

WASHINGTON POISON CENTER

An Independent Nonprofit Organization

2025

ANNUAL REPORT



Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we look back on our achievements and challenges in 2025, we are filled with immense gratitude. Every call we answered and every community member we reached was possible because of your trust in our work.

The past year continued to test our healthcare system. Hospitals were strained, healthcare costs kept rising, and communities faced complex substance crises. Through it all, **we remained an absolute constant**. Our promise to Washingtonians never wavered: we were **always there, always ready**, saving lives and reducing costs for everyone in our state.

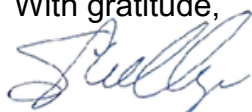
Every hour of every day, our team of toxicology nurses, pharmacists, and physicians provided immediate, expert, and empathetic care. As a vital triage service, our impact was clear.

- **We prevented unnecessary care:** We safely treated 93% of home callers at home, keeping thousands of patients out of crowded ERs and urgent care clinics.
- **We preserved overstretched emergency resources:** We helped people get the right level of care, keeping ambulances and ERs available for the most serious emergencies.
- **We saved significant healthcare costs:** Our services translated directly into \$76 million in healthcare savings and benefits for Washington families, insurers, and state budgets.
- **We delivered a powerful return on investment:** The healthcare savings from our services exceeded 10 times our annual operating budget, making Washington Poison Center an extremely efficient use of healthcare dollars.

Beyond financial savings, we measured our impact in healthier communities. **Washington Poison Center is a pillar of public safety**, preventing harm through community partnerships, public education, and trainings on emerging concerns. From tracking substances like kratom, to educating providers on nitrous oxide complications, to raising awareness about fentanyl overdose prevention, **we kept Washingtonians informed, empowered, and prepared**.

Thank you for standing with us, believing in our mission, and helping us keep Washington safe, healthy, and resilient.

With gratitude,



Scott Phillips, MD, FACP, FACMT, FAACT
Chief Executive Officer



Anita Mires
President, Board of Directors



About us

Washington Poison Center is your **nonprofit resource** on poison **prevention** and drug **safety**.

Our team of pharmacists, nurses, physicians, and public health professionals protects your health through:

24/7 Poison Helpline

Immediate, free, and confidential treatment advice in 200+ languages for poisonings, medication mistakes, and overdoses

Healthcare Professional Education

Training in managing toxic exposures across every stage of clinicians' careers, from internships and clinical rotations to continuing education

Public Health Education

Trainings, resources, and outreach to help people make safer, healthier choices

Data, Research, and Advocacy

Real-time monitoring of poisoning trends and expert support for public health leaders, clinicians, and policymakers

Call

1-800-222-1222

Text

206-526-2121

Visit

www.wapc.org



Our Mission

To prevent and reduce harm from poisoning through expertise, collaboration, and education

Our Vision

A region where poisoning and drug exposure is no longer the leading cause of unintentional death.

We eased panic with expert guidance, every minute of every day.

Whether it's a poisoning, overdose, medication mistake, or just a question, you can count on free, confidential, 24/7 support from medical professionals — no matter your insurance status, citizenship, or language.

We helped **65,473** people...



