



Greetings!

As we view the solar eclipse today, we are reminded of our humanity and the extraordinary experiences possible during our lifetime. Depending on where you view the eclipse, you will see a different perspective, much like life. For me, the eclipse is about being in the here and now and doing what you can to 'see' what is happening. This is much like health advocacy, which is ultimately the act of figuring out how to see the situation you are in clearly so you can make the best decisions possible.

You might remember that we have been working on a system and technology upgrade, which will be completed September 1st. This upgrade will help us prepare to offer members more benefits in the near future. We hope you will continue to support our efforts to educate and empower people navigating health care. We have a very busy Fall with several in-person meetings, including our first meeting in Spokane, along with our Annual Meeting on Thursday, November 2nd in Seattle. I hope to see you at least one of these meetings.

Here is to your good health,

Robin Shapiro

Chair, WASHAA Board

### [Sept 14 Webinar on Chronic Illness](#)

Living with chronic illness can impact many areas of life and the effects can leave individuals isolated and alone. In addition to physical symptoms from chronic illness, individuals can experience many losses -- a loss of a sense of self and of what you thought your life was going to be like. These losses can lead to anxiety and depression. Some illnesses are ongoing, while others come with flare-ups and periods of remission.

Join our WASHAA community as we learn more about the topic:  
**Living with Chronic Illness: Managing the Ups and Downs of  
Life with Ongoing Illness**

**When: 10-11 am, Thursday, September 14, 2017**

Cost: Free for WASHAA Members\*\*, \$5 for non-WASHAA members

\*\*Registration is required in order to attend.

Register Today at <http://tiny.cc/chronicillnesswebinar!>



Our speaker, Allison Fine, MSW, LICSW, founder and executive director for the Center for Chronic Illness, will discuss the challenges of living with chronic illness and multiple strategies and skills for managing those challenges. She has a broad understanding of the emotional challenges that individuals living with chronic illness face and will identify helpful community resources that can improve overall emotional well being.

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**[Another Opportunity to Participate in Safe and Sound in the Hospital  
Free on September 19](#)**

Join [Robin Shapiro](#) at [Skyline](#) at 3 pm on September 19th for Safe & Sound in the Hospital: A Short Course on Patient Safety. This free presentation is recommended by ALL people who have attended it in the past. To register, please contact Sandra Johanson at [sjo@verizon.net](mailto:sjo@verizon.net).

Medical errors in the hospital are the third leading cause of death in our country. A successful hospital experience includes knowing what actions patients and their families should take. Learn about some of the opportunities and challenges that hospitals face and what patients and their families can do to help. Bring a notebook and pen to write down specific tips and tools that you can use when you or a loved one is in the hospital. This content was compiled and is presented with permission by Campaign Zero, a non-profit organization dedicated to zeroing out preventable medical errors. For more information visit: [www.campaignzero.org](http://www.campaignzero.org).

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**[Join Us In Spokane September 28!](#)**



Health Advocacy is the act of supporting people navigating the health system to help them find the best care possible -- but all health care is local. Please join us for a first discussion in Spokane to assess and understand the specific needs of the Spokane community. This meeting is free and we hope to include medical providers, patients, patient safety organizations, insurance representatives, educators and health advocates.

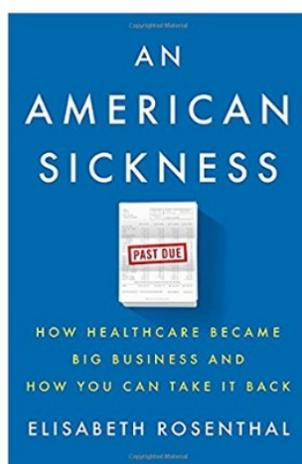
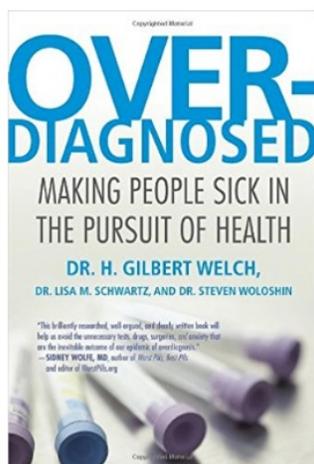
### *Why Attend:*

- \* Increase community support for patients and families navigating health care
- \* Learn about what Independent Health Advocates do
- \* Who is doing this work in the state
- \* Who is hiring Health Advocates
- \* What is happening nationally to support health advocates
- \* Discuss opportunities to leverage people in the community to empower patients

Please register here: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/a-conversation-about-health-advocacy-in-spokane-tickets-37152734830>

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### **Books We Are Reading**



The following reviews were submitted by WASHAA supporter Stewart Lyman, a biotechnology consultant who frequently writes about issues in healthcare and drug discovery. A lengthy list of other recommended books about our biomedical system, science, drug discovery, and medicine can be found on his website at [www.lymanbiopharma.com](http://www.lymanbiopharma.com)

[Overdiagnosed: Making People Sick in the Pursuit of Health](#) by [H. Gilbert](#)

Welch, Lisa Schwartz, and Steve Woloshin(2012) was one of those rare books that really changed my way of thinking. The author's premise is that, "... overdiagnosis is the biggest problem caused by modern medicine." Like a lot of people, I thought that looking for problems in people who are asymptomatic could be useful in helping to find illnesses that had not yet manifested themselves. Welch makes a strong case for just the opposite: following this path actually winds up harming patients by putting them through follow-up tests that can result both in physical injury and psychological damage (from fear and worry). With many diagnostic tests or protocols one must screen hundreds, if not thousands, of people just to find one individual who has that problem. What used to be considered normal blood pressure is now regarded as high, and the same is true for cholesterol levels. The closer a test result is to the demarcation line between normal and "sick", the less likely it is that a person will be helped by treating that particular condition. Subjects covered in the book include mammograms, PSA tests, osteoporosis, abdominal aortic aneurysms, damaged knee cartilage, and cancer.

