



HEALTH MATTERS 2.0

Welcome to “Health Matters 2.0”...Why it Matters

Twenty-some years ago, CWMA (Catherine Washburn Memorial Association as it was known then) identified a need for a newsletter to keep Lopez residents updated about the Clinic. Since then, “Health Matters” has brought news to the community highlighting Clinic staff, services, and ways that CWMA works to maintain the Clinic building and equipment.

This edition, “Health Matters 2.0,” marks the transition to news from the three entities that now support the Clinic – CWMA, Lopez Island Hospital District, and UW Medicine. Read on for information about this successful collaboration.

CWMA’s Mission and Vision

Since its founding in 1971, the Catherine Washburn Medical Association’s mission has been *to provide and maintain the building, equipment, and grounds for medical facilities on Lopez Island*. CWMA built the first clinic and expanded it three times using funds donated by the Lopez community. Everything CWMA has done over the past 47 years was accomplished with donations, big and small, from members of our community. That continues to this day.

Although our original mission of maintaining the clinic building and equipment remains, over time we’ve committed to new areas of service to Lopez residents.

For example, our Sikstrom Fund allows CWMA to offer financial assistance to many fellow islanders who need help paying their medical bills.

We also continue to address the ongoing need to find additional space for an independent physical therapy practice in our community – a goal we began pursuing four years ago. Now that a Public Hospital District and a new managing partner are firmly in place, we can renew our efforts to find a new location to house the Lopez Island Physical Therapy practice. Once we accomplish this goal, we’ll continue to provide reduced rent for the facility and help purchase equipment as needed.

Looking ahead, CWMA is exploring ways to deepen our relationship/partnership with UW Medicine and the Lopez Island Hospital District. For example, our quarterly newsletter, *Health Matters*, has shared medical information and clinic updates with the community for more than 25 years. We are collaborating with UW Medicine and the Lopez Island Hospital District to continue its publication with a new format.

Most importantly, we will work together to provide the Lopez community with the best healthcare possible.

You will soon receive the CWMA membership/donation letter, and we hope you will continue to contribute financially to help support these vital community priorities.

LIHD Year One Highlights

The Lopez Island Hospital District (LIHD) is a Public Hospital District established by Lopez Island voters to create a sustainable way to support primary and acute healthcare needs on Lopez Island. The LIHD mission is to *ensure that high quality, island-appropriate healthcare services are available now and into the future*.

Some important facts about the LIHD:

- The LIHD was approved by voters in April 2017, but the tax levy wasn’t effective until 2018.
- Based on the 2017 Total Assessed Property Values, the 2018 tax levy is \$833,662.
- In 2018, your tax dollars fund:
 - **Subsidy payments to support UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic**, which celebrated its first-year anniversary on 9/25/18.
 - **Subsidy payments to support Lopez Island Physical Therapy, LLC**, created when UW Medicine took over the clinic.
 - **LIHD administrative and operational expenses** (under 10 percent of the overall budget).
 - **Short- and long-term financing** to support the start and first-year costs associated with the transition from Island Hospital to UW Medicine.

Some highlights from the current year:

- **Appointed Anne Presson as District Superintendent.** Anne brings extensive experience in health care, strong organizational skills, and a collaborative spirit.
- **Received a “clean opinion” on finances and compliance with regulations** from the Office of the Washington State Auditor (SAO) after the District’s first, independent Accountability Audit. The SAO looked at every transaction to determine how well the District ensures compliance and adequate safeguarding of public resources from fraud, loss or abuse. In addition to financial controls, the audit reviewed compliance with state laws and regulations, as well as LIHD’s adopted Policies & Procedures.

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- **Reduced the cost of the audit by \$600** due to the efficiencies in the audit process, the fact that records were all in good shape, and the District's timely responses.
- **Maintained good financial stewardship of public funds**, enabling the LIHD to pay off short-term loans with CWMA and San Juan County. This reduces the District's debt and will dramatically reduce the remaining long-term debt service costs.

In the coming year, the LIHD will continue to work closely with UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic and LIPT. The Board is also excited about our collaboration with CWMA and is working closely with other community organizations such as Lopez Fire and the Family Resource Center.

In addition, the Board looks forward to engaging with the community to understand patient satisfaction and to identify other services that may be needed. Please visit the District website at <https://lopezislandhd.org> and register your email to stay current on 2019 activities.

One Year in, Lopez Clinic is Firmly Anchored in the Community

September 25 marked one year since the UW Medicine Clinic opened on Lopez Island. "It's hard to believe it's been a year already, but it also feels like we've always been here," says Debra Gussin, Executive Director, UW Medicine Neighborhood Clinics. "We've really appreciated the phenomenal support we've received."

UW Medicine has worked hard to address the unique nature of providing healthcare on the island, Debra says, and has adapted its model to address community needs. The ongoing goal: to offer Lopez residents the highest level of care possible, right in their own backyards.

One example is the e-consult service, which allows providers to electronically consult with world-class UW Medicine specialists and to get answers back to patients quickly. Another is the implementation of Epic technology, which powers eCare—a secure, free resource that lets patients easily access their UW Medicine medical records online.

"One of the advantages of the clinic," Debra says, "is that it provides Lopez Island residents a pathway of connection to the broader UW Medicine organization," so they have greater access to the healthcare system.

That pathway is already paying dividends, says clinic manager Crystal Rovente, noting that a number of patients have received orthopedic and gynecological referrals, healthcare management support and care services from top UW Medicine specialists that resulted in positive medical outcomes. "When it's your hometown provider referring you and reaching out to specialists, that's huge. We're kind of isolated here, so to be able to connect patients with some of the best specialists in the world is a big deal." Our goal is to continue to work with the community to deliver the highest levels of care," Debra adds, citing the clinic's partnership with local EMS, the Lopez Island Hospital District and the Catherine Washburn Medical Association, which owns and manages the clinic property.

Community feedback will continue to drive patient-centered change. Already, patient input prompted the clinic to open earlier, offer lunchtime appointments and provide courtesy lab work for most tests ordered by non-UW Medicine doctors.

Whatever future improvements are in store, healthcare will always remain a people business. With his 21-year track record of caring for Lopez patients "Bob Wilson is *the* island doc people have come to know, love and trust," Crystal says. Working with Bob is Wendy Murphy, the clinic's highly-regarded advanced registered nurse practitioner, a skilled nursing team and a dedicated administrative staff. That combination, Crystal adds, will serve the community well moving forward.

Onward to year two!

Take "Your Shot" at Not Getting Sick This Flu Season

What to do? Easy. Schedule a flu vaccination at the UW Medicine Lopez Island Clinic.

Everyone age six months or older should get one, especially those at high risk for flu complications: young children, pregnant women, older adults, and people with chronic conditions like asthma, heart or lung disease, and diabetes.

It takes about two weeks after being vaccinated for your immune system to begin producing protective antibodies, so you should get your shot soon.

The flu spreads when infected people expel respiratory droplets by breathing, speaking, coughing, and sneezing. The virus can also live on doorknobs, TV remotes, or money.

To minimize your risk, wash your hands regularly. Don't touch your mouth, eyes, or nose. And avoid sick people.

Remember, the vaccine won't make you sick. And although it doesn't guarantee you won't contract the flu, it can decrease your risk by up to 60 percent and minimize the severity of symptoms if you do become ill.

Those symptoms include runny and stuffy nose, cough, sore throat, head and muscle aches, fatigue, and fever. If you do get sick, stay home from work or school. Your doctor can prescribe antiviral drugs to treat flu. They work best if given within 48 hours of when symptoms start.

To schedule your vaccination, call the clinic at 360.468.2245.