58,646 had a potential poisoning



6,287 had a question



...on **129,422** calls



includes follow-up calls for many patients

We answered the call within **14 seconds...**

and had an answer within **3 minutes.**



And, we safely kept **93% of people at home.**

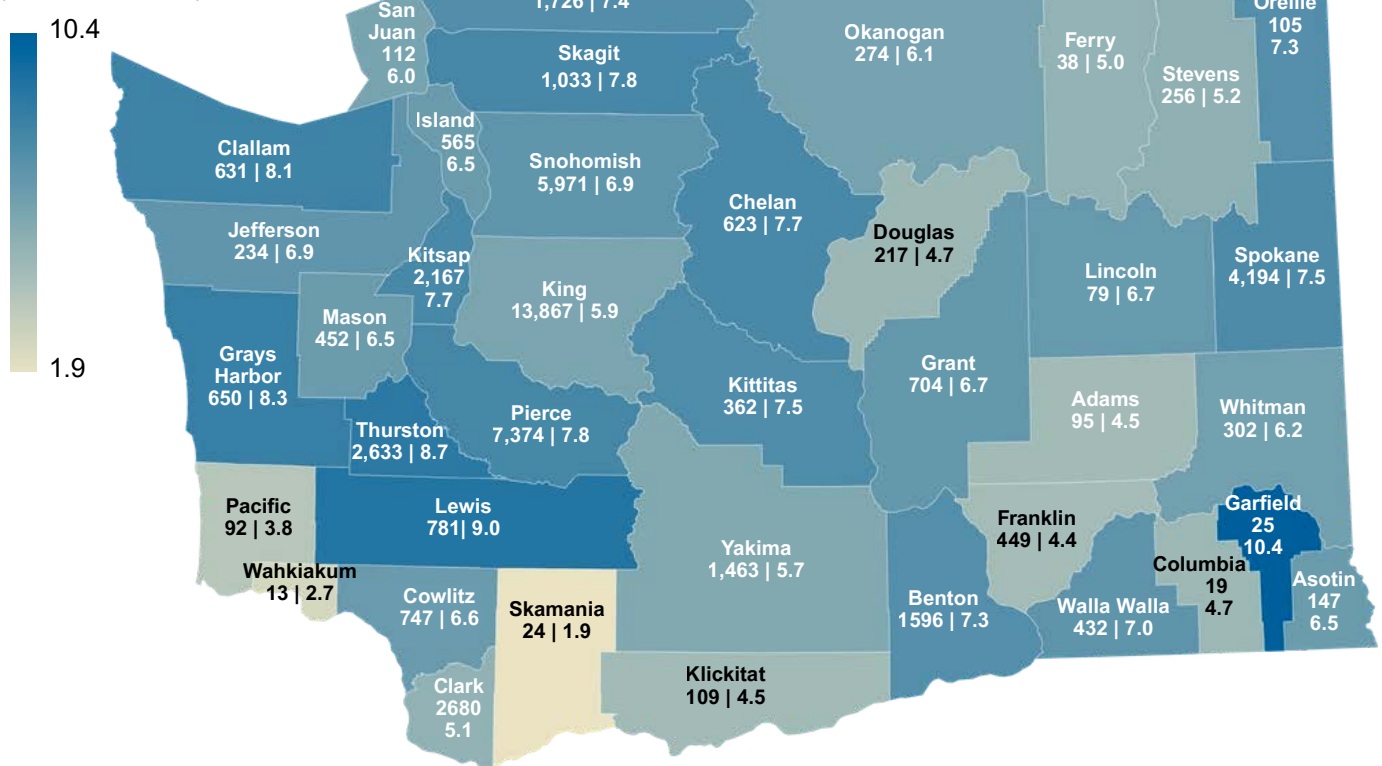
We helped people in every part of Washington state.

We are always there, always ready, no matter if you live in a big city, a small town, or down a rural road. **Our help is especially important for people who don't live near a hospital or healthcare facility.** Because we can keep 93% of people at home, many avoid hours on the road or a feeling of helpless panic.

This map shows the number of calls received per county in 2025, as well as each county's utilization rate (calculated as the number of exposures per 1,000 population).

UTILIZATION RATE:

(Exposures * 1000) / Population

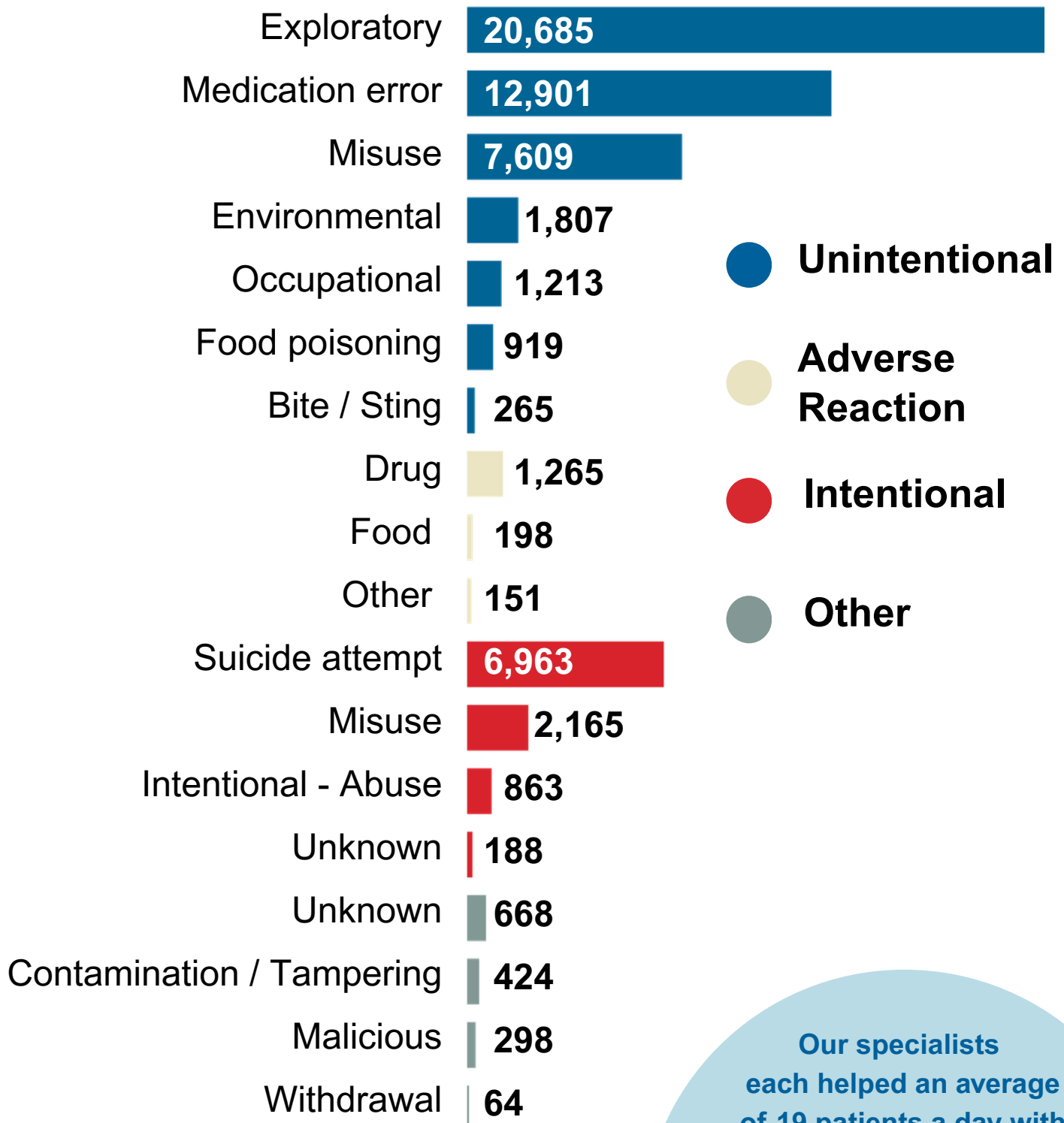


Please note: Clark, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties have significant issues with misrouted calls, with a substantial number of calls routed to the Oregon Poison Center instead of Washington Poison Center. Oregon Poison Center managed 1,530 exposure cases in Clark, 31 in Skamania, and 11 in Wahkiakum counties. Calls taken by Oregon are not represented in the above map. Due to call misrouting, we managed an additional 5,638 patients outside of Washington state that are not represented in the map.

“The Poison Center is essential and the staff is amazing! People in outlying areas with extremely limited access to medical care depend on them - they are a lifeline.”

- Helpline caller

We helped people through accidents and intentional exposures.

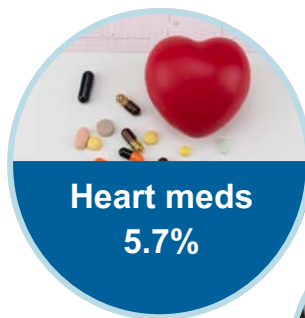


Our specialists
each helped an average
of 19 patients a day with
suicidal poisonings.

We consulted on 73,433 substances.