Another excellent and timely read is [An American Sickness: How Healthcare Became Big Business and How You Can Take It Back](#) by Elisabeth Rosenthal (2017). The book covers roughly the same territory as Maggie Mahar's [Money Driven Medicine](#) (2006), but has the advantage of being written after the Affordable Care Act became law. The author delves into numerous facets of our healthcare system and finds nearly all of them guilty of price gouging American consumers. This includes doctors, hospitals, medical billers and coders, insurance companies, drug and medical device makers, and those who develop and push unnecessary diagnostic tests. The overall conclusion is the same one reached in the earlier book. The [medical industrial complex](#) (a term coined in 1980 by Dr. Arnold Relman, former editor of the prestigious New England Journal of Medicine) has taken over our healthcare system and it is being driven by profits, not a need to help people. The latter part of the book is comprised of suggestions for how consumers can reclaim our healthcare system, but this is by far the weakest part of the book. The suggestions are on the face of it reasonable (challenge every bill, demand explanations for every test order or procedure experienced, etc). However, this would be incredibly time consuming for most people, and will lead to more frustrations when answers to the questions are not provided. It would be difficult to do under the best of circumstances, and even harder when one is battling a serious illness. More useful are the few pages in the back of the book directing the reader to resources that they can tap into to find help for specific problems.

## RESOURCE CORNER

[Support for Patients and Caregivers Living with Chronic Illness](#)

The Center for Chronic Illness is running two monthly support groups:

**Living with Illness**, a free monthly support group for those living with or impacted by chronic illness, facilitated by Carrie Pope, MSW, LICSW.

6:30-7:30 pm, 4th Wednesday of the Month at the Seattle Public Library

**Living Mindfully with Chronic Illness**, a free supportive group for those wanting to live

mindfully and with self-compassion and led by Bartja Wachtel, MSW, LICSW, MHP, CMH

3:00 - 4:00 pm, 4th Wednesday of the Month at Aljoia Thorton Place Northgate

For questions or to sign up for the group/s, contact:

[info@thecenterforchronicillness.org](mailto:info@thecenterforchronicillness.org) or (425) 296-2705 or visit:

[www.thecenterforchronicillness.org](http://www.thecenterforchronicillness.org)

### SAVE THE DATES!

- September 14 - Webinar on Chronic Illness - [Register](#)
- September 19 - Safe and Sound in the Hospital Free Public Presentation - (FREE!) @ Skyline in Seattle - [Presentation Information](#)
- September 28 - A Conversation About Health Advocacy in person meeting in Spokane, WA (FREE!) - [Register](#)
- October 18 - 10am Patient No More - Sponsored by the Phinney Neighborhood Village
- November 2, 2017 - 9 am to 2 pm : WASHAA Annual Meeting -- Registration Coming Soon - [Conference Details](#)

### WASHAA Presentations You Can Use

*Want to know more about Health Advocacy? Do you have a group who could benefit from learning about what health advocacy is and how to do it? WASHAA and WASHAA members are available to give presentations on a variety of topics. Here are a few:*

#### ***Patient No More***

**How Being a Participant in your own Care and Having a Health Advocate Can Save your Life**

Join Robin Shapiro, from WASHAA (the Washington State Health Advocacy Association), for a session to learn more about how to improve your health care experience with skills and insights into becoming more active in your own health. Everyone has the ability to seek better choice and control in health care decision-making. This session will review some of the most important ways people can

become full Participants by applying common health advocacy skills. Be ready for an interactive, hands-on session, with must-know tips for anyone who has ever assisted family, friends or themselves in navigating the health care system. To schedule this or other presentations, contact: [info@washaa.org](mailto:info@washaa.org)

### ***Safe and Sound in the Hospital\*\****

Medical errors in the hospital are the third leading cause of death in our country.

<sup>1</sup> A successful hospital experience includes knowing what actions patients and their families should take. Learn about some of the opportunities and challenges that hospitals face and what patients and their families can do to help. Bring a notebook and pen to write down specific tips and tools that you can use when you or a loved one is in the hospital. \*\*This content was compiled and is presented with permission by Campaign Zero, a non-profit organization dedicated to zeroing out preventable medical errors. To schedule a presentation, contact: [info@washaa.org](mailto:info@washaa.org)

<sup>1</sup>Journal of Patient Safety, Sept 2013 - Vol 9 - Issue 3 p 122-128

### ***CareBrigade - Member Florence Harvey***

**Be Prepared! Don't Go Through a Serious Illness/Surgery Alone!  
Create a "Just in Case" CareBrigade for Yourself or a Loved One!**

Have you, a friend, or family member ever faced a life-threatening illness, like cancer, navigated an at-home recovery after major surgery or a "marvel of science" procedure like hip or knee surgery? Did you or they have a live-in partner to serve as a caregiver? If so, you were among a very fortunate few.

Today many adults are single, living alone; some single parents, many fragile seniors. Few of us live close to our immediate families; many folks don't know their neighbors. Even when family is nearby, how many family members can afford to take time off work, to be a live-in caregiver, especially over a long stretch of time? By the end of the training, you will know: what support Roles even a newly diagnosed Patient needs, whom to invite to play each Role, and will be able to use the CareBrigade Web site's downloadable forms and FREE online technology tools to support you and others in fulfilling those Roles even over distance. If you are interested in hosting this training, please contact WASHAA member Florence Harvey via her [WASHAA Member Profile](#). Florence recently presented CareBrigade at Phinney Neighborhood Village!

See what's happening on our social sites.

