

# **A Novel Way to Obtain and Deploy Health Workforce Demand Data: The Washington State Health Workforce Sentinel Network**

March 20, 2018

Health Workforce Technical Assistance Center Webinar

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# Sentinel Network Project Team

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## University of Washington CHWS

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## Washington State Workforce Board

Eleni Papadakis, Executive Director

Nova Gattman, Legislative Director

# Funding

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Initial: Washington State *Healthier Washington* Initiative (CMMI SIM grant & CMS DSRIP – Medicaid Transformation), subcontract

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Current: Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Governor's Discretionary Funds

To: Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, subcontracting with University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies

# Sentinel Network's Purpose

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*The workforce is key to healthcare transformation.*

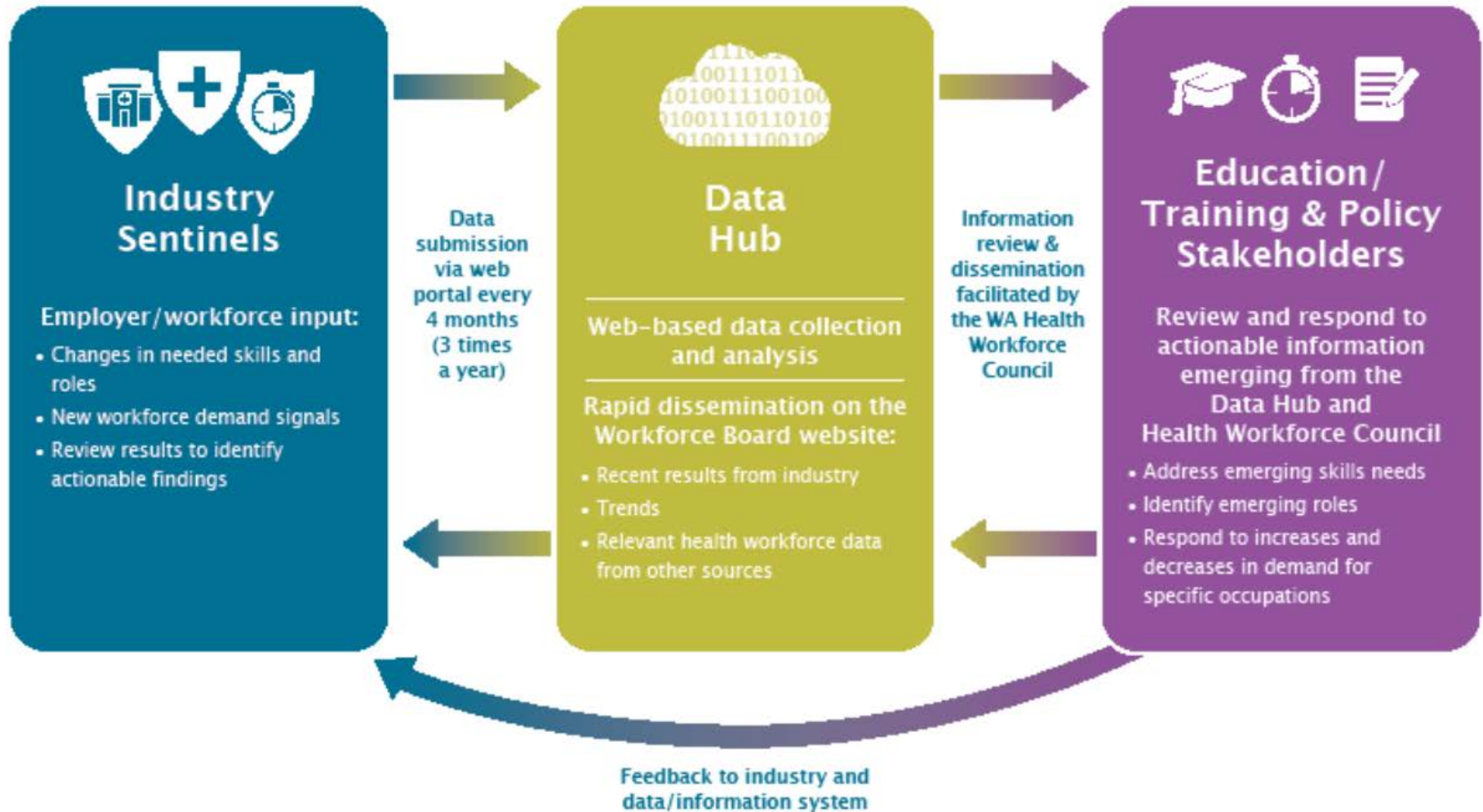
*We need early signals of changes in the occupations, skills, and roles needed to deliver quality care in order to respond appropriately.*

The Sentinel Network supports efficient and effective health workforce preparation and deployment by:

- Identifying emerging signals of health workforce demand needs/changes
- Rapidly disseminating information to education, training and policy partners who can take action based on findings

[www.wasentinelnetwork.org](http://www.wasentinelnetwork.org)

# Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network



# Registration and Questions

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## Registration Information

Sentinel employers first “register” by providing:

- facility type(s) where employed, and
- locations (counties)

Registration information populates subsequent question logic

For each facility type, Sentinels prompted to select occupations (based on SOC codes) that experienced recent change in demand

A Sentinel’s registration data is saved for the next reporting period.