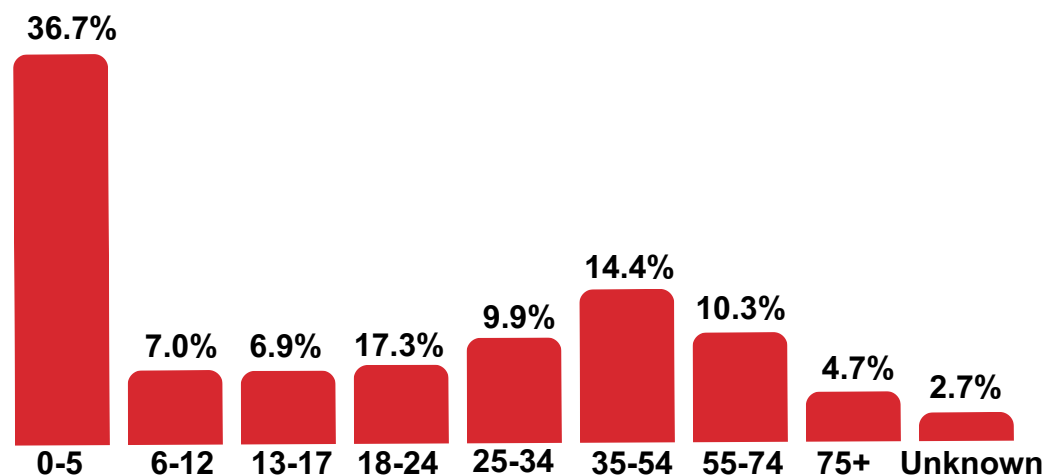
Our poison specialists assess exposures to hundreds of products and toxins every day. Many times, they evaluate complicated situations involving more than one substance at a time.

These **five most common substance groups** affected 34% of patients.



We helped people of all ages.

Poison exposure patients by age



We helped navigate common challenges faced at every age.

More than **one-third** of our patients were **newborn to 5 years old**.

The most common substance groups were:

- Pain medications (like ibuprofen and acetaminophen)
- Cosmetics/personal care products
- Household cleaners

*“Thank you so so so much for what you do!
My husband and I thought we overdosed our
baby on acetaminophen but turns out it was a
false alarm! Saved us a trip to the ER!”*

- Helpline caller

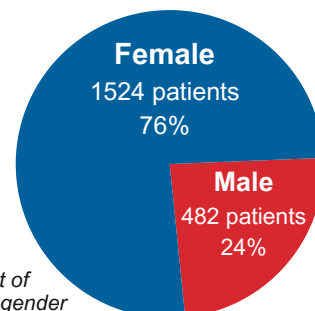


One-half of our **teen** patients were treated for **suspected suicide**.

We treated **2,007 teens aged 14-18 years** for suspected suicide and self-harm. Most of these patients (76%) were **female**.

Teens comprised **29%** of all suspected suicide and self-harm patients (**6,963 people**).

Teens aged 14-18 years treated for suspected suicide/self harm by gender



*One patient of other/unknown gender





Medication mistakes were the main reason older adults called us for help.

Of the 5,679 older adults (65+) we assisted, **3026 made a mistake or had a medication mix-up (53%)**. Our pharmacists, nurses, and doctors are specially trained to quickly assess potential dangers, interactions, and effects of mistakes with multiple medications.

The top 5 medication errors were:

- Inadvertently took twice
- Wrong medication
- Incorrect dose
- Took someone else's medicine
- Dosed too close together

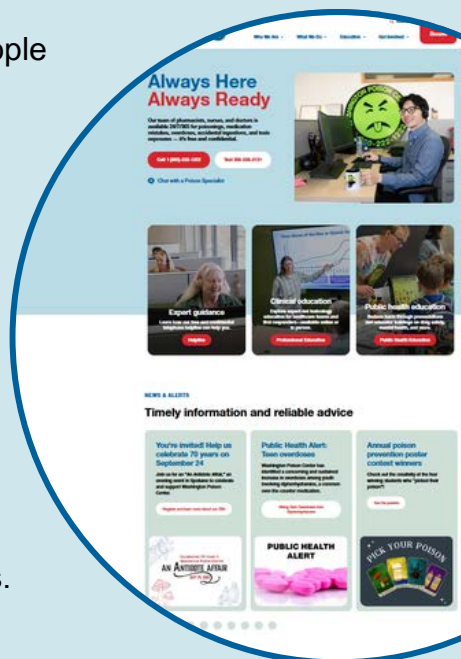
Poison help is now more accessible than ever.

