From evidence to everyday

Practical research for better health
Group Health Research Institute produces timely, relevant results that help turn innovative ideas into better health and health care for people everywhere.

From testing new vaccines to helping people quit smoking to finding ways to delay or prevent Alzheimer’s disease, our practical research has helped millions of people worldwide lead healthier, happier lives.

What do bike helmets, breast cancer screening, and yoga have in common?

All are everyday strategies for staying healthy that were shown to be effective by research at Group Health.
Who we are

Group Health Research Institute is the non-proprietary, public-interest research center within Group Health Cooperative, a nonprofit health system based in Seattle, WA. Group Health provides coverage and care for more than 600,000 people in Washington and North Idaho.

We are an interdisciplinary faculty more than 60 members strong, mainly PhD or MD investigators with expertise spanning health services, behavioral science, epidemiology, biostatistics, economics, health informatics, and other fields.

We are experienced scientific collaborators and founding members of several influential research consortia, including the HMO Research Network, the National Institutes of Health’s Vaccine Treatment and Evaluation Units, and the National Cancer Institute’s Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium.

We are an integral part of Seattle’s biomedical core thanks to longstanding partnerships with the University of Washington, Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center, and Seattle Children’s Research Institute.

What we do

We study health and health care as experienced in everyday settings by everyday people, producing results that are built to work in the real world—not just in a research environment.

We create a learning health care system within Group Health—where our researchers, providers, administrators, and patients work together to turn advances in research into better health.

We share our results in the public domain—disseminating our findings widely through publications, presentations, and traditional and social media to help inform people around the country and the world.

We work with other scientists nationwide as consultants, co-investigators, and leaders of multi-site studies that use the vast data resources, population diversity, and statistical power needed to answer health care’s toughest questions.

We do practical research that helps people everywhere stay healthy and get the care they need.
A single mother starts taking an antidepressant, receiving follow-up care via online messaging with a psychiatric nurse. As her symptoms improve, she resumes many of her favorite activities—including making home-cooked meals for her kids. People who received online follow-up care for depression in addition to usual care were more likely to improve and were more satisfied with their care. (Journal of General Internal Medicine, 2011)

A construction worker who supports a family of four is on the verge of quitting his job due to back pain that just won’t go away. He enrolls in a yoga class, and his pain starts to ease. Soon, he is promoted to lead carpenter. Yoga classes were linked to better back-related function and diminished symptoms from chronic low back pain in the largest U.S. yoga study to date. (Archives of Internal Medicine, 2011)

A couple often brings groceries to her aging mother, who doesn’t get out much anymore. They worry that Alzheimer’s disease is a risk. So they start walking with her several evenings a week—a habit she continues well into her 80s. Seniors who exercised three or more times a week had a 30-40 percent lower risk for developing dementia than did those who exercised less often. (Annals of Internal Medicine, 2006)

A busy executive doesn’t have time for doctor visits. Instead, he gets tested for colon cancer using a home screening kit. His test results are abnormal, so he has a colonoscopy that finds and removes polyps before they develop into cancer. Colorectal cancer screening rates doubled among people who were overdue for it, largely because of increased use of home screening kits. (Annals of Internal Medicine, 2013)

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Research: It’s in our DNA.

Since its founding in 1947, transforming health care through research has been part of Group Health’s vision. Our founders established Group Health Research Institute in 1983—seizing the unique opportunity to promote public health by studying real-world, population-based care delivery.

And now, as health care changes faster than ever, we are studying those changes as they happen. Our research will continue to discover practical ways to achieve good health—for generations to come.

From childhood to old age, Group Health research sheds light on innovations that improve the health of local communities, the nation, and the world.

Learn more at grouphealthresearch.org.

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At Group Health Research Institute (GHRI), 2015 was a year of record-high grant and contract revenue: $46.3 million. GHRI also increased funding diversification—with a smaller proportion of grant dollars coming from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and increased funding from sources such as the Patient Centered Outcomes Research Institute (PCORI), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the State of Washington, and industry.

We also became more efficient at generating and maintaining our grant funding. In 2015, we produced more revenue while submitting slightly fewer grant applications than in the past. And we continue to publish a steady stream of research findings that are being widely disseminated to help people live healthier lives.
Financial stability. Scientific excellence. Practical research that improves the lives of people everywhere.

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