



From the Director's Desk

I assumed the Directorship of WREN in November 2012 and hit the ground running with the help of interim Associate Director, Paul Smith. After a hiatus of many years (rotating off the WREN Steering Committee and pursuing my own research), I found that WREN has become a well-oiled machine with superb staff. I want to give Paul a sincere round of applause for building a sustainable organization and for assisting in my orientation to WREN, the Department of Family Medicine and the University environment. I also want to thank Melody Bockenfeld, WREN Program Manager, and our outstanding staff (in alphabetical order): Amy, Erin, Hannah, Kate and Veronica for making each day in the office such a delight. They have all been great. Unfortunately, WREN recently said goodbye to Regional Research Coordinator, Hannah Louks. She left WREN to earn her master's degree in biostatistics at Northwestern University. We thank her for her contributions to WREN and wish her well as she enters the next phase of her career.

While I still practice half time at the Dean Medical Center, I had (and will have) a lot to learn about leading WREN. The network has evolved from a "research club" for doctors to a team-based organization with links to many community-based groups that share the WREN vision "to improve the health of the people of Wisconsin." The WREN Annual Meeting has evolved to include over a dozen such groups and networks that all contribute to the success of the Fall Forum. Please consider attending by exploring this [link](#). One of my goals as Director is to continue along the successful trajectory that Paul has developed to engage and strengthen these relationships.

Another goal I have is to strengthen our connections with the "grass roots" of WREN: the teams of clinic members and clinicians who care for patients every day in their practices. WREN is, after all, ultimately a practice-based network. To that end, I have instituted a WREN listserv currently containing over 400 members: clinicians, clinical staff, other team members, and "friends of WREN." The purpose of the listserv is to (1) communicate new study opportunities to members, (2) disseminate information such as results of WREN studies and other clinically relevant news, and (3) stimulate conversation and sharing of ideas among members. With the last goal in mind, I will be sending a WREN HOT TOPICS mailing each month; the first two topics have generated thoughtful responses from several of the listserv members. If you are not a listserv member and would like to be included in the conversation, please click [here](#) and join us!

3rd Annual Wisconsin Health Improvement & Research Partnerships Forum

Facilitating Partnerships: Common Mission, Multiple Approaches

September 12-13, 2013 | Madison, WI - Union South

Registration is now open – please join us! Get full conference details at:

[2013 Wisconsin Health Improvement & Research Partnerships Forum](#)

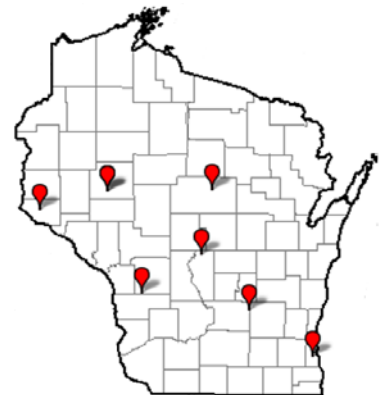


Workflow Assessment for Health IT Toolkit

WREN partnered with the Oregon Rural Practice-based Research Network (ORPRN) to evaluate the AHRQ [Workflow Assessment for Health IT Toolkit](#). The Toolkit was developed by human factors engineering experts at UW-Madison, and is intended to help users better understand workflow in ambulatory clinics to more efficiently integrate health IT into clinical practice.

With the help of Wisconsin Health Information Technology Extension Center (WHITEC), WREN partnered with the following clinics for the Toolkit project:

- Best Care Pediatrics (*Milwaukee*)
- Bridge Community Health Clinic (*Wausau*)
- Ellsworth Medical Clinic (*Ellsworth*)
- Family Health Associates (*Chippewa Falls*)
- Randolph Community Clinic (*Randolph*)
- Riverview Family Clinic (*Nekoosa*)
- Scenic Bluffs Community Health Center (*Cashton*)
- Sunrise Family Care Clinic (*Chippewa Falls*)



Each of these clinics worked with WREN for approximately 10 weeks to use the Toolkit to assess workflow in their practices. They also provided valuable feedback about the usability and usefulness, which will guide its developers in enhancing the Toolkit before it's widely disseminated. WREN is presenting on this project at the [Research Partnerships Forum](#), so plan to attend the workshop to learn more!