In March 2025, we launched **text and online chat services**, giving people more ways to connect with us in a way that works for them.

In December, we unveiled a **new website with user-friendly interface design** and navigation to help visitors find the information they're looking for quickly and easily.

We also added a library of resources and facts on common poisons and made it easier to order safety materials for homes, classrooms, and health facilities.

These improvements **reflect the growing preference for digital communication** and **increase accessibility** for people with disabilities.



Helpline Highlight:

When collaboration counts

One morning, we received a call from a consulting nurse about Joseph, an 82-year-old man* who had accidentally taken an old blood pressure medication instead of his current prescription. He was experiencing dizziness, a headache, and trouble breathing.

The nurse transferred Joseph to our Poison Helpline, where Kelly, a pharmacist and Certified Specialist in Poison Information, calmly talked with him about his symptoms and possible risks.

Joseph lived alone, and because he didn't have a blood pressure monitor at home, Kelly asked him to call 911 so medics could check him out. When the medics arrived, they consulted with Kelly so that, together, they could determine the best next steps.

Fortunately, Joseph's vitals were stable, and they suspected he was dealing with the flu instead of a medication emergency. After some rest and fluids, he began to feel better.

The next day, Kelly called Joseph to check in. Grateful, he said,
"I don't know what I would have done if you all hadn't taken such good care of me!"



Stories like Joseph's highlight how we collaborate with healthcare professionals and first responders every day to ensure the best care for our patients.

Together, we are committed to keeping all Washingtonians safe and healthy!

**Share your own experience at
wapc.org/share-your-story**

**identifying details changed
to maintain confidentiality*

We provided \$76 million in healthcare savings and benefits.

We safely **kept 93%** of **callers at home**.

When people call us first instead of going to the ED, urgent care, or their physician, we can usually treat them at home. This **saves healthcare costs and avoids insurance claims**. It also spares the time and stress of unnecessary medical visits.

We **improved efficiency** and patient **outcomes** for **hospitals**.

When patients are in a healthcare facility, we provide expert guidance to physicians, 24/7/365, that **reduces admissions, shortens length of stay, and improves patient outcomes**.

Each dollar invested in Washington Poison Center **returns \$12** in benefits.

\$1 = \$12
dollars spent dollars saved



We are more than just a helpline.

Our team of **public health educators** provide trainings, resources, and outreach to help people make safer, healthier choices. They also engage with the community, educate caretakers, and distribute safety materials to prevent poisonings and accidents before they happen. They reached 12,414 people in 2025 – over 1,000 more than the previous year!



We reached **12,414 people** across the state with poisoning prevention lessons and resources at **185 public events.**

240,000 Mr. Yuk stickers made it into homes, schools, and healthcare facilities all over Washington.

We educated **4,360 clinicians** through **38 sessions.** We also visited **77 hospitals** across Washington.

"I just want to give kudos to Alex. He's come to Eastlake twice to present to us about Naloxone and Opioid use. Each year, the presentation is received with very positive comments from the teachers and staff that are able to attend."

Alex is engaging with his presentation, and creates an environment where we all feel comfortable to learn and ask questions about a potentially sensitive topic."



- Lowell Thomson, Eastlake High School

Education Highlight:

Understanding barriers for Spanish-speaking communities

We strive to make our services accessible to everyone. While we offer free interpretation in more than 200 languages, a significant gap remains: roughly 8% of people in Washington have Limited English Proficiency (LEP), but only 0.23% of our 2025 patients requested interpretation.

To bridge this gap, we partnered with the Oregon Poison Center on a research study. We focused specifically on Spanish speakers, as Spanish is the most widely spoken language after English in both states. Together, we hosted eight community listening sessions with 92 Spanish-speaking residents across urban and rural Washington and Oregon.

Key insights:

Our participants shared that while they are highly willing to use a poison center, significant barriers exist:

- Most were **unaware that poison centers exist**, making them **more likely to call 911** out of familiarity.
- Many worried that **language barriers would delay their care**.
- Participants emphasized the **critical need for poison center education** in their communities

Next steps:

As a result of these findings, we made changes:

- Added an option to our phone tree to request Spanish interpretation
- Began dedicated bilingual outreach
- Translated more educational materials into Spanish

These changes are only the beginning. This study also provided the data we need to secure funding to improve our bilingual services for our communities. We are excited for the work ahead!



