



## NEWS RELEASE

# Virginia Mason Announces Collaboration With Vera Whole Health

*Virginia Mason and Vera Whole Health work together to bring clinical best practices and improved patient experience to employer-funded primary care clinics*

**SEATTLE – (Jan. 20, 2014)** – Virginia Mason and Vera Whole Health today announced a strategic collaboration that brings Virginia Mason’s clinical best practices to Vera Whole Health’s employer-funded primary care clinics.

Seattle-based Vera Whole Health offers onsite and near-site health care to employers in the Pacific Northwest, including primary care, urgent care and health coaching. Its teams of physicians, nurse practitioners, medical assistants and health coaches work with patients to identify and address underlying issues that impact their health. Instead of waiting until people get sick to treat them, Vera Whole Health’s goal is to help people establish healthy lifestyles and take preventive measures to avoid chronic illness, which ultimately leads to reduced total cost of care.

Vera Whole Health providers will utilize evidence-based criteria devised by Virginia Mason physicians to inform their diagnoses, and refer patients to appropriate specialty care, providing each patient with access to the right care in the right place to best meet their needs.

“This is an exceptionally good fit for both organizations since we share a vision of providing high quality care while removing waste and inefficiency from care delivery,” said Virginia Mason Chairman and CEO Gary S. Kaplan, MD. “Our ultimate goal is to provide the most efficient and cost-effective way to deliver all the care people need and only the care they need.”

To optimize its use of Virginia Mason’s clinical best practices, Vera Whole Health teams will be trained in the Virginia Mason management method at the Virginia Mason Institute. The method emphasizes continual process improvement, teaching providers how to identify and eliminate waste and inefficiency from the health care experience. As a result, providers are able to deliver the highest quality and safest patient care.

“We are thrilled to be working with such a high-caliber national health care leader,” said Vera Whole Health CEO Ryan Schmid. “Like Virginia Mason, our focus is providing appropriate patient-centered care and keeping people well. By coming together, we hope to take our collective best practices to deliver the best care in the world to people in the workplace.”

Employers across the country are looking for effective solutions to keep employees healthy and manage rising medical costs. According to human resources firm Mercer, more than 30 percent of U.S. companies with 500 or more employees are using onsite/near-site health models such as Vera Whole Health – and more are integrating the model every day. Vera Whole Health has its largest on-site clinic installed at Seattle Children’s Hospital and has several additional clinic openings planned for this year.

### **About Virginia Mason**

Virginia Mason, founded in 1920, is a nonprofit regional health care system in Seattle that serves the Pacific Northwest. Virginia Mason employs approximately 6,000 people and includes a 336-bed acute-care hospital; a primary and specialty care group practice of more than 460 physicians; and satellite locations throughout the Puget Sound area. Virginia Mason was the first health system to apply lean manufacturing principles to health care delivery to eliminate waste and improve quality and patient safety.

Virginia Mason owns and operates Bailey-Boushay House, the first skilled-nursing and outpatient chronic care management program in the U.S. designed and built specifically to meet the needs of people with HIV/AIDS. Internationally recognized for its breakthrough autoimmune disease research, scientists at Benaroya Research Institute at Virginia Mason have realized major advances against more than 80 autoimmune diseases. Virginia Mason online:

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

### **About Vera Whole Health**

Vera Whole Health is a Seattle-based worksite health care provider and industry leader in personal health and behavior change. Specializing in primary, preventive, urgent and wellness care, Vera helps clients reduce health care costs and improve the health and well-being of employees and their families. Visit [verawholehealth.com](http://verawholehealth.com) for more information or follow [@VeraWholeHealth](https://twitter.com/VeraWholeHealth) on Twitter.

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