



Checking in with new Group Health members

Better customer service, easier access to doctors and rapid online feedback are what employees who made the switch from KingCare to Group Health are finding.



Christine Lange, communications manager with the Department of Executive Services, was seeking convenience when she decided to switch to Group Health from KingCare. "I wanted a place close to my house and I wanted one doctor keeping track of everything."

Christine and her husband were body boarding in Hawaii when a shore break wave threw her husband to the ground on his hip. Right away they knew he had been badly hurt. "We knew it wasn't broken, because he could walk, but something was not right. We got ibuprofen, ace bandages and a chocolate bar from the grocery store and used ice from the hotel ice machine to ice it overnight."

Christine called Group Health from Hawaii and explained the situation. Though it was after clinic hours in Seattle, they were able to book him an appointment with their doctor the following morning.

"Our reservations to fly back were for that night, anyway. We arrived in Seattle at 1 a.m. and by 8 a.m. we were at the clinic seeing the doctor."

Within 15 minutes a hip x-ray had been taken and within 30 minutes the injury was diagnosed as a bone bruise and a plan for treatment had been developed.

"It was all digital and it was all in one place," Christine said.

This kind of convenience has also extended to prescription maintenance medications. To refill prescriptions she takes on a regular basis, Christine logs in to her secure Group Health account, clicks the refills she wants and within 48 hours they are delivered to her home. There's also a pharmacy in the clinic close to her home that is open weekends.

"It's more accessible than I even expected," says Christine. "Everything the commercial says is true."

Rev Up for Retirement seminar
Friday, April 30, 11 a.m.–1:30 p.m., Rooms 121 and 123, Chinook Bldg, downtown. *Please register in advance by calling 206-263-3696.*

When King County announced that Group Health out of pocket expenses would be lower than KingCare in 2010, **Tom Braman** was less than satisfied with the care he and his wife were getting at Minor and James. "So we decided we would try to save money and improve our health care experience," by switching to Group Health, he said.



"From the first time I called Group Health, they were exceedingly kind. They were helpful and very customer service oriented."

One of Tom's chief concerns in switching to Group Health was giving up the convenience of being able to fill prescriptions wherever he wanted. Group Health took care of transferring his prescriptions and Tom was able to pick them up at a Group Health pharmacy a few blocks away from where he works downtown. "There's also a 24/7 pharmacy at the Capitol Hill location not too far from where I live."

At this first appointment, he found that though his doctor was no longer accepting new patients, an exception would be made if Tom's wife and daughter wanted to also see the same doctor. His doctor was very attentive and thorough. "It felt like he spent 15-20 minutes with me. He wasn't in and out. Staff walked me from one place to the next personally. They didn't just give me a lab slip and point me down the hall."

At the appointment the doctor encouraged Tom to get his own blood pressure cuff to monitor his blood pressure on a regular basis. "I can send the numbers to my doctor, and he'll load them into the Group Health computer system. He can track my pressure, and from the Web site I can too."

By the time Tom returned to his office after his physical, an e-mail alerted him that his lab results were available in his secure online medical record.

"I am rarely surprised by cool online experiences because I'm at the cutting edge in what I do. What continues to impress me is that this cool online experience is so geared toward customer satisfaction."

April 20th is the last day to start your individual action plan.

To earn gold: Make 50 entries and Complete 10 phases of readings before June 30, 2010.

For more information call King County Benefits at 206-684-2120.

April is Alcohol Awareness Month

In 2007, more than one fifth of people older than 12 participated in binge drinking at least once in the last 30 days. Alcohol abuse is a serious problem in the United States. Warning Signs of Alcohol Abuse:

If you answer "yes" to any of the following questions, you may have a problem with alcohol:

- Do you drink alone when you feel angry or sad?
- Does your drinking ever make you late for work?
- Does your drinking worry your family?
- Do you ever drink after telling yourself you won't?

Gear up for Bike to Work Month in May

May is Bike to Work Month. Gear up this month and try a bike commute – there's never been more help for new riders. In April sign up for the Bike to Work Month Challenge and mark your calendar for educational seminars to help you get the rubber on the road.

Join the Group Health Challenge – Commit to riding 5 round trips between May 1 – 31 and be eligible for great prizes. King County will have several teams - join one or form your own team of co-workers, family and friends. Registration is free – call 206-522-3222.

Ride on Bike to Work Day, May 21st. This is your chance to cycle to work and be counted as one of

What employees are saying about the new Healthy Incentives

I think the WebMD model is a step in the right direction...WAY better than the coaching calls.

Jackie Phillips, graphic designer, King County DOT

It's been a great motivator for me and I especially like the individual action plan... I only wished I could record over 50 entries.

Employee resources and tips from April Health Matters

Eat Smart – Excess sugar intake has been linked to the growing obesity epidemic. But how much is too much? Experts weigh in. Go to www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters, "April Health Matters".

Move More – Spring into action. If biking isn't your thing, there are many more events and activities for you to explore. Just get outside and start moving! Click on "April Health Matters" from www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters for local options.

- Do you ever forget what you did while drinking?
- Do you get headaches hangovers after drinking?

King County's Making Life Easier program
24 hrs a day, 7 days a week - call: 1-888-874-7290
www.achievesolutions.net/kcmlle

Visit the web site for tools including articles about cutting back, tips for family members, and more. You can also visit with a counselor or therapist who's trained in alcohol or substance abuse. Services are free to King County employees and family members.

thousands of bike commuters in the greater Seattle area. Cascade Bike Club counts the number of bike commuters this day. Visit the web site for a map of commute stations, or call 206-522-3222 for details. (www.cbcef.org/btw/btw_stations.html)

Attend an Intro to Bike Commuting class

Cascade will come and hold a class at your worksite if you gather 10-15 of your colleagues and neighbors to attend. Contact 206-263-6085 for more information.

Visit the revised Health Matters bike resources page for links to local bike maps, safety tips, info about loading your bike on a Metro bus, and more.

May Jean Yee, King County Prosecutor's Office

"The choices we've been offered have made quite a difference for a lot of people, from walking to the Weight Watchers at Work additions, rather than just doing the online plans."

N. Lynn Mazer, IT Project Admin, DJA

Stress Less – The added stress of tax season can put your health at risk. Fortunately, taxes don't have to be a major source of stress. Go to www.kingcounty.gov/HealthMatters and click "April Health Matters".

Quit Tobacco – Smoking is expensive. Quitting is free! Most people try to quit cold turkey, but studies show you'll have a better chance of quitting if you use tools and resources available to you. Click "Quit Tobacco" from the **Health Matters** site or call 206-263-6085.