“If I had known about this number, it would have saved me from paying a thousand dollars at the emergency room.”

- Listening session participant



Meet our team

We are a team of pharmacists, nurses, physicians, educators, and professionals dedicated to protecting the health of our communities. Our 24/7 Helpline staff are medical professionals who receive extensive training in toxicology and poison information. They ease panic and provide empathetic and expert guidance when every second counts.

Our public health educators work in community spaces, healthcare settings, and schools to prevent poisonings and overdoses before they happen. Together, we combine expertise, education, and compassion to keep Washington families safe and supported.

Call Center Poison Specialists

Aaron, PharmD, CSPI
Amanda, RPh, CSPI
Amen, PharmD, CSPI
Chris, PharmD, CSPI
Curtis, PharmD, CSPI
David D., PharmD, CPSI
David S., PIP

Devin, PharmD, CSPI
Gordon, PharmD, CSPI
Kelsey, PharmD, CSPI
Jenna, PharmD, CSPI
Jessi, PharmD, CSPI
Joan, RN, CSPI
Katie, PharmD, CSPI

Kelly, PharmD, CSPI
Kiana, PharmD, CSPI
Lorelei, MD, CSPI
Marlo, PharmD, CSPI
Noemi, RPh, CSPI
Trent, PharmD, CSPI
Van, PharmD, CSPI

"The staff member I spoke with was incredibly calm and helped me calm down. They helped me evaluate the situation and determine a good plan of action with what to look for and when to get more help. I felt assured from my interaction with the WAPC staff - thank you!"

-Helpline Caller

Welcome, Colleen Cowdery, MD

In 2025, we welcomed Dr. Colleen Cowdery as Chief Medical Officer. A board-certified emergency physician and board-eligible medical toxicologist, Dr. Cowdery provides medical leadership and oversight for our clinical team. She also educates healthcare professionals and first responders, supporting better patient outcomes and emergency response. Dr. Cowdery trained in emergency medicine at the University of Florida and completed a fellowship in medical toxicology at the Oregon Health and Science University. She has researched, published, and lectured extensively on toxicology and emergency medicine topics, particularly toxins unique to our region. Her experience and leadership strengthen our expertise and our delivery of excellent service to our communities.



Executive Leadership

Scott Phillips, MD, FACP, FACMT, FAACT
Chief Executive Officer

John Churchill
Chief Information Officer

Colleen Cowdery, MD
Chief Medical Officer

Meghan King, MPH
Chief Engagement & Communications
Officer

Jimmy Leonard, PharmD, DABAT
Chief Clinical Officer

Michele Meaker, MPA
Chief Development Officer

Sierra Ranier, DBA, MBA, MA, SHRM-SCP
Chief Financial and Operations Officer



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Safety and Emergency Preparedness Coordinator, The Museum of Flight

Stacy Tarango, MD

Spokane Emergency Physician, Providence Sacred Heart Children's Hospital

Joseph Wubbold III

Captain, US Coast Guard (Retired)

Tammy York, MHA, BSN, CP

Director of Ambulatory System and Operations, Seattle Children's

NON-VOTING MEMBERS

Scott Hogan, MHA

Retired

Nate Weed, MPH

Chief of Resiliency and Health Security, Department of Health

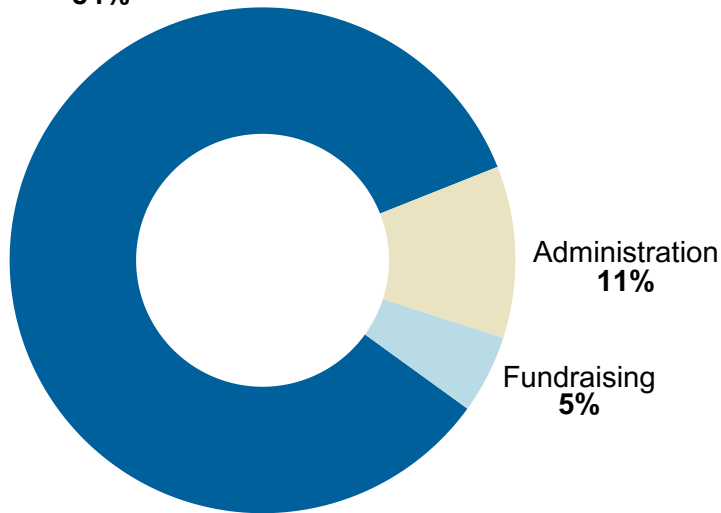


Financials

Fiscal year 2025 (July 1, 2024 - June 30, 2025)

