologists for urologists, oncologists for oncologists).
- Advocacy for grievance and appeals processes reviewed by physicians in the same specialty as the requester.
- Prevention of retroactive denial of prior-authorized services, except in cases of fraud or non-performance.

We proudly report that WSMA supports these reforms and will continue advocating for change. KCMS is ready to work with legislators, the insurance commissioner and other state bodies to reduce these burdens and ensure that physicians can focus on delivering the care our patients deserve.

Amish Dave

Amish Dave, MD, MPH

Letter from the Secretary/Treasurer



Mark Levy, MD
Secretary - Treasurer,
King County
Medical Society

Fellow King County Medical Society members,

It has been my honor to serve as Secretary - Treasurer on the Executive Committee of KCMS this past year. Despite challenging times for medicine as a whole, KCMS has remained fiscally stable and continues to engage meaningfully for our members with state legislators, regulators and with the WSMA.

Under the leadership of President Daniel Low and executive Nancy Belcher, the KCMS Community Foundation has disbursed the first 3 scholarships to medical students. These exceptional individuals represent underserved and underrepresented communities in medicine. They are from all 3 medical schools in the state and are our hope for an even brighter future for medical care in King County going forward. The Community Foundation is partnering with community organizations to get outside input for our charitable giving and to encourage additional support of the foundation from non-physician community members.

We continue to have our own lobbyist in Olympia and are, as a result, kept abreast of legislative news in real time. This allows the Board of Trustees to weigh in on a number of issues of concern to our membership. This has resulted in meaningful reform of the state's death investigation/coroner system and improvement in cumbersome prior authorization processes.

I look forward to finishing my term and continuing my engagement with KCMS. Medicine needs all of our voices, now more than ever.

Mark Levy
Mark Levy, MD

A Message from the outgoing President



Michelle Terry, MD

Former President
King County
Medical Society

Dear Colleagues,

As we navigate the complexities of modern healthcare, the importance of doctors working together cannot be overstated. Collaboration among physicians is crucial for the advancement of our profession and, more importantly, for the comprehensive care of our patients.

Healthcare is increasingly multidisciplinary. Each specialty contributes unique insights and expertise, creating a holistic approach to patient care. By working together, we can ensure that every aspect of a patient's health is considered, leading to more accurate diagnoses, effective treatments, and improved outcomes. Interdisciplinary collaboration fosters innovation, as diverse perspectives spark creative solutions to complex medical challenges.

Moreover, collective effort promotes continuous learning and professional growth. Sharing knowledge and experiences allows us to stay abreast of the latest developments in medicine, from cutting-edge research to new treatment protocols. Acknowledging the social determinants of health and understanding the lived experiences of our patients, which influence health outcomes, encourages us to advocate for initiatives that affect our patients in their day-to-day lives. This multifaceted exchange not only enhances our individual skills but also raises the standard of care across our entire community.

King County Medical Society is a support network where we can seek advice, share burdens, and celebrate successes together. Building camaraderie is essential for our well-being and resilience in our life's work.

Let us commit to working together, across specialties and disciplines, to elevate our profession and provide the highest quality of care for our patients. Our collective knowledge, experience, and dedication are the keys to advancing physician influence and making a profound difference in the lives of those we serve.

Sincerely,

Michelle Terry
Michelle Terry, MD

Success at the WSMA HOD Meeting



Nancy L. Belcher
Ph.D., MPA
CEO King County
Medical Society

KCMS Delegates Drive Progress at the House of Delegates

We are pleased to share the outcomes of the recent Washington State Medical Association (WSMA) House of Delegates meeting in Spokane, where KCMS played a pivotal role.

Our KCMS Delegate Council has worked diligently to craft resolutions addressing key healthcare issues on behalf of our physician members. We are proud to report that 11 resolutions were adopted, and six were referred for further discussion. The resolution titles are listed below.

This success reflects the dedication and collaboration of our Delegate Council. Moving forward, we will

continue working alongside WSMA, other county medical societies, and our legislative partners to advance these resolutions to the next stage.

Our commitment remains clear: amplifying physician voices and advocating for policies that improve patient care and healthcare delivery.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we work together to shape the future of healthcare in Washington.

