



**DATE:** October 9, 2013

**TO:** Washington State Board of Health Members

**FROM:** John Austin, Chair

**SUBJECT:** HEALTH SYSTEM TRANSFORMATION UNDER THE AFFORDABLE CARE ACT

---

**Background and Summary:**

For many years, the Board has been concerned about the lack of access to care for residents of the State of Washington. The Board has included access to care as an ongoing priority area in its strategic plans. On March 23, 2010, President Obama signed the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act. This act was primarily focused on decreasing the number of uninsured Americans and reducing health care costs.

This year, the Board has received two briefings related to implementation of the Affordable Care Act in Washington state. In January, staff from the Health Care Authority described their efforts to expand Medicaid eligibility by January 1, 2014. The expansion will include individuals with income up to 133 percent of the federal poverty line, including adults without dependent children.

In March, Health Benefit Exchange staff described Washington Healthplanfinder, an online marketplace that allows individuals, families and small businesses to compare and enroll in qualified health insurance plans. Healthplanfinder started enrollment October 1.

Today, Sue Grinnell, Special Assistant for Health Reform at the Department of Health will share some of the activities the Department of Health is engaged in to help implement the provisions of the Act that are focused on public health, prevention and evidence-based care.

**Recommended Board Action:** None

**Staff Contact:** Michelle Davis, Executive Director