Allocation of Expenses

Program Services
84%



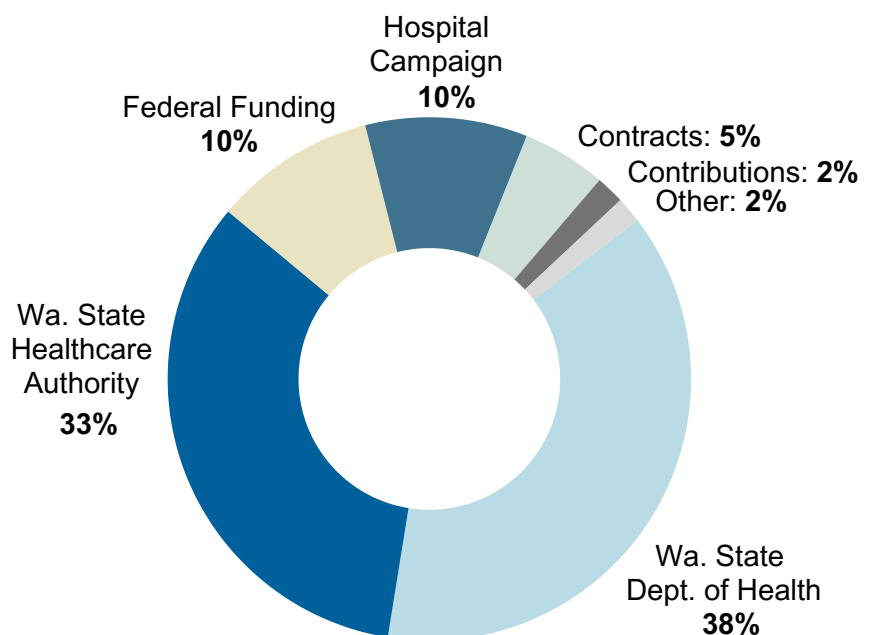
Program Services:	\$5,184,297
Administration:	\$682,886
Fundraising:	\$334,257

Total expenses \$6,201,440

Public Support and Revenue

Washington State Dept. of Health	\$2,199,970
Washington State Health Care Authority	\$1,944,007
Federal Funding	\$580,949
Hospital Campaign Contributions	\$592,594
Contracts	\$301,425
Grants/Private Contributions	\$102,337
Other	\$92,774

Total revenue \$5,814,056





Supporting patients together: Partnership in Healthcare Campaign

Nearly one-third of our calls are with healthcare professionals – primarily hospital staff. Since none of the hospitals in the state have a dedicated toxicology service, **we are an extended part of their care team**. We consult with physicians and nurses, 24/7, providing treatment guidance and following through until they are resolved.

Washington hospitals have invested in our services by contributing to our Partnership in Healthcare Campaign since 1999. Their contribution is based on the number of patient cases Washington Poison Center has consulted on. **We extend our our gratitude for their support and their collaboration in delivering excellent patient care.**

Arbor Health - Morton Hospital

AstriaHeath

- Astria Sunnyside Hospital
- Astria - Toppenish Hospital

Cascade Medical

Confluence Health

- Confluence Health Central Campus
- Confluence Health Mares Campus

East Adams Rural Healthcare

EvergreenHealth

- EvergreenHealth Medical Center
- EvergreenHealth Monroe
- EvergreenHealth Redmond

Forks Community Hospital

Garfield County Hospital District

Island Health

Kittitas Valley Healthcare

Lincoln Hospital

Mid Valley Hospital

Multicare

- MultiCare Allenmore Hospital
- MultiCare Auburn Medical Center
- MultiCare Bonny Lake Emergency
- MultiCare Capital Medical Center
- MultiCare Covington Medical Center
- MultiCare Deaconess Hospital
- MultiCare Deaconess North Emergency
- MultiCare Federal Way Tacoma General
- MultiCare Good Samaritan ER Parkland
- MultiCare Good Samaritan Hospital
- MultiCare Lacey Emergency Center
- MultiCare Mary Bridge Children's
- MultiCare South Hill Emergency
- MultiCare Tacoma General Hospital
- MultiCare Valley Hospital
- MultiCare Yakima Memorial

