



OFFICE OF
INSURANCE COMMISSIONER

November 1, 2020

The Honorable Emily Randall
Washington State Senate
P.O. Box 40433
Olympia, WA 98504-0433

The Honorable Steve Tharinger
House of Representatives
P.O. Box 40426
Olympia, WA 98504-0426

Planning for Aging and Disability Issues
JLEC
Washington State Senate
P.O. Box 40433
Olympia, WA 98504-0433

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House of Representatives
P.O. Box 40426
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SUBJECT: Palliative Care Work Group

Dear Senator Randall, Representative Tharinger and members of the JLEC,

Pursuant ESSB 6168, Sec. 138 (19)(a), the legislature directed the Office of the Insurance Commissioner (OIC) and the Health Care Authority (HCA) to co-chair a work group to determine next steps for insurance coverage of specialty palliative care as defined in the [Bree Collaborative's 2019 palliative care report](#). The proviso called for a report to the legislature and the joint legislative executive committee on aging and disability by November 1, 2020. Please accept this letter as our report on the interim work conducted by the palliative care work group.

In the attached letter from June 18, the OIC and HCA requested to be relieved of the specific tasks identified in the proviso due to the current fiscal and staffing environment and competing urgent priorities related to the COVID-19 response. However, OIC remained committed to facilitating the conversation with the work group members outlined in the proviso with the goal of advancing work around palliative care.

We are happy to report that, despite the above-mentioned resource constraints, the OIC facilitated a dialogue between the Washington palliative care community and the members of the Association of Washington Health Plans (AWHP).

The OIC began the dialogue by establishing foundational knowledge about current palliative care offerings and approaches in the market. The OIC sent a set of questions to insurance carriers through AWHP to obtain information about these approaches. The OIC provided the responses it received to the palliative care community, which are also attached. On October 6, the OIC

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facilitated a meeting with the work group. Over 35 participants attended the meeting, including the Bree Collaborative, as well as commercial health insurance companies, managed care organizations, the Washington State Hospital Association, representatives from the palliative care community and more. The meeting succeeded in starting a conversation about the next steps for addressing palliative care in the commercial insurance market. Representatives of the palliative care community will continue communications and hold discussions with the work group members who participated in this meeting.

We believe this approach achieved the underlying goals in a manner that aligns with the constraints of the current situation.

Should you have any questions, please contact me by telephone at 360-725-7101 or via email at JonN@oic.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



Jon Noski,
Legislative Liaison
Office of the Insurance Commissioner

By email

Cc: Representative Paul Harris, House of Representatives
Senator Karen Keiser, Washington State Senate
Representative Marcus Riccelli, House of Representatives
Representative Robert Sutherland, House of Representatives
Molly Voris, Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
Candice Myrum, Deputy, Policy and Legislative Affairs, OIC
Mandy Weeks-Green, Policy Analyst, Policy and Legislative Affairs, OIC