SAFE-C Study Enters Data Analysis Stage

Situational Awareness Facilitating Excellent Care, known as the [SAFE-C](#) study, tested an intervention to improve Primary Care Physician (PCP) performance and thus safety of primary care of the elderly. This study was unique in that all patient enrollment, randomization, data collection and performance of intervention occurred at the clinic and was conducted by the clinic team. The study spanned from 16-22 months and enrolled 755 patients in the pre-intervention and 1514 in the post. WREN acknowledges participating clinics for the successful completion of this involved project:

- Mayo Clinic Health System – Franciscan Healthcare (*Tomah*)
- Mile Bluff Clinic (*Mauston*)
- Richland Medical Center (*Richland Center*)
- Wildwood Family Clinic (*Madison*)

Data from the pre-intervention phase shows that physicians often perceive they are missing important clinical information at the end of elderly primary care visits. In fact for over 1/3 of visits, doctors do not have good information on main reason for visit, health concerns and ongoing medical problems. Patients have valuable information that physicians do not have 4-19% of the time, especially about other health professional visits and the concerns about costs of care. Strategies are needed to get physicians the information they need before elderly primary care visits and that is what the intervention phase was designed to provide. Watch for future updates and results from the intervention portion of the study.

Feature WREN practice – Mile Bluff Clinic

Mile Bluff Clinic has been expanding the availability of primary care and specialty services in Mauston and the entire Juneau County region since 1980. It is part of Mile Bluff Medical Center, which operates the only hospital in Juneau County and serves a population of more than 55,000 residents in a five-county rural region. Visiting consultants in specialties of allergy, gastroenterology, hematology, nephrology, neurology, neurosurgery, oncology, ophthalmology, orthopedics, otolaryngology, optometry, rheumatology and urology regularly attend Mile Bluff Clinic. Four satellite clinics also provide obstetrical, pediatric and adult care services: New Lisbon Medical Center; Necedah Family Medical Center; Elroy Family Medical Center; and, Delton Family Medical Center.

Showing a commitment to exceptional care, Mile Bluff Clinic developed its first formal Quality Improvement Program in 1998. A CQI (Continuous Quality Improvement) committee was also formed and remains active to this day. Mile Bluff's QI Program serves as a framework for developing ongoing, clinic-wide, multidisciplinary and multi-departmental processes to measure and continually improve the quality of care.

Mile Bluff has been a WREN Full Support Clinic since 2007 and has participated in numerous studies over the years. During this past year, Mile Bluff was one of four clinics that worked tirelessly on the [SAFE-C](#) (Situational Awareness Facilitating Excellent Care) study. This required pre-visit chart

review, completion of a “Patient Overview Document” (POD), pre-visit patient phone call, and day of visit huddle. Staff also had to utilize the [REDCap](#) database to manage patient enrollment, randomize study subjects, obtain billing data/clinic notes and other study related duties. WREN recognizes and appreciates Mile Bluff’s hard work on this challenging project!



CAPTION Study: WREN Helps UW Health Clinics

Collaboration Among Pharmacists & Physicians to Improve Outcomes Now ([CAPTION](#)) is a multi-site, national study sponsored by the University of Iowa. In January 2011, WREN partnered with Northeast Family Medicine Clinic and has since performed all IRB functions, study recruitment activities, study visit procedures, and data entry for this local site.

While study visits were originally planned through December of 2013, NIH funding cuts resulted in a change of protocol and an abbreviated timeline. With the change in protocol, study visits ended in June. WREN is happy to report that all eligible participants in both groups (Asthma Intervention Group and Hypertension Control Group) completed the required study visits. Study recruitment goals were exceeded and all eligible participants retained.

WREN’s services have been enlisted by another CAPTION site as well. The final phase of the CAPTION study involves the identification of a Passive Observation Group and data collection through chart review. WREN will now be conducting these procedures for two CAPTION sites: Wingra Family Medical Center and Northeast Family Medicine Clinic, both in Madison.

Chronic Kidney Disease – Lessons Learned Shared Statewide

WREN recently completed work on a multi-site quality improvement project that brought the National Kidney Foundation Kidney Disease Outcomes Quality Initiative (NKF KDOQI) guidelines to 22 practice sites throughout the state; [Improving Care for Patients with CKD](#).