Partnership in Healthcare Campaign , continued

Olympic Medical Center

Othello Community Hospital

Overlake Medical Center

Peace Health

- PeaceHealth Peace Island Medical
- PeaceHealth St. Joseph Medical Center
- PeaceHealth United General Medical Center
- PeaceHealth St. John Medical Center
- PeaceHealth Southwest Medical Center

Prosser Memorial Health

Providence

- Providence INWA - Holy Family Hospital
- Providence INWA - Mount Carmel Hospital
- Providence INWA - Sacred Heart Med Ctr &
- Providence INWA - St. Joseph Hospital
- Providence NPS - Regional Medical Center Everett
- Providence NPS - Swedish Edmonds
- Providence NPS - Swedish Mill Creek

Providence Swedish

- Swedish Ballard
- Swedish Cherry Hill
- Swedish First Hill
- Swedish Issaquah
- Swedish Redmond
- Providence Centralia Hospital
- Providence St. Peter Hospital

Quincy Valley Medical Center

Samaritan

Skagit Regional Health

Cascade Valley Hospital

Skagit Valley Hospital

Summit Pacific

Three Rivers Hospital

TriState Health

Valley Medical Center

Virginia Mason Franciscan Health

- Virginia Mason Franciscan Health Urgent Cares
- St. Anne Medical Center
- St. Anthony Hospital
- St. Clare Hospital
- St. Elizabeth Hospital
- St. Francis Hospital
- St. Joseph Medical Center
- St. Michael Medical Center
- Virginia Mason Medical Center

Whitman Hospital & Medical Clinics

Willapa Harbor Hospital



"Washington Poison Center is an integral part of our team in the pediatric emergency department at Mary Bridge, even though they are not located within our department."

The poison center provides essential support for the frequent cases of poisonings and ingestions we see. No question is too big or too small, and they are always ready to help."

- Derek Tam, MD, MPH
Pediatric Emergency Physician,
Mary Bridge Children's Hospital

Our community of supporters makes this vital work possible.



We extend deep gratitude to the individuals, foundations, hospitals and companies that have invested their trust and resources in us to protect the health and safety of our communities in FY25 (July 1- June 30, 2025).

During these times of tenuous public funding, the support we receive from donors, funders, and sponsors is more precious than ever.

Corporate and Foundation Supporters

Glaser Foundation
The Norcliffe Foundation
North Sound Emergency Medicine
North Tacoma Pediatrics
Puget Sound Mycological Society
William E. Wockner Foundation

Get involved and stay connected!

Get active in supporting the health and safety of our state! Join the Washington Poison Center community and strengthen our work by [contributing](#), [volunteering](#), or [sponsoring](#). Keep safe and up-to-date by [joining our email list](#).

Sign up



Volunteer



Contribute

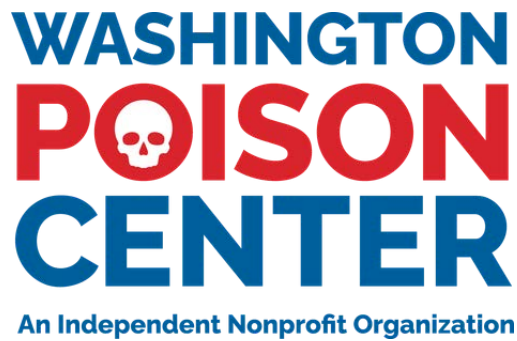


Sponsor



“We could not do this work without you – our donors, funders, volunteers, advocates and friends. Together, we make an impact. We are deeply grateful for your partnership and your vital role in protecting the health and safety of our communities.”

– Dr. Scott Phillips, CEO



Always here. Always ready.

Call for poison help 24/7/365
1-800-222-1222

Text
206-526-2121

Chat
wapc.org

155 NE 100th St. Suite 100
Seattle, WA 98125
Office: 206-517-2350
www.wapc.org



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