



Greetings!

We hope you are having a wonderful and enjoyable summer! With the heat here in our city, we have also picked up the pace on our upcoming WASHAA events. We can't wait to share a few pieces written by the WASHAA Board as well as our upcoming events:

- What's Race Got To Do With It? By Robin Shapiro
- Do Patients Have Power in the Health Care System? By Bill Thatcher
- Understanding Medicare Online Webinar with Dianne Walkup - Sept. 23rd!
- WASHAA 3rd Annual Meeting - November 13 in Seattle!
- Call for Volunteers for WASHAA Annual Event + Other Opportunities!

We hope you will join us September 23rd for our next Webinar featuring Dianne Walkup talking about Medicare coverage and knowing the in's and out's to save you money. Lastly, please "Save The Date!" for our WASHAA Annual Meeting on Friday, November 13, 2015 in Seattle! We can't wait to see you soon!

Sincerely,

Robin Shapiro

Chair, WASHAA Board

## WASHAA UPDATES

### **What's Race Got To Do With It?**

By Robin Shapiro, WASHAA Chair

It is not every day that you walk into a work meeting and discuss race - or white fragility (defined as the inability for white people to tolerate racial stress, preventing them from engaging constructively across race), but at a recent WASHAA meeting that is exactly how we started it. Led by Robin DiAngelo, our working group was challenged to consider how an absence of diverse experience, opinion and background leaves a gaping hole in whatever work is pursued.



Robin DiAngelo,  
PhD

Her discussion provoked our thinking and shined a light on our own limitations and failings based on the environment we live and operate in. We all like to think of ourselves as anti-racist. But I know as a white woman I cannot totally understand what it means to be another race. After listening to Robin DiAngelo, I would like to learn more and be engaged in trying to understand better and take action to support anti-racist living.

The reality is most of us have a long way to go to taking action to really understand what 'inclusive,' and 'diverse' mean in everything we do. Our brief time with Robin DiAngelo sparked a lot of questions from our group: how do we go about including people from communities we don't know? Do we stop working on our program until we figure this out? What would it look like to invite and incorporate different needs and priorities from communities?

Our working group discussed these questions and knowing that we, as a primarily white group have a lot of work to do. We will be contacting communities to see how we can engage in conversation about health advocacy and how we see and experience [health advocacy challenges from differing points of view](#). If you are receiving this newsletter and want to join the conversation - please contact WASHAA at [info@washaa.org](mailto:info@washaa.org). If you have suggestions about communities or people for us to talk with and/or people who want to join our efforts, we would love to hear from you!

DiAngelo, is an expert on race relations and is the current Director of Equity for Senior Services, Seattle/King County. She has been a consultant and trainer for over 20 years on issues of racial and social justice.

*View Robin's Blog [online](#) & share with friends  
Have comments? Please [Email Robin](#) and submit your feedback*

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## **Do Patients Have Power in the Health Care System?**

By: [Bill Thatcher, WASHAA Acting Executive Director](#)

I'm constantly reading and tweeting about healthcare issues, patient safety and health advocacy. Occasionally I find this "world" of health issues connecting to other "worlds" of importance to me. That's what happened just this past week. As I was listening to a recent presentation by Robin DiAngelo on White Fragility: Building White [Racial Stamina](#), I was struck by her descriptions of the power imbalance that our culture creates which has systematically and historically polarized the races. Like

the fish, we have been swimming in our own culture our whole lives, and don't even realize we are in it. I'm not speaking here about acts of racism but rather of a system created for white Americans by white Americans. Similarly, our health care system has huge biases that do not help patients.

The system truly is stacked against the patient/family in terms of the distribution of power and decision-making.(1) Unless healthcare professionals invite patients/families not just "to the table" but into the power dynamic, there can be no balance possible. For even with such an invitation to sit at the table, it matters whether there is also a sharing of power. Patient Advisory Committees, by their usual description, can only advise. Who ultimately makes the system decisions? How many stories do we need to hear from healthcare professionals who, suddenly finding themselves as patients in their own system of care, realize how imbalanced the power is even for them as patients?(2)

This is extremely important because when patients and families are given the opportunity to be heard, healthcare professionals may be surprised by what they hear from patients. Whether it is a matter of tone or how procedures and policies translate into what patients actually experience, it is incumbent on healthcare professionals and administrators to create opportunities to listen humbly and partner with patients.