# Registration and Questions

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## Questions

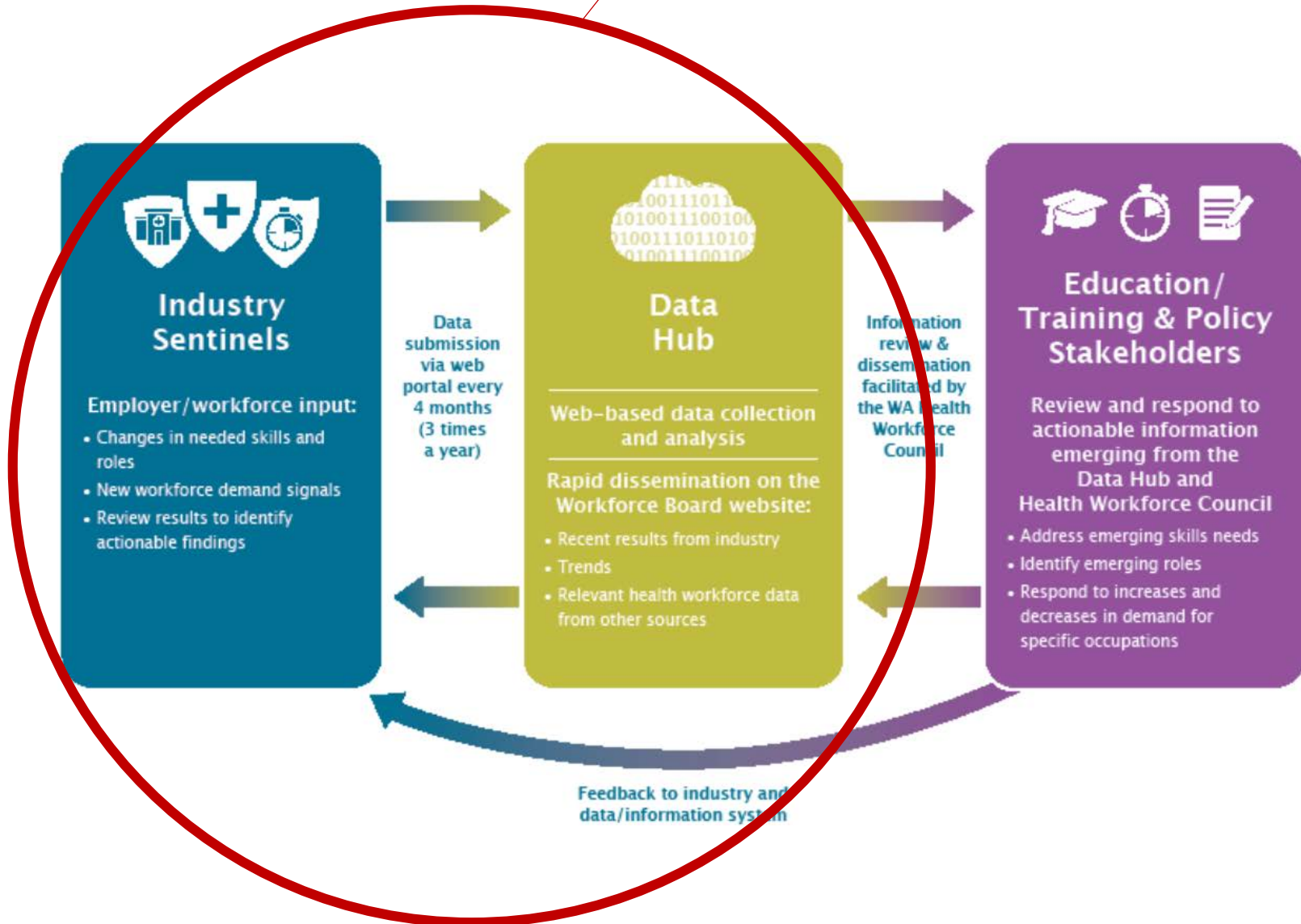
*Recently (in the past 3–4 months):*

- *Occupations experiencing exceptionally long vacancies*
- *Occupations with increased or decreased demand*
- *New occupations that they did not previously employ*
- *New roles for existing employees*
- *Changes in orientation/onboarding procedures for new employees*
- *Changes in training priorities for existing employees*

***AND qualitative input about which, how, and reasons why***

# 1. Hearing from Sentinels

## Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network





# Sentinel Data Collection Dates

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Round 1:  
Jun/Jul  
2016

Round 3:  
Apr/May  
2017

Round 5:  
June  
2018?

Round 2:  
Nov/Dec  
2016

Round 4:  
Sept/Oct  
2017

Round 6, 7....  
Dates to be  
determined

Phase I

Phase II

# Responses from Sentinels

Facility Type	July 2016	Nov 2016	May 2017	Sept 2017
Behavioral-mental health clinic/outpatient mental health and substance abuse clinic	26	30	16	33
Skilled nursing facility	17	28	11	14
Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale	19	18	19	23
Nursing & personal care facility (not a Skilled Nursing or Intermediate Care Facility)	7	15	6	4
Acute care hospital (25 beds or fewer)	10	12	8	7
Education	10	10	5	1
Primary care medical clinic (not FQHC or community clinic)	19	7	8	4
Intermediate care facility	1	7	5	2
Specialty medical clinic	29	6	6	3
Home health care service	11	4	7	6
Psychiatric/substance abuse hospital	3	4	0	10
Medical/diagnostic laboratory	5	3	5	4
Public health	4	3	5	2
Dentist office/dental clinic	3	3	0	4
Other	1	3	11	2
Acute care hospital (more than 25 beds)	12	1	6	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>154</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>127</b>

# Response Counts by Facility Type and Geography

Note: Each facility could serve clients/patients in more than one county, which is why the totals in the chart below are greater than the totals in the table above.

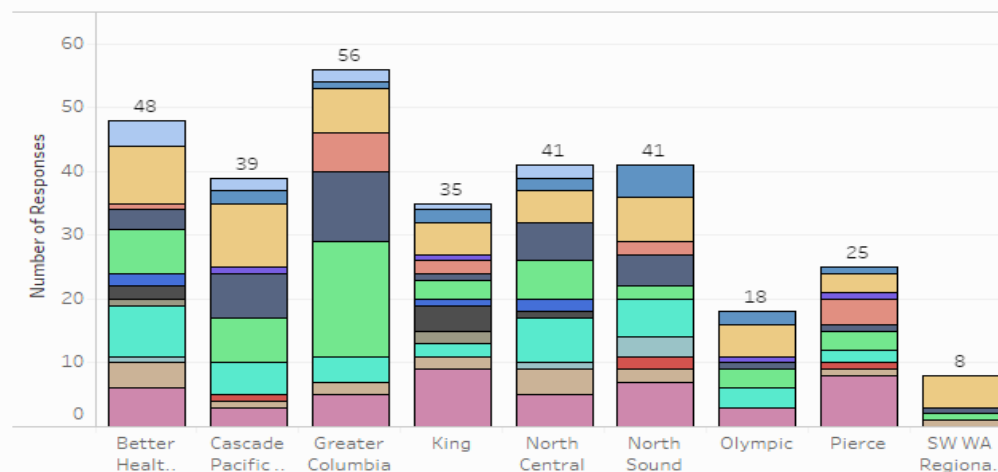
Click on a facility type below to highlight the number of responses from each data collection period.