This project armed the WREN team with a wealth of experience and tools to help primary care providers help their patients with CKD. The project also shed light on critical ways EPIC/Healthlink could be improved to help providers identify and manage care for patients with CKD. In an effort to build on lessons learned, WREN applied for and received a quality improvement grant from the Department of Human Services. The grant, “**Building on WREN and Diabetes Leadership Initiative Experience: Implementing CKD Guidelines at UWMF,**” provided funding through June 30, 2013 to support the following work:

- WREN Practice Facilitation to implement the NKF KDOQI guidelines at two additional UW Health Clinics (*Belleville & Eau Claire*)
 - WREN engaged with clinic teams to create processes and integrated strategies for improving care of patients with CKD following the NKF KDOQI guidelines.
- WREN Statewide CKD Learning Collaborative
 - WREN offered a monthly teleconference for clinicians and staff across Wisconsin enlisting Nephrologist Laura Maursetter, DO, as expert presenter. While interest was high, time demands in primary care made it difficult for engagement.
- EPIC Workgroup
 - WREN convened a workgroup with the mission to create tools within EPIC that would make it easier for PCPs to implement NKF KDOQI guidelines. PCPs from across systems and around the state were invited to participate. In addition to PCPs, the workgroup included UW Nephrologist, Dr. Laura Maursetter, UW General Internist and CKD expert, Dr. David Feldstein, and Healthlink Analyst & Supervisor at the Center for Clinical Knowledge Management, Deb Dunham. The workgroup is in the final stages of creating a CKD Care Smartset for the PCP, along with smartphrases that can be used by nurses or Certified Medical Assistants when rooming patients. The CKD Care Smartset will be ready for pilot testing soon, with hopes of making it available to interested PCPs this fall.

WREN Represented at National Conference

The National Practice-Based Research Network conference was held June 18-19 in Bethesda, Maryland. WREN was able to disseminate the great work of members and practices in a number of presentations and posters:

Posters (Completed Research)

- [**Workflow? Schmerkflow! The Myth of Workflow In Primary Care and Why It Matters for Health IT Design and Implementation. An I-PrACTISE Study.**](#)

John W. Beasley, MD; Paul Smith, MD; Jamie A. Stone, MS; Daniel Krueger, MSG; Talley Holman, PhD; Tosha B. Wetterneck, MD, MS; Ben-Tzion Karsh, PhD

- [**Involving Clinic Staff in a Large Randomized Control Trial: Balancing Study Goals with Maintaining Positive Relationships with Clinics**](#)

Melody Bockenfeld, MPH, BSN; Mary Ellen Hagenauer; Kate Judge; Hannah Louks; Paul Smith; Tosha Wetterneck; Peggy O'Halloran; John Beasley; Jamie Stone

- [**Physician and Patient Perceptions of Physician Knowledge about Patient Information During Primary Care Visits**](#)

Paul Smith, MD

Posters (Research in Progress)

- [**Using Statistical Software Efficiently and Effectively in Quality Improvement Projects**](#)

Hannah Louks, BS; Kate Judge, MSSW; Melody Bockenfeld, MPH, BSN; Erin Leege, MPH; Paul Smith, MD; David Hahn, MD, MS

- **Implementation of Local Learning Collaborative (LLC) for the Diffusion of CKD Guidelines in a Multi-PBRN Quality Improvement Project: Description of Intervention Fidelity, Participant Attendance, and Guidelines Addressed**

Paula Darby Lipman, PhD; Rachel A. Cohen, MPH; Melody Bockenfeld, MPH; Lyndee Knox; Cheryl Aspy; James W. Mold, MD, MPH

Workshops

- **Multi-Network Research Collaboration: Steps to Success**

Don Nease, MD; Lyle Fagnan, MD; Nancy Rollins, CCRP; LeAnn Michaels; Tabria Winer; Melody Bockenfeld, MPH; David Hahn, MD; France Legare, MD, PhD

- **Practice Facilitation Evaluation: Case Studies From a CKD Guidelines Dissemination, Implementation and Diffusion Project in Primary Care**

Cheryl Aspy, PhD; Melody Bockenfeld, MPH; Paula Lipman, PhD; Carol Lange, MS; Lyndee Knox, PhD