

# 2019 NPCR WASHINGTON SUCCESS STORY

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## Washington Oral Health Providers Promote Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination Using HPV Immunization Rates and WSCR Data

# NATIONAL PROGRAM OF CANCER REGISTRIES SUCCESS STORY

**SUMMARY:** The Washington State HPV Task Force has been a critical partner in utilizing HPV cancer data provided by the Washington State Cancer Registry (WSCR). The Task Force includes more than 250 individuals from across the state, including health care facilities, cancer centers, non-profits, universities, tribal organizations, and local health jurisdictions, and has created a number of sub-committees to take on targeted work, including an Oral Health Committee. This committee has been led by WSCR's counterpart in Comprehensive Cancer Control at the Department of Health. One participant in the committee, the Snohomish County Health Department, has started prioritizing promotional work on HPV vaccination with county oral health providers as a result of their participation in the committee. Engaging with the HPV Task Force has also provided the Snohomish County Health Department with connections at the Academy of General Dentistry, and which produced a strong partnership and direct connections to county oral health providers. The county health department utilized the WSCR incidence data on HPV related cancer sites from 1992 to 2015, and HPV vaccination rates data among Washington boys and girls, to create targeted flyers, brochures, and presentations to promote HPV vaccination especially with oral health providers. These materials will be used by county oral health providers to talk to parents about the HPV vaccination.

**CHALLENGE:** Increasing HPV vaccination across Washington State through work with the Washington State HPV Task Force. The official goal of the Task Force is to attain a measurable reduction of HPV associated disease in Washington State by achieving an 80% vaccination completion rate by age 13 by 2026. At 13, youth may see an oral health provider more often than a pediatrician. With the clear associations between HPV and oral cancers, this means engaging Oral Health providers is critical in our mission to increase HPV vaccination rates to 80%. Currently, oral health providers are not completely comfortable in discussing HPV vaccination with parents and do not feel they have the support tools necessary.

**SOLUTION:** The Snohomish County Health Department, in conjunction with the Washington State HPV Task Force, used WSCR data on HPV related cancers to create a toolkit of flyers, brochures, and presentations. These materials, which promote HPV vaccination and include WSCR and HPV immunization data, were shared with dentists and other oral health providers in the county to support conversations with parents about HPV vaccination.

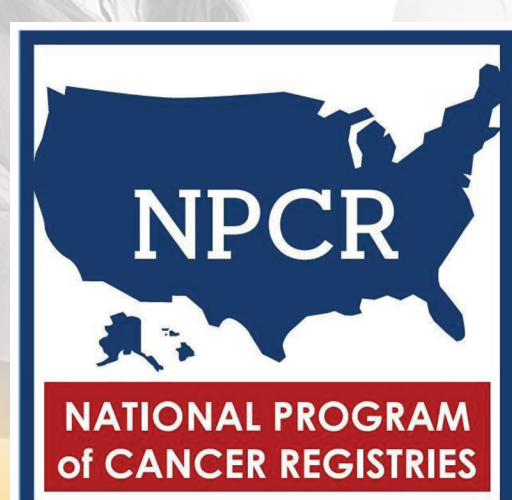
**RESULTS:** Since beginning their work, the Snohomish County Health Department has partnered with another Task Force member, Oregon Pacific Area Health Education Center (OPAHEC), which received grant funding to upgrade the "HPV You are the Key" talk provided by the CDC and integrate oral health materials. This talk integrated best dental practices including oropharyngeal cancer data and how dental staff can contribute to increasing HPV vaccination numbers. OPAHEC also provided free CME/CE credits to dental community professionals who attended the updated talk. In total, they provided four presentations to over 300 participants. The Snohomish County Health Department also engaged local oral health providers as well as schools interested in integrating this information into their programs. This promotional work, in turn, is beginning to change the culture of oral health clinics around the state well beyond Snohomish County. For example, one dental office in Snohomish County reported a significant policy change after working closely with their county health partners. Previously, the dental office had a policy against posters that promoted HPV vaccination. After a presentation by the Snohomish County Health Department and follow up discussions about WSCR data on HPV associated cancers and immunization data on HPV vaccination rates, the dental office changed their policy to allow oral cancer and HPV prevention posters. The dental office now utilizes the printed promotional materials to talk with the parents of age appropriate patients.

**SUSTAINING SUCCESS:** WSCR plans to do more data presentations on HPV associated cancers at the HPV Task Force meetings once new data become available. WSCR staff will also monitor trends on HPV associated cancers to see whether the HPV vaccination has made impact over time. The HPV Task Force will continue to promote resources and materials to increase awareness of HPV cancers among oral health care providers and Washington residents. In the near future, WSCR will also try to link with immunization data to determine whether cancer patients were vaccinated. In addition, WSCR will collaborate with the Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center to examine the distribution of HPV related cancer cases in geographic areas with lower HPV vaccination rates.

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