Move your cursor over each bar to see the number of responses.

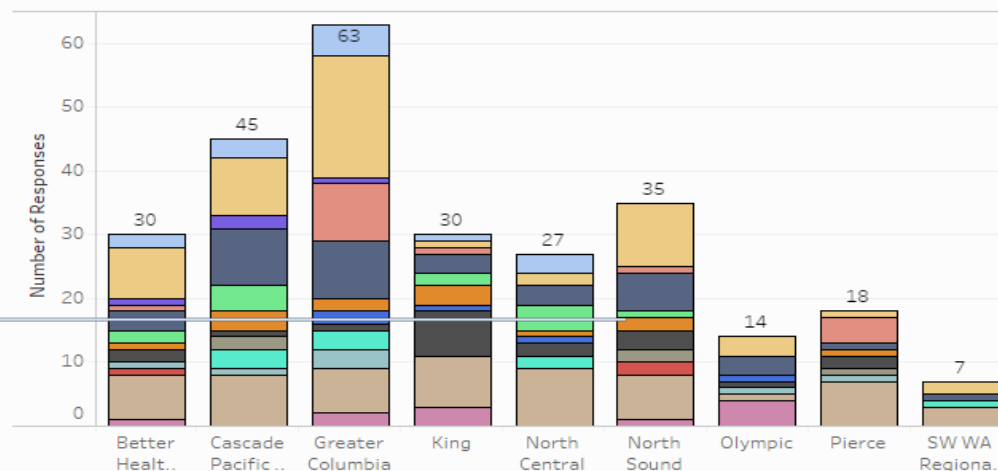
Click below the last label to reset.

- Acute care hospital (...)
- Acute care hospital (...)
- Behavioral-mental h...
- Dentist office/denta...
- Education
- Federally qualified h...
- Home health care se...
- Medical/diagnostic l...
- Nursing & personal c...
- Other
- Primary care medica...
- Psychiatric/substan...
- Public health
- Skilled nursing facili...
- Specialty medical cli...

Data collected June 15, 2016 - July 30, 2016



Data collected Nov. 1, 2016 - Dec. 15, 2016



# Why Do We Need to Hear from Sentinels?

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Case study:

Medical Assistants

# Example: A Surplus of Medical Assistants?

Health Workforce Council



2016 Annual Report



December 2016

Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board  
128 10th Avenue SW | PO Box 43105, Olympia, WA 98504  
360-709-4600, [www.wtb.wa.gov](http://www.wtb.wa.gov)

## Washington State Health Workforce Council Report:

### Medical Assistants


Educational output:\* 2,821 MAs

Job Vacancies:\*\* 592 MAs

\*Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS, National Center for Education Statistics) 2015

\*\*Current Employment Statistics (CES, Bureau of Labor Statistics) Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW, Bureau of Labor Statistics) 2019-2024


# Screen Shot – Sentinel Network Dashboard



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### Washington State Health Workforce Sentinel Network

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#### What is the Sentinel Network?

The Sentinel Network is an information network linking the healthcare industry with partners in education and training, policymakers and workforce planners to collectively identify and respond to new and changing demand for healthcare workers, skills and roles. Part of the Healthier Washington initiative, the Sentinel Network is a collaboration of state's Workforce Board and the University of Washington Center for Health Workforce Studies, with funding from Washington's Health Care Authority.

#### Join the Sentinel Network!

[Register Now](#)


As a Sentinel, you will:

- Help ensure the state's health workforce is prepared to respond to the transforming health care environment.
- Have access to current and actionable information about emerging workforce needs.
- Compare your organization's experience and emerging workforce demand trends with similar employer groups.


#### Sentinel Network Findings to Date

Results from data submitted June/July and November/December 2016 are now available!

[View Findings](#)



Washington Career Bridge  
Find the education & training you need to get the job you want



Upskill Backfill INITIATIVE

# Screen Shot – Sentinel Network Dashboard

**WORKFORCE BOARD**  
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**Washington State Health Workforce Sentinel Network**

HOME TEAM FINDINGS

**Findings as reported by facility type**

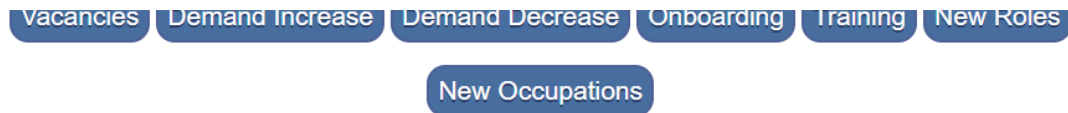
Click on the buttons to explore the results by question topic; use the menu that will appear in the sidebar as you scroll to explore findings by other questions.  
[Click here to see all questions asked of Sentinels.](#)

Vacancies Demand Increase Demand Decrease Onboarding Training New Roles

New Occupations

**Washington Career Bridge**  
Find the education & training you need to get the job you want

# Screen Shot – Sentinel Network Dashboard



## Vacancies

Sentinels were asked: "Recently (in the past 3-4 months), has your facility type experienced exceptionally long vacancies for any open position? If yes, for which occupations and what are possible reasons why?"

- I. **Select a facility type(s)** to begin exploring data. Ctrl/Cmd + Click to show multiple facility types.
- II. **Select** the data collection period(s) and the number of occupations to show for the selected facility type(s)..
- III. **Reasons:** **Click on an occupation** (or Ctrl/Cmd + Click on multiple occupations). Move your cursor over the bars to see respondents' comments.

## Exceptionally Long Vacancies by Facility Type

Facility Type(s)	Data Collection Date(s)	Number of Occupations to Display
Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or co... ▼	(All) ▼	<input type="range"/>
<div><input type="checkbox"/> (All) <input type="checkbox"/> Acute care hospital (25 beds or fewer) <input type="checkbox"/> Acute care hospital (more than 25 beds) <input type="checkbox"/> Behavioral-mental health clinic/outpatient mental health and substance abuse clinic <input type="checkbox"/> Dentist office/dental clinic <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale <input type="checkbox"/> Higher Education / Research <input type="checkbox"/> Home health care service <input type="checkbox"/> Intermediate care facility <input type="checkbox"/> Medical/diagnostic laboratory</div>		



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## Exceptionally Long Vacancies by Facility Type

Facility Type(s)

x

Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or co...

