

## Remarks on Accepting the Lifetime Achievement Award

Karin Dufault, SP  
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Thank you so much for this very special honor. I am really humbled by this peer recognition, especially as I look around the room and see so many who have mentored and influenced me and who are so deserving. I wish I could name you all, but I was only given five minutes to speak and it would take much longer than that. You know who you are. I never considered myself old enough to receive a lifetime achievement award. I am not retired yet!!

Wherever one serves in health care and in whatever roles, collaboration in service of others is *the* way to get the best outcomes. Health care is a team sport, and I have been blessed to minister with amazing teams, including so many of you!

I accept this honor on behalf of the Sisters of Providence, to whom I owe the privilege of serving in the health-care ministry for so many years -- at the bedside, in administrative council rooms and in boardrooms in our own health system and those of other Catholic health systems, as well as the Washington State Hospital Association. I also accept it on behalf of Providence Health & Services, which has provided me with so many ministry opportunities and supported me in ministries within and outside the system.

I admit that once a nurse always a nurse, and in my case a sister-nurse, so that is the lens through which I have looked: how are we impacting the individual patient and the community? Do we know them, do we care for them, and are we easing their way, as the vision statement of Providence & Health and Services states? In all our ministries, the relationships with the people served and with colleagues have been the greatest of blessings for me personally.

I thank all of you for what you and your organizations are doing to assure that everyone, especially the most vulnerable, has access to the safe, effective and affordable health care that meets their needs. I also commend you for the community benefit and community health initiatives that are addressing the underlying causes of illness and promoting health within populations of people. We have heard so many of these stories tonight.

Washington has been a health-care leader nationally and I am always proud to say I am from Washington State. Imagine my surprise watching PBS from our home in Montreal on December 26 and seeing Judy Woodruff speak about the 6.4 million people who signed up for health insurance plans through the Affordable Care Act thus far during the enrollment period, and the 9 million-plus who have gotten covered by Medicaid recently. Then she turned to Sarah Varney of Kaiser Health News to tell the Washington State story of expanding the federal-state program for the poor and those with disabilities. It was a great story of a 34-year-old man becoming qualified for Apple Health in the South Seattle clinic and receiving his first insured primary-care checkup since becoming an adult. Did you see it?

Washington State also stepped up in 2005 to provide full-scope medical coverage for all children in families under the federal poverty level, regardless of immigration status. Washington State cares about healthy communities, about people in community!

I also appreciate that Washington State has been a leader in palliative care and hospice care in multiple settings, including long-term care. Your experts join together to provide an interdisciplinary team approach to symptom management, with attentiveness to physical, psychological and spiritual needs of patients *and families*. Patients and family are team members. Such tender care and accompaniment is certainly needed during this age, when some mistakenly think life isn't worth living and nothing can be done once cure is no longer possible.

I encourage you all to continue your good and important work. Health care is indeed complex and challenging in so many ways today. The people of Washington and the nation need you as people who bring not only your competency, but also your heart. They need you to have solid values of respect, justice, compassion and community, as well as excellence, to guide your deliberations and actions. Through your service, you bring hope and healing for which our world hungers.

Thank you again for this honor and for the privilege of being with you tonight. Thank you especially to those who nominated me and to all of you who have influenced my life. I pray that God bless everyone here and your families, and provide you with all the guidance and wisdom you need to use your gifts in serving others well. Peace be to you!