Patients/families must share in the power in the healthcare system or they will find themselves dismissed the first time they speak an unpleasant truth.

*Read More About Bill [here](#) & submit feedback or comments [here](#)  
[Share](#) his article with friends and colleagues*

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## Volunteer Health Advocate Training Program Update

Our Volunteer Health Advocate (VHA) Training Program is continuing to make progress. We are in the process of developing evaluation measures for the program.

We are also beginning to reach out to communities who might like to pilot the VHA training at their site. We will be evaluating the following benefits of the training program:

- Better health for Participants (patients)
- Improved support and confidence for Participant medical decision-making
- Better quality of life/well being for Participants
- Meaningful engagement for community volunteers

We are looking for partners that can:

- Make a one year commitment to the program, including:
  - Pre-Assessment Program meeting
  - All volunteers attend the mandatory 6 hour training
  - Monthly volunteer reporting
  - Quarterly Partner reporting to WASHAA
- Have a volunteer base within the community
- Have a volunteer coordinator within the community

If you are or know of a community who might be interested in discussing our VHA Training Program, please have them contact Robin Shapiro at 206.979.8861.

## Upcoming Events



### Understanding Medicare Coverage

#### *What You Don't Know Will Cost You*

When: September 23, 2015 | Time: 10:00 am - 11:00am (PST)

Presenter: Dianne Walkup RDMS, HHP, CMBCS

Cost: \$5.00 - [Register Online](#)

\*\*Post-Event Recorded Webinar is Free for WASHAA members

If you are confused about Medicare options, you are not alone! Medicare's Open Enrollment starts October 15 and ends December 7th! Whether you are signing up for the first time, wanting to change your plan or are helping others clarify their options, this webinar is for you! Our speaker will explain Medicare, how it works, supplemental insurance options and how to get the most benefits without breaking the bank. It comes as a surprise to many that Medicare is not completely "free."

Dianne Walkup, RDMS, HHP, CMBCS is Principal Advocate for Independent Patient Advocates LLC. Dianne has a diverse background in health care. She is a Certified Medical Bill Compliance Specialist and has spent years helping clients get reimbursed for uncovered medical expenses and has helped clients from all over the United States with medical billing and insurance negotiation.

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**Don't Miss Out!**

Past WASHAA Webinars are available for viewing and CEU credit is Available!

## Misdiagnosis & Patient Advocacy

[Sign Up Now to View the Webinar](#)

lo Dolka, co-founder and former Executive Director of WASHAA, will help us understand misdiagnosis, what factors contribute to diagnostic error, how often it occurs, and what can be done about it. She weaves in moving personal stories on the impact of misdiagnosis and will share helpful tools and resources for both patients and clinicians to help advocate for best practices on this important issue.

If you would like CEUs for this webinar, the CEU is available for \$25 by submitting payment then filling out the paperwork here: [Click Here to Pay & Receive Your CEU Credit](#)

## WASHAA 3rd Annual Meeting

### WASHAA Annual Meeting Nov 13 - Engage!

Our Third Annual WASHAA Meeting will discuss Health Advocacy Matters. We will hear from local and national health advocacy experts who will provide an update on what is happening in the field and how you can participate. All meeting participants will also engage in a group activity focused on health advocacy challenges and opportunities. You won't want to miss it! Mark your calendars for November 13 from 7:30am-12pm. More details about registration will be sent out soon!

Date: Friday, November 13, 2015

Location: [Cambia Grove, 1800 9th Ave, Suite 250, Seattle, WA 98101](#)

Time: Doors Open at 7:30am; Meeting Begins at 8:00 am to Noon



## Become a WASHAA Member

Join the 1st state level patient advocacy organization in the U.S. and be a health care pioneer!

[SIGN UP TODAY!](#)

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