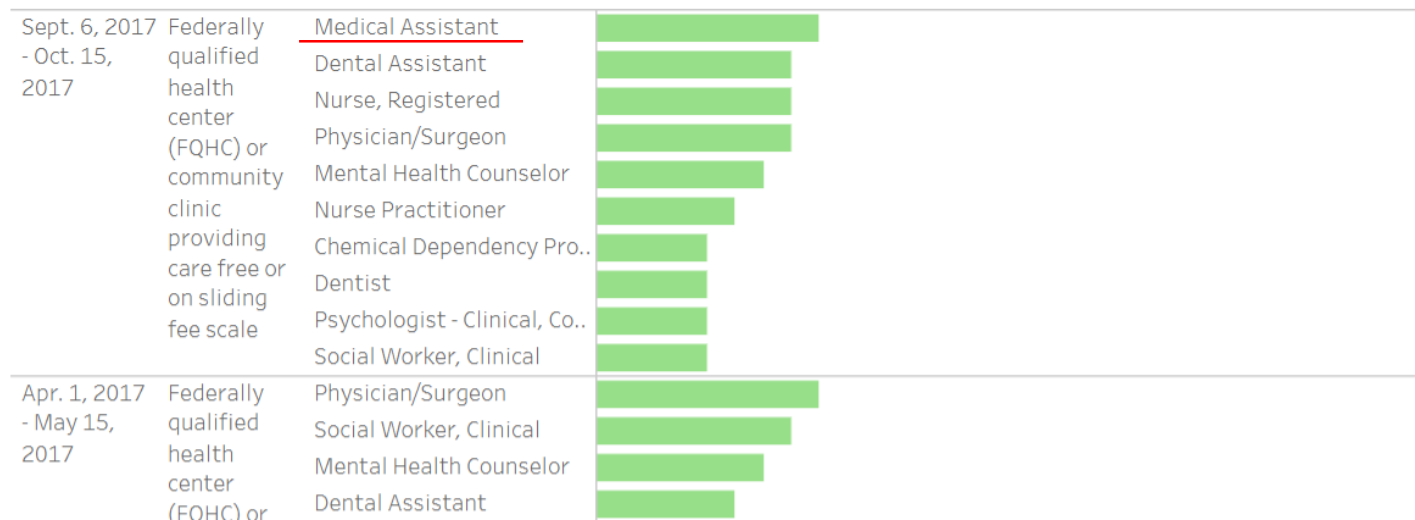
Data Collection Date(s)

(All)

Number of Occupations to Display


### Occupations with Exceptionally Long Vacancies


Click on an occupation (Ctrl/Cmd + Click on multiple occupations) to view reasons

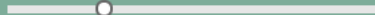


# Screen Shot – Sentinel Network Dashboard

## Exceptionally Long Vacancies by Facility Type




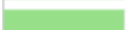






Facility Type(s)   
 Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or co...

Data Collection Date(s)  
 (All) 

Number of Occupations to Display  


### Occupations with Exceptionally Long Vacancies

Click on an occupation (CtrlCmd + Click on multiple occupations)  
 to view reasons

Sept. 6, 2017 - Oct. 15, 2017	Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale	Medical Assistant	
For Sentinels representing a(n) <u>Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale</u> , 8/23 (35%) reported the occupation <u>Medical Assistant</u> as experiencing exceptionally long vacancies in the past 3-4 months			
	community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale	Nurse Practitioner	
		Chemical Dependency Professional	
		Dentist	
		Psychologist - Clinical, Community	
		Social Worker, Clinical	
Apr. 1, 2017 - May 15, 2017	Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale	Physician/Surgeon	
		Social Worker, Clinical	
		Mental Health Counselor	
		Dental Assistant	

# Screen Shot – Sentinel Network Dashboard

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## Exceptionally Long Vacancies by Facility Type

Facility Type(s)  
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Data Collection Date(s)  
(All)

Number of Occupations to Display

### Occupations with Exceptionally Long Vacancies

Click on an occupation (Ctrl/Cmd + Click on multiple occupations) to view reasons

Sept. 6, 2017 - Oct. 15, 2017	Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale	Medical Assistant	
		Dental Assistant	
		Nurse, Registered	
		Physician/Surgeon	
		Mental Health Counselor	
		Nurse Practitioner	
		Chemical Dependency Pro..	
		Dentist	
		Psychologist - Clinical, Co..	
Apr. 1, 2017 - May 15, 2017	Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or ..	Social Worker, Clinical	
		Physician/Surgeon	
		Social Worker, Clinical	
		Mental Health Counselor	
		Dental Assistant	
		Medical Assistant	

### Reasons for Exceptionally Long Vacancies

Move your cursor over the bars to read comments for the selected occupation(s)