Sincerely,

Nancy Belcher

Nancy L. Belcher, Ph.D., MPA

Delegate Council Activities

Resolutions Adopted

- Improving efficiency in the prior authorization process to reduce administrative delays in patient care.
- Incorporating firearm safety education into WA State high school health curriculums to promote responsible practices.
- Expanding access to continuous glucose monitoring for individuals managing diabetes.
- Increasing awareness of potential health risks associated with micro and nanoplastics.
- Providing regular updates to county medical societies on the status of submitted resolutions.
- Ensuring continued Medicaid reimbursement for audio-only telehealth visits to preserve access for patients in rural and underserved areas.
- Promoting sustainable anesthesia practices to enhance both patient safety and environmental health.
- Enhancing access to comprehensive sexual health education in Washington State.
- Maintaining high standards for coroner system education to ensure quality forensic investigations.
- Improving maternal and infant health outcomes through better access to prenatal and postnatal care.
- Increasing awareness and access to the WA State child tax credit to support families' health and financial stability.
- Supporting policies that improve postpartum substance use disorder (SUD) treatment access to ensure better health outcomes for new mothers and infants.

Join our KCMS Delegate Council Today and have your voice heard! info@kcmsociety.org

2025 Legislative Priorities



In 2025, the King County Medical Society (KCMS) will focus on initiatives that promote physician and patient well-being

Improve Patient Access to High-Quality Physician Care

- Align Medicaid primary and specialty care reimbursement with Medicare.
- Extend Medicaid postpartum substance use disorder coverage to at least six months.
- Maintain education requirements for coroners in Washington.

Prioritize Physician Expertise for Quality Care

- Reform prior authorization to reduce administrative burden, ensure specialty-specific peer review, and require human oversight in denials.

- Reduce legal, administrative, and tax burdens on physicians.

Advance Public Health & Patient Outcomes

- Establish a Commission on Boys and Men for evidence-based health interventions.
- Implement Firearm Injury Prevention Education in high schools.
- Secure full funding for the WA State Working Family Tax Credit.
- Support climate health initiatives, including reducing nano-plastics, anesthetic gas emissions, and carbon pollution.

Oppose Policies That Undermine Physician Roles

- Prevent inappropriate expansion of physician responsibilities to non-physicians without proven patient benefits.
- Resist healthcare corporatization that limits physician leadership.
- Protect funding for physician education and the healthcare system.
- Oppose evidence-lacking mandates imposed on physicians.
- KCMS remains committed to policies that prioritize patient care, public health, and physician well-being.

Join Us at KCMS Delegate Council

Uniting for Healthcare Innovation

Your Voice Matters: Be part of the change in healthcare.

Whether practicing, retired, or in training, your insights drive reforms.

Why Join?

Shape the Future: Craft solutions for healthcare advancement.

Represent Peers: Voice the needs of healthcare professionals and communities.

Flexible Support: KCMS offers support and flexible participation to fit your life.

Build Community: Connect, share, and grow with fellow physicians.



Congratulations to Our Grant Winners

The KCMS Community Foundation is pleased to announce the three winners of the 2024 Foundation Grant. After a thorough review, our Grant Committee selected these outstanding recipients from nearly 30 applicants across Washington State's three medical schools. We are proud to recognize their dedication to patient care and their future contributions to the medical field.



Salsabeal Alsaedy
Washington State
University School
of Medicine

Salsabeal, a third-year medical student, is deeply committed to expanding access to healthcare. They co-founded Premeds United, volunteered during the COVID-19 pandemic, and worked as a medical assistant at a dermatology clinic. Their experience as a scribe with University District Street Medicine, where they connected with patients experiencing homelessness to provide essential care, strengthened their dedication to holistic patient care and improving healthcare accessibility.

“I grew up in the Greater Seattle region and attended the University of Washington, where I earned a Bachelor of Science in Biochemistry. I am committed to providing comprehensive patient care, especially in communities with limited healthcare access. I find all areas of medicine fascinating, but I am particularly drawn to internal medicine.”

This grant strengthens my motivation and confidence, pushing me to work even harder toward my goals.”



Luis Sanchez
University of
Washington
School of Medicine

Luis is proud to be a Latino immigrant from a family of migrant farmworkers. Luis brings a powerful personal story of overcoming barriers.

“I am deeply honored to receive the King County Medical Society Community Foundation (KCMS-CF) Grant. As a second-year medical student and the first in my family to graduate from high school and university, this achievement holds special significance.”

