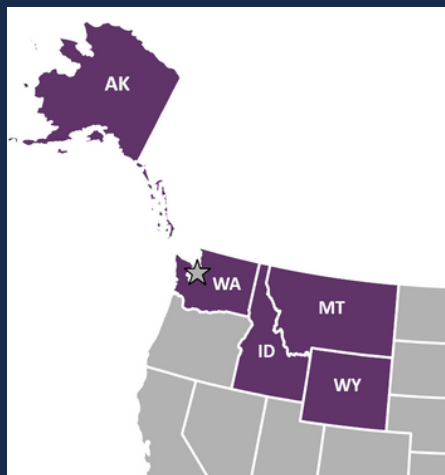


AHRQ Long COVID Care Network

Improving Access to Multidisciplinary Care for Patients With Long COVID



Institution

University of Washington

Geographic Service Area

Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho (WWAMI) region

Priority Population

Historically underserved populations, including patients in rural communities, LGBTQ+ individuals, Alaskan, Native American, Latinx, and Southeast Asian communities

Project Period

2023–2028

Contact

Principal Investigators

Janna Friedly, MD
friedlyj@uw.edu

Jessica Bender, MD
jessi730@uw.edu

Nikki Gentile, MD
ngentile@uw.edu

Project Overview

The mission of the University of Washington (UW) Medicine Long COVID Clinic Harborview Medical Center (HMC) is to offer comprehensive, coordinated, and innovative care for patients with Long COVID. Launched in 2020 as part of HMC's rehabilitation services, the clinic transitioned to a multidisciplinary model in January 2021, incorporating experts from rehabilitation medicine, internal medicine, family medicine, and rehabilitation psychology.

Operating on a hybrid model, the clinic offers both in-person and telemedicine appointments. The multidisciplinary UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic serves a broad geographic area, including patients traveling to the clinic from across the WWAMI region—Washington, Wyoming, Alaska, Montana, and Idaho.

Through its involvement with the AHRQ Long COVID Care Network, the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic is committed to enhancing the quality of its services and refining its care delivery model, focusing on improving access, quality, and comprehensiveness of care for historically underserved minorities and vulnerable populations, all while developing and disseminating educational materials for clinicians and patients. By employing a hub-and-spoke model, with the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic as the central educational hub and community primary care clinicians throughout the WWAMI region as spokes, the clinic strives to provide clinicians the training resources necessary for managing Long COVID, ensuring that underserved communities across the region receive the care they need with a wider range and greater volume than a single clinic can provide.

Notable Features

- The UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic offers a range of rehabilitation services, including individual therapy and a group-based symptom self-management intervention delivered via telemedicine. Developed by clinicians at the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic, this six-session group intervention equips patients with self-management strategies for common Long COVID symptoms and has been adopted by multiple clinics nationwide.
- Community outreach and connection is a primary focus for the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic. The clinic has recently formed two advisory boards—one of patients and another of representatives from community organizations serving target populations. Additionally, the clinic has participated in five large community events to increase visibility, connect with the community, and disseminate educational materials.

Project Goal: Improve Access, Quality, and Comprehensiveness of Care for Underserved Minorities and Other Vulnerable Populations

Specific Aims

The UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic aims to improve access and care delivery for patients throughout the WWAMI region by 1) improving clinical care delivery and expanding access to Long COVID Clinic services; 2) engaging underserved communities to enhance Long COVID education and connection to local resources; and 3) improving patient access in the WWAMI region by training a network of clinicians specializing in Long COVID care.

Improve Clinical Care Delivery and Expand Access to the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic

The UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic is investing key resources to enhance comprehensive, coordinated care, focusing on high-demand services to improve access and delivery, particularly for patients from Washington and Alaska who lack access to local multidisciplinary Long COVID clinics.

To achieve these objectives, the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic is expanding its services in several key areas: coordination of care, behavioral health support, social and vocational services, and electronic consultations (e-consults). It has plans to extend its successful Long COVID Self-Management Group behavioral health support sessions to patients in Alaska and to Spanish-speaking patients. The UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic is also increasing opportunities for clinicians to obtain timely recommendations for Long COVID diagnosis and treatment by implementing e-consultations and office hours.

By the Numbers

- Since opening in 2021, the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic has served **2,323** patients in a total of **6,637** visits
- The clinic has completed more than **25** series of the Long COVID Symptom Self-Management Group, providing **200+** patients with critical skills to help develop strategies for managing Long COVID symptoms

Enhance Long COVID Education and Resources

The goal of the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic community engagement activities is to foster authentic longitudinal relationships, promote ongoing collaborations, and address community needs. This approach leverages existing partnerships from working with Washington State and community partners, while also incorporating feedback from its CAB.

The UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic is launching "Community Conversations," a series of publicly accessible educational webinars featuring interactive discussions and Q&A sessions, available for asynchronous viewing on UW Medicine's YouTube channels.

Additionally, the clinic is creating patient educational materials in multiple languages and consulting with community members to ensure cultural responsiveness. The team is also participating in public events to raise awareness about Long COVID and the clinic, and to provide access to health supplies. Furthermore, the clinic has established the Long COVID Recovery, Insights, Support, and Education (RISE) Symposium to provide patients and clinicians the opportunity to learn from experts in the field of Long COVID research and care. The impact of these activities will be assessed through interviews with community partners, patients, and clinicians, as well as through internal tracking of community outreach efforts.

Train Clinicians in the WWAMI Region

The UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic is dedicated to advancing the expertise of community primary care clinicians in diagnosing and managing Long COVID. To support this, the clinic is currently developing a Long COVID Mini Fellowship program to be launched in 2025. This mini fellowship will train a cohort of clinicians to become Long COVID champions in their region, establishing themselves as local experts who deliver specialized care in rural and historically underserved areas. Additionally, the clinic participates in numerous training and educational opportunities including webinars, podcasts, workshops, and other presentations. The effectiveness of the training program will be assessed through interviews and focus groups with participants, as well as feedback surveys conducted after the training sessions.

"The overall goal of the proposed project is to strengthen the infrastructure and expand the services of the UW Medicine Long COVID Clinic to improve access, quality, and comprehensiveness of care for underserved minorities and other vulnerable populations."

- Janna Friedly, Principal Investigator



Agency for Healthcare
Research and Quality