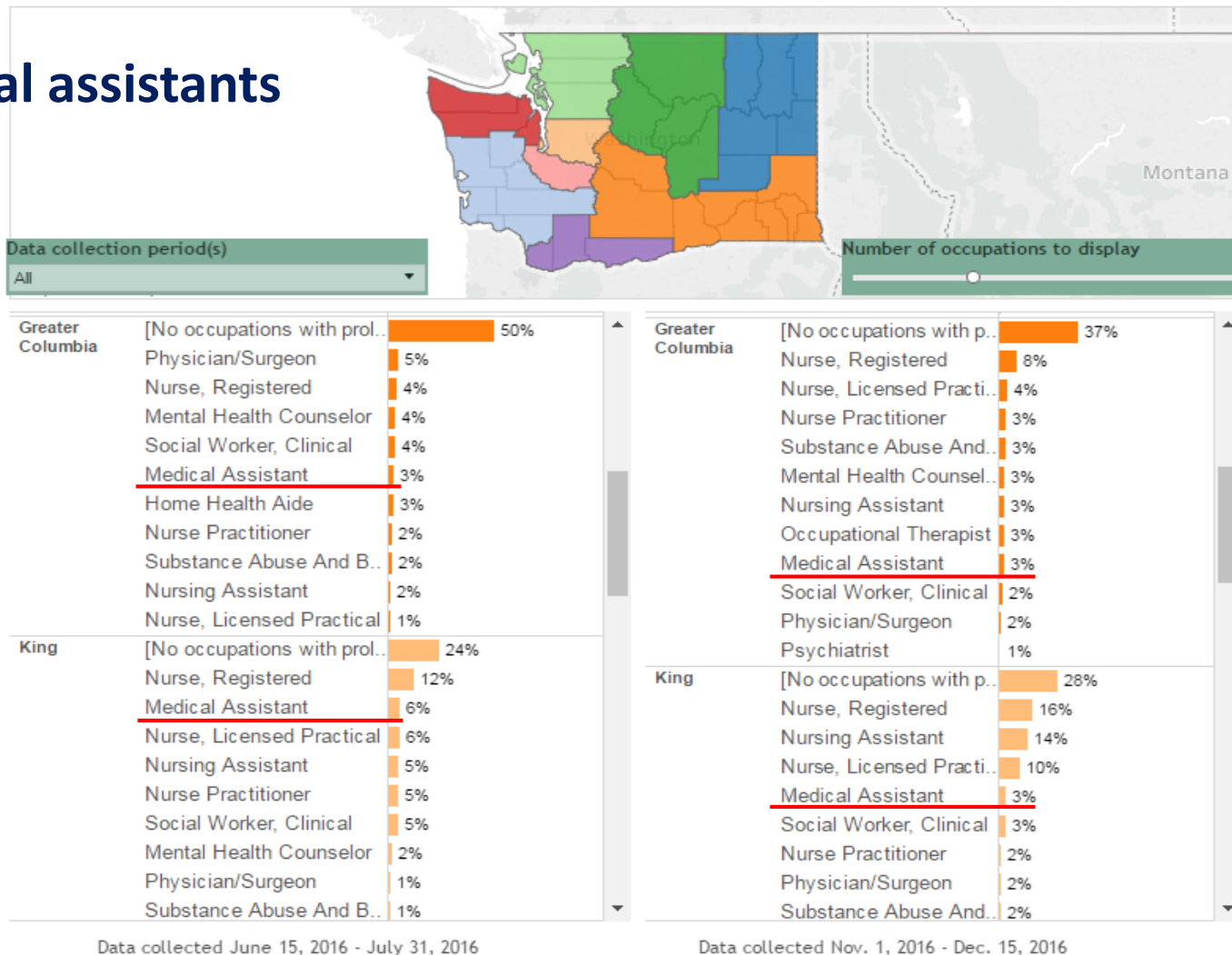
Sept. 6, 2017 - Oct. 15, 2017	Federally qualified health center (FQHC) or community clinic providing care free or on sliding fee scale	Not enough..	
		Recruitment..	
Apr. 1, 2017 - May 15, 2017	Federally qualified health center..	Salary/wag..	
		Recruitment..	
		[No reason ..	
		[No reason ..	
Nov. 1, 2016 - Dec. 15, 2016	Federally qualified health center (FQH..	Not enough..	
		Salary/wag..	
		[No reason ..	
June 15, 2016 - July 31, 2016	Federally qualified health center (FQH..	Recruitment..	
		Not enough..	
		[No reason ..	
	Federally qualified health center (FQH..	Other	
		Recruitment..	

[Medical Assistant] high expectations on experience

# Washington State's Sentinels Report --

Exceptionally Long Vacancies by Geographic Region

## Medical assistants



# Washington State's Sentinels Report --

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## Medical Assistants

By facility type: MAs were among the top occupations with exceptionally long vacancies reported by

- FQHCs/community clinics
- Other primary care clinics
- Specialty medical clinics
- Acute care hospitals ( $\leq 25$  beds)

By geography: MAs were among occupations with exceptionally long vacancies

- July 2016: 8 of 9 Accountable Communities of Health (ACHs)
- Nov. 2016: 9 of 9 ACHs
- April 2017: 9 of 9 ACHs
- October 2017: 8 or 9 ACHs

# Changes in Onboarding & Training Priorities

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## Medical Assistants

*Examples of comments:*

### EHR/HIT

- *EHR training/more EHR skills*
- *Knowledge of quality data tracking*
- *Onboarding curriculum tailored to focus on EHR competency and documentation of clinical measures.*

### Other Skills

- *Gathering SO/GI [sexual orientation/gender identity] demographics*
- *Enhanced training to work to full scope of role*
- *Expansion of customer service training*
- *Organization-wide training and implementation of AIDET\* customer service model; increased localized trainings on integration of care with an emphasis on a care team based approach to healthcare and synchronization of services*

\*Acknowledge, Introduce, Duration, Explanation, and Thank You.

