

# 2021 Annual Report

A better future for the communities we serve



Kaiser Permanente Washington  
Health Research Institute

## A better future for the communities we serve

In 2021, Kaiser Permanente Washington Health Research Institute partnered with researchers, health systems, and communities to help improve health care and address health inequities. Institute highlights this year included a major new grant for our groundbreaking Adult Changes in Thought study that will broaden diversify of study participants and research areas to prevent dementia. We also launched the new Center for Accelerating Care Transformation, increasing our ability to partner with patients, care teams, health systems, funders, and communities to accelerate the provision of equitable, whole-person health care. One example this year that demonstrated KPWHRI-led research being put into action is all KPWA primary care clinics adding Community Resource Specialist roles, which connect KPWA members to community-based resources for social needs. All of these contributions to innovating health and healthcare would not be possible without our team of 314 talented, passionate, and perseverant investigators and staff.

## Research highlights

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Throughout the year, we conducted groundbreaking work on COVID vaccines to help the world keep up with the ever-evolving pandemic. We shared new suicide prevention research on firearms to encourage clinicians to start conversations about safety when patients are at risk of suicide. Our research also offered new evidence on using cognitive behavioral therapy to reduce chronic pain for people who are taking long-term opioids, and much more. All together our researchers published 300 articles in peer-reviewed journals, 72 of which were led by institute investigators. Here are some of our research highlights that made headlines in 2021:

### COVID-19 vaccine research

In 2021, we continued to be at the forefront of vaccine research. Our vaccine scientists were part of a [study](#) that found the Moderna vaccine offered protection against Delta and other variants 6 months after vaccination. KPWHRI was also part of a clinical trial exploring mixing different vaccines and boosters.

### Increasing health care access

The COVID-19 pandemic has fundamentally changed how many of us access health care services. Our researchers worked with the [Breast Cancer Surveillance Consortium](#) to learn [what concerned people most](#) about returning for breast cancer screening, providing insights to help mammogram clinics [adopt safety measures and expand access](#).

### Advancing health equity

A KPWHRI-led study also took a close look at [prediction models](#) that use health record data to identify people at high risk of suicide, finding that models that work well in a general population sample can perform poorly in some racial and ethnic groups.

## Improving breast cancer screening, diagnosis

A study led by KPWHRI collaborators found that race, income, and education may affect [access to 3D mammography](#) — technology that can improve breast cancer detection rates and decrease false alarms.

## New evidence about dementia prevention, intervention, and care

The [Adult Changes in Thought \(ACT\)](#) study released major findings this year, including about associations between dementia risk and fine-particle [air pollution](#), specific [medications for high blood pressure](#), [hearing loss](#), and [cataract surgery](#).

## Preventing suicide

This year, a Kaiser Permanente Firearm Injury Prevention Task Force [study](#) found that patients will answer a question about their firearm access during clinic visits. Asking about the availability of firearms could help clinicians start conversations about safely storing them when patients are at risk of suicide.

## Improving care for cardiovascular disease

A [study](#) conducted under real-world clinical conditions uncovered the obstacles faced by smaller practices when integrating cardiovascular disease risk calculators into primary care. Researchers have now mapped all 13 barriers to inform the adoption of health service innovations.

## Understanding bariatric surgery, weight gain

[New research](#) found that bariatric (weight-loss) surgery may help people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and obesity live longer — a finding that challenges earlier studies linking obesity to better survival among people with CKD (known as the “obesity paradox”).

## Managing chronic pain

A KPWHRI [study](#) showed that a program of cognitive behavioral therapy that includes yoga-based movement reduces pain and disability for people with chronic pain who are taking long-term opioids. What’s more, primary care team members can provide the CBT program at their clinics.

## Sharing physician notes with patients

A federal rule began requiring doctors to provide patients with access to their online notes. For doctors concerned about this change, a [KPWHRI study](#) provided reassurance, finding that doctors’ fears about allowing their patients to see notes in their electronic health record diminished after first-hand experience with such access.