My journey from being a first-generation immigrant from Mexico to pursuing medicine has been shaped by firsthand experiences with healthcare access challenges, particularly those affecting rural workers and lower-income communities. Growing up, my family worked as seasonal farmworkers, and I saw how difficult it was for them to receive timely and adequate healthcare. These experiences motivated me to become a physician and focus on increasing access to medical care.

My work at Sea Mar Community Health Centers, along with teaching and volunteer experiences, has strengthened my commitment to expanding medical services in areas with limited healthcare options. This grant is not just a milestone—it validates my goal of becoming the first doctor in my family and allows me to focus on training to serve communities in need.”

Congratulations to Our Grant Winners continued



Gabriela Gomez
Pacific Northwest
University of
Health Sciences

Gabriela's experience as a bilingual interpreter and their involvement with the Flying Samaritans at UCLA exemplify their commitment to cultural representation and understanding in healthcare. Their work as a clinical coordinator and scribe highlights their dedication to improving healthcare access for all.

“Growing up in inner-city Los Angeles, I witnessed the challenges of poverty, violence, and limited access to healthcare. From a sense of hopelessness to help, I fueled my desire for change into finding resources to advance my professional development. Along my journey, I joined organizations that expanded my skills and allowed me to help communities in need.

As a first-generation Latina, my experiences shape how I connect with aspiring medical professionals from similar backgrounds. My goal is to increase access to medical care in communities facing physician shortages and ensure students from under-resourced schools know that higher education and professional careers are within reach.

With this grant, I feel more secure financially and can focus on becoming a well-rounded physician while continuing to contribute to medical education and outreach programs.”

The Grant is Open for Your Donations

Support the Fund & Empower Future Healthcare Leaders!

Why Donate?

Your contribution—no matter the size—makes a direct impact on students like Salsabeal, Luis, and Gabriela as they pursue careers in medicine. These dedicated individuals are committed to expanding healthcare access and improving patient care. Your support helps alleviate their financial burden, allowing them to focus on their training and future contributions to the medical field.

Pay It Forward.

Remember the challenges of being a student? Now is your chance to support the next generation of physicians as they work toward building a stronger healthcare system.

Every Dollar Counts!

Your donation supports future healthcare professionals and is tax-deductible, making it a meaningful and impactful way to give back.

How to Donate?

Click the link below to donate—it's quick, easy, and truly life-changing!

kcmsociety.org

KCMS Receives Pfizer Grant to Advance Cervical Cancer Care

We are proud to announce that King County Medical Society (KCMS) has been awarded a grant from Pfizer and Genmab to support an initiative titled “Improving Care for Patients with Recurrent/Metastatic (r/m) Cervical Cancer.”

This 15-month project is dedicated to enhancing patient care by equipping healthcare professionals with vital educational resources and the latest treatment guidelines. By addressing key knowledge gaps and fostering collaboration among clinicians, this initiative will ensure that physicians, PAs, nurses, and other healthcare professionals have access to best practices and evolving treatment protocols—ultimately improving both clinical expertise and patient outcomes.

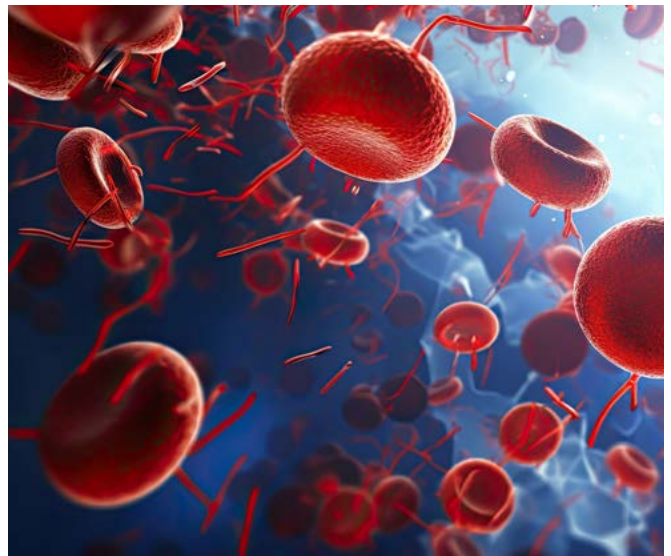


Advancing Hemophilia Care Through Shared Decision-Making and Education

In 2024, King County Medical Society (KCMS) received a grant from Pfizer and Genmab to support our initiative, “Increasing Shared Decision-Making and Education on Emerging Hemophilia Therapies.”