# Sentinels Suggest Solutions

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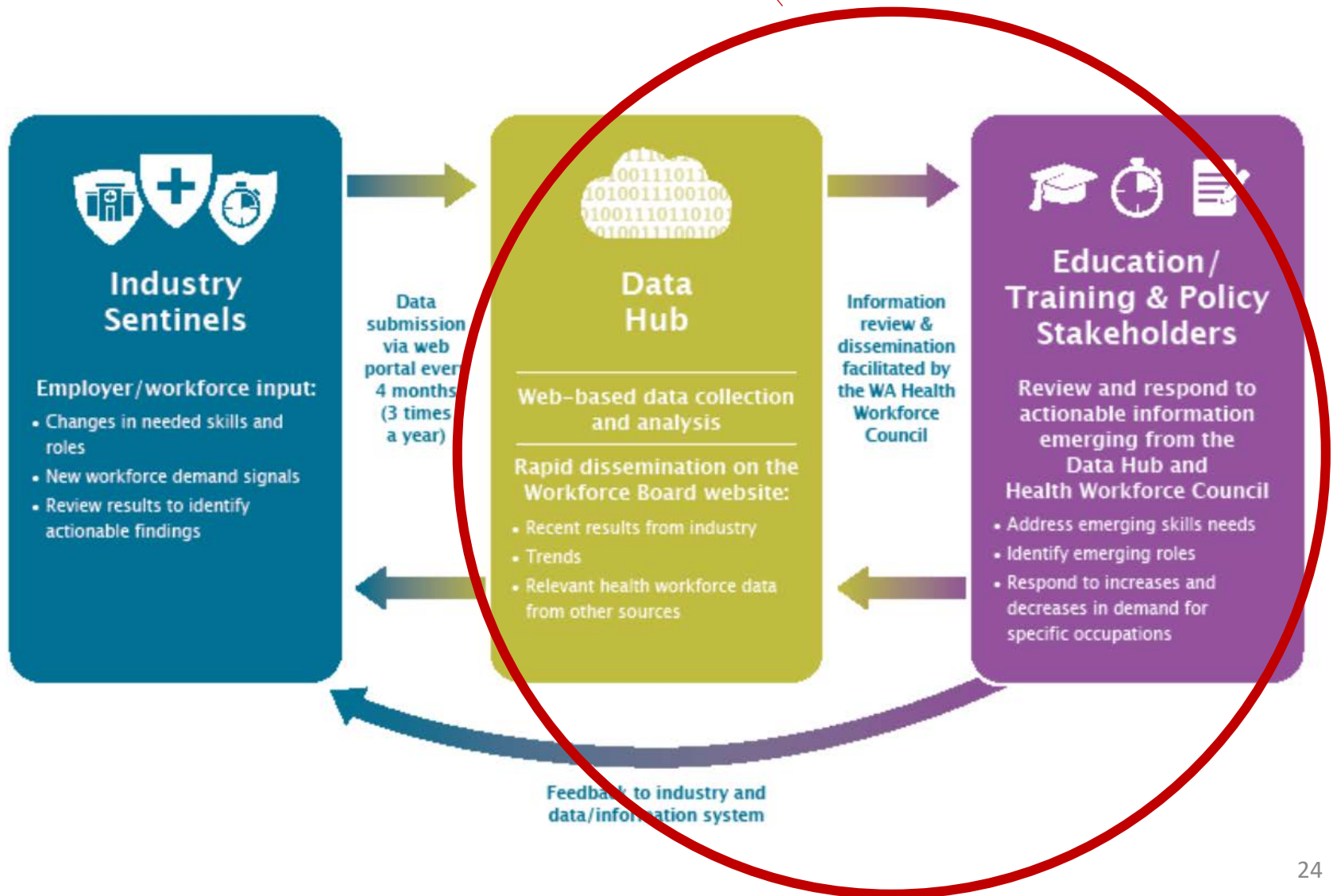
## Medical Assistants

*Examples of comments:*

- *We have an MA Trainer they are paired with. We also do an MA apprenticeship program to grow our own.*
- *[We developed] a residency program for MAs.*
- *Looking at partnering with a local college.*

## 2. Connecting with Stakeholders

### Washington's Health Workforce Sentinel Network





# Demand for Medical Assistants

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***Sentinel Network signals that there's not a statewide surplus of MAs that meet the hiring needs of employers***

*Next steps to investigate with stakeholders:*

- Explore if there's a drop-off between MA program completion and certification
- Skills/preparedness variability in completers from different education programs
- Possible need for remote/distance education for MAs?
- Expansion of apprenticeships?
- More information needed on specific skills that MA candidates lack for some employers:
  - EHR/HIT – more that can be provided in education programs?

# Sentinel Network

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## Highlights of Other Findings

# Washington State's Sentinels Report --

## Registered Nurses

*By facility type:*

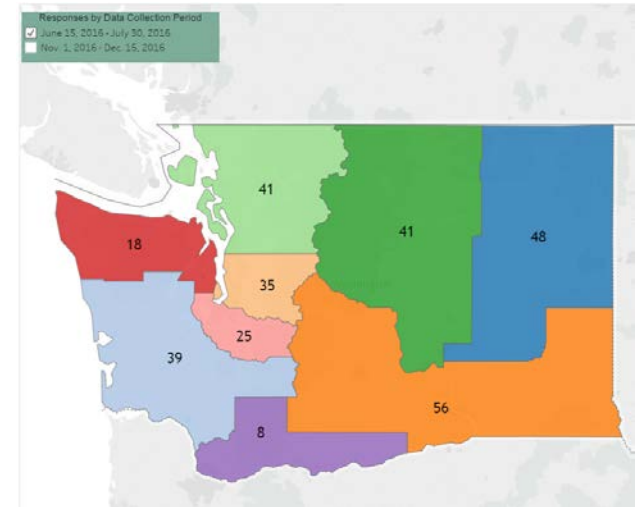
**RNs are the top occupation with exceptionally long vacancies recently reported by**

- Small acute care hospitals
- Home health care services

*By geography:*

**RNs were the top ranked occupation with exceptionally long vacancies**

- July 2016: in 7 of 9 Accountable Communities of Health (ACHs)
- Nov. 2016: in 9 of 9 ACHs
- April 2017: in 7 ACHs (2nd in Better Health Together and 3rd in Greater Columbia)
- Oct. 2017: in 4 ACHs (2nd or 3rd in 4 other ACHs)



# Washington State's Sentinels Report --

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## Registered Nurses

*Examples of reasons for RNs' exceptionally long vacancies:*

### RNs in Hospitals

- New grads looking for acute care wage and experience; workforce does not meet demand.
- Difficulty in recruitment for more rural areas; lack of experienced specialty nurses who wish to come to a rural area.
- Nights hard to fill.
- Too many open positions elsewhere and traveling companies are scooping up what is out there promising them almost \$100 an hour.