## Video: Top 10 research highlights in 2021



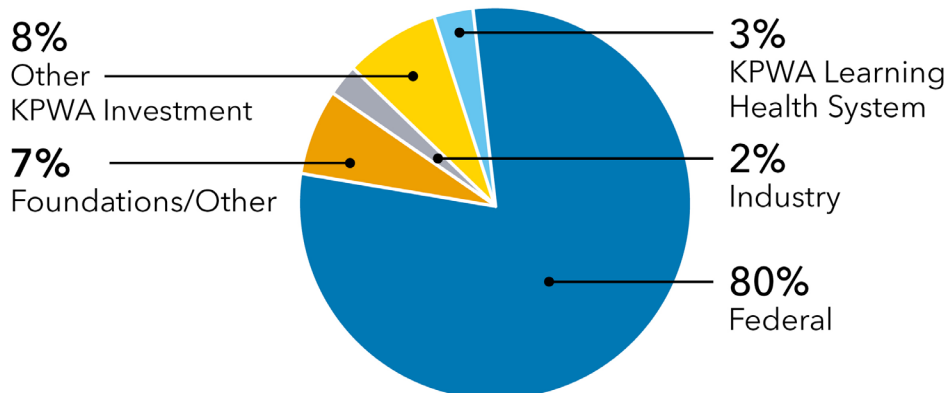
From vaccines to health equity, watch our [video](#) highlighting the research stories that made headlines in 2021.

## Finances

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KPWHRI expanded its operating budget in 2021, reaching more than \$63.5 million. Federal grant and contract revenue totaled \$57.1 million and other sponsored revenue was more than \$9 million. Our number of active grants stood at about 338.

### 2021 Revenue by sponsor (% of total)

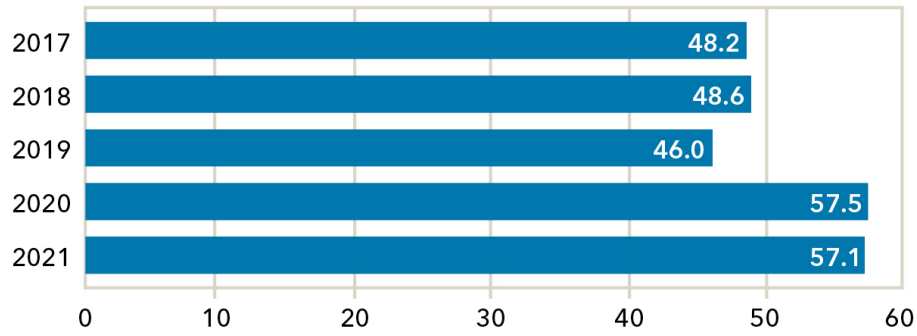


## Financial statement

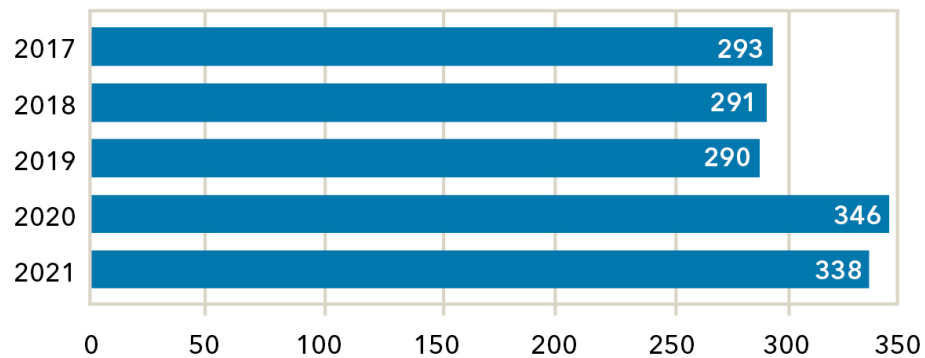
### Revenue

Federal grant and contract revenue .....	\$51.2 million
Other sponsored revenue.....	\$5.9 million
Kaiser Permanente support.....	\$7.0 million
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Total revenues.....	\$64.1 million
<b>Net gain/loss.....</b>	<b>\$0</b>

### Grant and contract revenue (in millions per year)



### Number of active grants and contracts



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