This project leverages KCMS’s healthcare network to provide physicians and patients with the latest information on advancements in hemophilia treatment. Through newsletters, workshops, social media outreach, and partnerships, we are expanding access to evidence-based education and resources.

This initiative reflects KCMS’s ongoing commitment to physician education, patient support, and healthcare innovation.





An Exclusive Wine Tasting to Support the KCMS Community Foundation

The KCMS Community Foundation has proudly hosted remarkable events over the past two years, bringing together healthcare professionals, scientists, and community leaders to celebrate excellence in medicine. Our inaugural Awards Gala in November 2022 and our sold-out success in November 2023 raised vital funds for our 501(c)(3) foundation, which provides grants to medical students pursuing careers in medicine.

In 2024, we took a more intimate approach with an exclusive wine tasting event, where we honored **Dr. Mark Levy** with a **Lifetime Achievement Award**. Guests enjoyed curated wines, meaningful conversations, and an opportunity to support our foundation’s mission. While smaller in scale, this event was just as impactful—allowing us to continue funding future healthcare leaders.

Special thanks to KeyBank for supporting this memorable evening!



Couldn't attend? You can still make a difference! Click [HERE](#) to donate to our grants for medical students.



WINE TASTING & AWARDS

WHEN
Thursday,
October 24, 2024
6:00 - 9:00 PM

WHERE
Basketry
4459 Fremont Ave North
Seattle, WA 98107

SOLD OUT

THANK YOU
Thank you to KeyBank for their generous sponsorship. All donations will support our medical student grants fund and are tax deductible.

KeyBank King County Medical Society





Physician Perspectives



Inspiring Meaningful Change

Nancy L. Belcher

Ph.D., MPA
CEO King County
Medical Society

We are excited to announce the launch of **Physician Perspectives**, a new feature in our KCMS newsletter. This column will provide a platform for KCMS members to share their experiences and reflections, fostering dialogue and collaboration within our community.

Our Goal

“Physician Perspectives” aims to create a space where physician members can voice their ideas and discuss healthcare in ways that inspire meaningful change. Newsletters will feature a letter or essay from a KCMS member, offering unique insights into the challenges and opportunities in healthcare.

I’m honored to present Dr. Mark Levy’s thoughtful reflection as the inaugural piece for this column. His candid perspective identifies inefficiencies in our system and encourages us to strive for a better future in healthcare.

How You Can Contribute

We invite KCMS members to submit ideas or essays for future editions. Submissions should:

- Reflect KCMS’s mission of advancing healthcare and supporting physicians.
- Be professional and constructive in tone.
- We will focus on topics relevant to our members, such as healthcare advocacy, clinical challenges, or solutions to systemic issues.
- Be no more than 500 words (exceptions may be considered)

While we encourage members to contribute, please remember that space is limited, and not all submissions will be published. Our team will review submissions to ensure alignment with KCMS’s mission. Send your submissions to info@kcmsociety.org.

Quotes From Doctors & Medical Students

“ THANK YOU to the KCMS for getting community healthcare providers vaccinated. You are the only agency that has made such an organized effort on our behalf. Thanks for your hard work!”

“ I’m a great believer in the physician as an advocate focused on the welfare of patients.”

“ We are all crazy busy - but KCMS has been essential for my professional growth, offering resources and a strong voice in healthcare.”

“ I realized I was not limited by my birth circumstances but rather by how hard I was willing to work. My journey is about more than becoming a physician; it’s about uplifting communities through healthcare education and access.”

“ Doctors cannot be passive observers; we want to set the standards, not have someone else tell us what the standards are.”

“ Being part of KCMS is like voting - if you don’t join, you can’t complain. Our collective voice is crucial for making real changes in healthcare.”

“ KCMS has excellent leadership, strategic management, & collaborative skills. It’s nimble & responsive. To quote Hamilton, “We get the job done!”

Your Voice Matters: **Join KCMS Today!**

KCMS is committed to advocating for physicians and improving patient care. From reducing administrative burdens to strengthening public health initiatives and preserving physician leadership in medicine, KCMS works to drive meaningful change in healthcare.

Membership in KCMS is an investment in your profession. By focusing on impact and efficiency, we ensure that your support directly fuels critical initiatives while remaining accessible.

Together, we amplify physician voices and enhance healthcare for all. **Join KCMS today!**

**RENEW YOUR
MEMBERSHIP**

**BECOME
A MEMBER**

THANK YOU

for your support!