### Long Term Care (home health, skilled nursing, nursing and personal care)

- Not enough RN's for all the facilities and hospitals and a new regulation requiring skilled nursing facilities to have 24 hour RN coverage (SNF)
- Nursing homes are unattractive to potential candidates, low candidate pool, competition with local hospital (pay/environment) (NH)
- A local hospital opened over 100 RN positions. Severe impact on community. Not enough RNs to fill open positions.
- Lack of experienced RNs willing to work in this capacity (HH)
- Multiple new jobs being opened to RNs. (SNF)
- Wage compression from new minimum wage (SNF)

# Registered Nurses: Training Needs/Onboarding

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- *EHR training and responsibilities; new EMRs; HIT*
- *Knowledge of quality data tracking*
- *Customer service*
- *Behavioral training (multiple facility types)*
- *Dementia knowledge (SNF)*
- *Ongoing training to support nursing faculty in their roles as instructors (hospital)*
- *Root cause/SBAR/Assessments/Care plans (SNF)*
- *Investing in staff by offering more training (SNF)*
- *Address needs of workers with little prior experience (SNF)*
- *New grad nurses getting more orientation and training; we are spending more time with new employees during the onboarding/orientation process (SNF)*

# Demand for Registered Nurses

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## *Sentinel Network signals include:*

- *RNs are in high demand across healthcare sectors*
- *EHR/HIT related skills are among ongoing training needs*
- *Experience remains important to employers*
- *Nurses follow better salaries*

## **Next steps :**

- Engage more discussion with stakeholders
- Solutions – explore:
  - Turn up the education “spigot”?
  - Enhance skills/roles of incumbent RNs?
  - Focus on retention strategies?

# Washington State's Sentinels Report --

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## **Behavioral Health Occupations**

**Chemical dependency professionals (CDPs) and substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors**

*By facility type:*

**The combined occupations of chemical dependency professionals (CDPs) and substance abuse and behavioral disorder counselors were the top occupation with exceptionally long vacancies recently reported by:**

- Large hospitals
- Behavioral health clinics
- Psychiatric/ substance abuse hospitals

They were also among the top 10 occupations listed with long vacancies at FQHCs.

### **Examples of reasons for exceptionally long vacancies:**

- Low wages and difficult working conditions, increased client acuity, lack of qualified candidates.
- Integration with managed care means many new positions do not exclusively require CDP/ Substance Abuse skills and there has been a flood of new positions on the market, leading to a shortage.
- Many CDPs have obtained dual licensure and have opted to be employed under Mental Health due to higher pay in that area.
- Long licensing process, including supervision requirements.

# Sentinel Network Evaluation

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- Internal, led by Davis Patterson, UW CHWS
- Inquiries and feedback from gathered from users throughout implementation in 2016 and 2017
- An online evaluation questionnaire sent to Sentinel Network users August-September 2017

58 responses

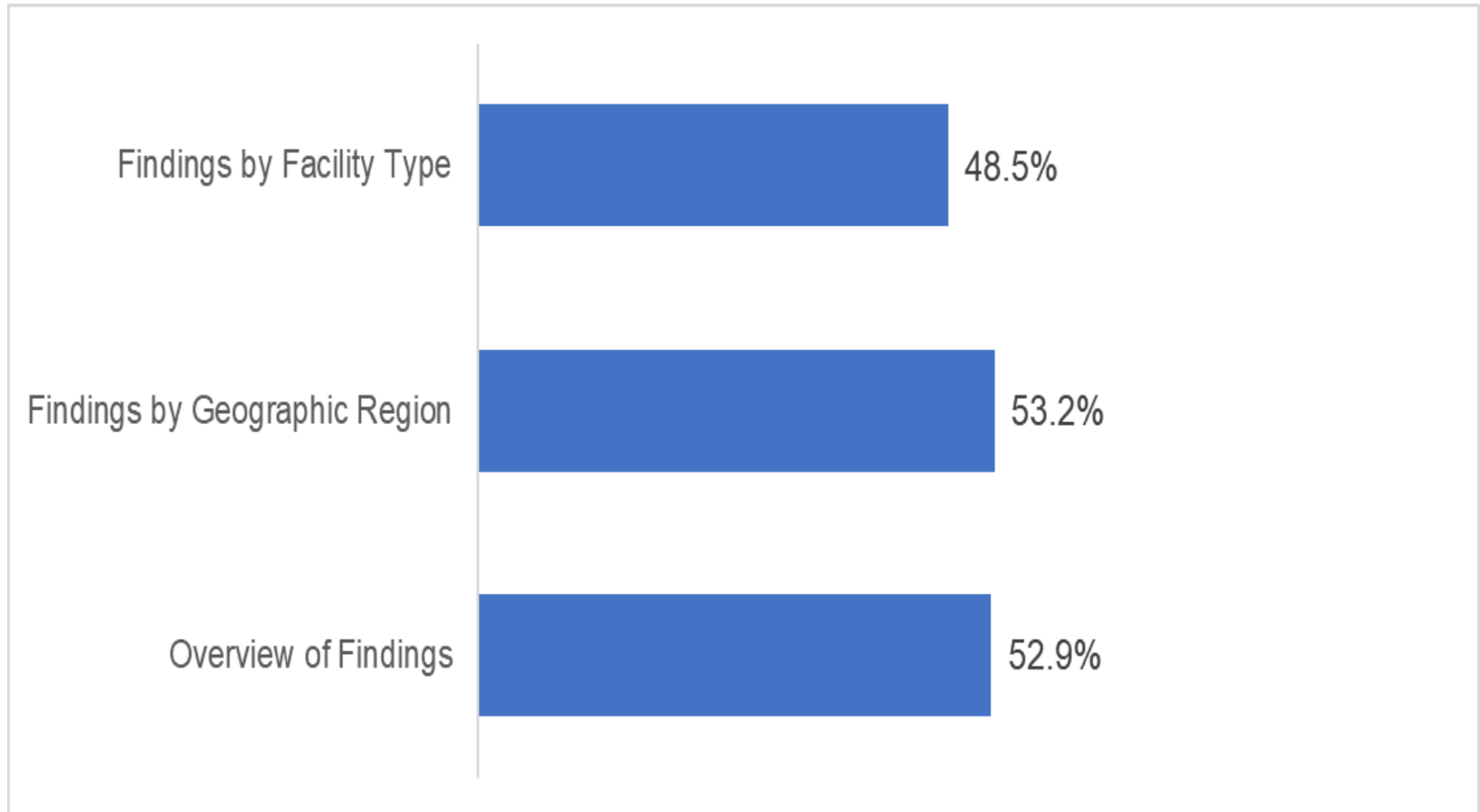
- health service delivery organizations (60.5%)
- education and training organizations (15.8%)
- government (13.2%)
- advocacy organizations (7.9%)
- professional organizations (7.9%)
- as well as a community-based organization, local public health, and a non-profit community agency



