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Virginia Mason Memorial receives WSHA Community Health Leadership Silver Award for its SignalHealth Opioid Registry

SEATTLE – Virginia Mason Memorial received the Washington State Hospital Association’s 2017 Community Health Leadership Silver Award for its innovative approach to ensure good opioid prescribing practices for patients managing chronic pain.

The association gives the Community Health Leadership Award annually to health care organizations that are serving their community’s broader health needs in innovative and lasting ways. The award was presented during the association’s annual meeting on Oct. 12, 2017, at the Waterfront Marriott in Seattle. More information about the Community Health Leadership Award can be found on the WSHA website at <http://www.wsha.org/our-members/awards/community-health-leadership-award/>.

“Health care is traditionally thought of in terms of hospital stays or visits to an outpatient clinic, but a major focus of health care today is community wellness,” WSHA President and CEO Cassie Sauer said. “Hospitals such as Virginia Mason Memorial have become important community partners when it comes to proactively helping residents live healthier lives.”

“Virginia Mason Memorial is setting an example of how Washington’s hospitals and health systems are stepping up with new ways meet the needs of their community,” said Nancy Gorshe, incoming chair of the WSHA Hospital Governing Boards Committee. “We are extremely proud of Virginia Mason Memorial and the work they have been doing, which continues to make an impact.”

The goal of the SignalHealth Opioid Registry is to ensure good opioid prescribing practices for patients managing chronic pain. Virginia Mason Memorial has established targets, policies and tools to assess and influence the appropriate use of opioids and other controlled substances. The web-based chronic opioid therapy registry is for primary care clinic providers. Data from the electronic medical records system, multiple approaches to reporting and empowered medical assistants help to ensure good care for these patients. The approach encompasses all VMM primary care clinic patients.

This multi-faceted approach is providing clinics and providers with the data to improve, and providers are engaging with their patients about opioid use. Anecdotally, many patients have reduced dosages or have stopped taking opioid medications. With the electronic record including multiple specialties, the standards are also readily available to specialty providers and their patients.

“The opioid epidemic is a problem that affects all cross-sections of the community, indifferent to language, income, ethnicity or zip code,” said Dr. Tanny Davenport, Chief Medical Officer of SignalHealth. “The SignalHealth Opioid Registry is the first step in helping our medical community systematically approach this problem from a population health perspective.”

Watch WSHA’s Community Health Leadership Award video on the WSHA website at <http://www.wsha.org/events-resources/videos/>.

About WSHA

The Washington State Hospital Association works to improve the health of all Washington state residents by being active on key issues of policy and quality. WSHA represents more than 100 hospitals and health systems in the state, including those that are non-profit, investor-owned, and county, state and military hospitals. The Triple Aim guides our members and our work, as we strive to improve the patient experience, improve the health of populations and reduce the cost of health care. Visit www.wsha.org for more information.

About Virginia Mason Memorial

Virginia Mason Memorial, part of the Virginia Mason Health System, is a 226-bed, acute-care, nonprofit, community hospital serving Central Washington’s Yakima Valley. Virginia Mason Memorial includes primary care practices and specialty care services including high-quality cardiac care; cancer care through North Star Lodge; breast health at `Ohana Mammography Center; acute hospice and respite care at Cottage in the Meadow, winner of the Circle of Life Award from the American Hospital Association for innovative palliative and end-of-life care; pain management at Water’s Edge; an advanced NICU unit, the only place in Central Washington that offers specialty care for at-risk infants; advanced services for children with special health care needs at Children’s Village; and The Memorial Foundation, a separate 501c(3) organization that raises funds for innovative health care programs in the Yakima Valley (www.memfound.org).

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