# Sentinel Network Evaluation

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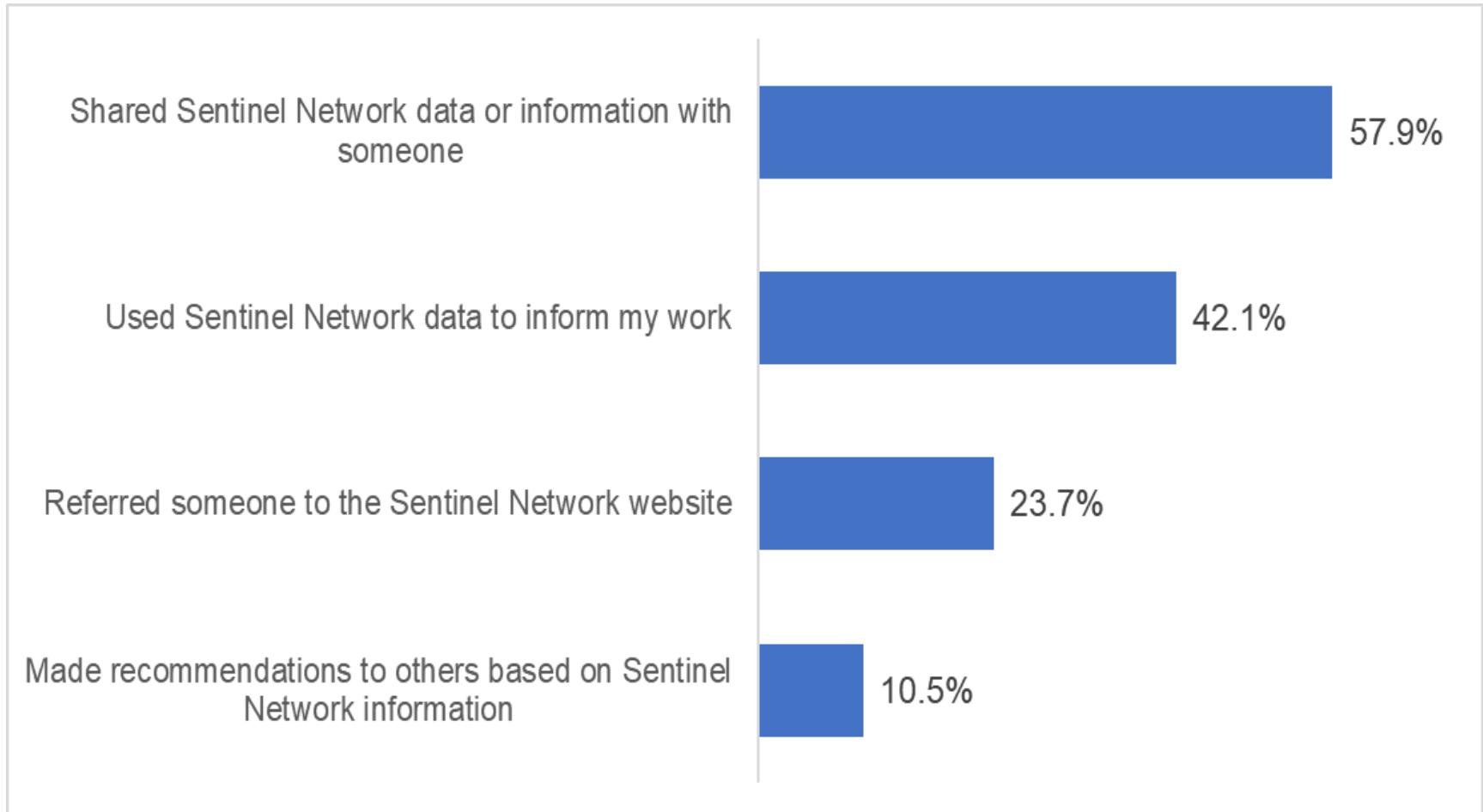
## Usefulness of Sentinel Network Findings: Percentage of Users Reporting that Findings Were “Very” or “Extremely Useful”



# Sentinel Network Evaluation

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## Sentinel Network Information Uses: Percentage of Users Reporting Each Type of Use



# Value of the Sentinel Network Approach

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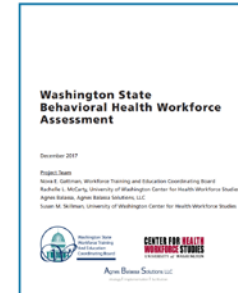
- Rapid turnaround signals of workforce demand changes
- Relatively inexpensive
- Provides “how and why” behind signals
- Identifies skills needed
- Highlights local conditions that may make hiring difficult
- Engages the full network of stakeholders needed to identify and solve workforce problems

# Use of Sentinel Network Findings: Examples

- Informed Washington State Behavioral Health Workforce Assessment

Gattman N, Reule R, Balassa A, Skillman SM, McCarty RL, Schwartz MR. Washington's Behavioral Health Workforce Assessment: Project Phase I. Fall. Washington State Workforce Training and Education Coordinating Board, Nov 2016.

<http://depts.washington.edu/fammed/chws/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2016/11/FINAL-BH-Workforce-Assessment-Phase-I-Report-2016.pdf>



- Reported in-depth by Washington Health Workforce Council

<http://www.wtb.wa.gov/Documents/2017HWCReport-FINAL.pdf>



- Accountable Communities of Health exploring SN use in monitoring health workforce demand in state healthcare transformation regions



- State Community College Health Programs Deans and Directors group engaged in interpreting findings



- HR Directors groups very interested in findings
- Being considered for use in other states

# Sentinel Network Phase II

Funded February 2018 through June 2019, in partnership with the Washington Workforce Board



Currently working with Washington's Health Workforce Council on improvements to increase effectiveness

## Considering:

- Additional formats to display findings
- Less frequent data collection
- Methods for greater engagement with response panel and stakeholders (to lead interpretation and dissemination of findings)
- More options for user interaction
- Possible customizable modules
- Long term sustainability plan

# Washington State's Health Workforce Sentinel Network

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[www.wasentinelnetwork.org](http://www.wasentinelnetwork.org)

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