

UW Health Innovation Challenge

Buerk Center for Entrepreneurship, Foster School of Business

Innovations in health and healthcare that promote, impact, and monitor health are creating a paradigm shift in our approach to healthy living. In the United States, healthcare has entered a period of unprecedented change with the Affordable Care Act and the “triple aim,” the emphasis on care that is safer, more efficient, and more accessible. Worldwide, the goal is clear: a healthier future that revolves around reducing infectious and noncommunicable disease, increasing the safety of care, lowering the cost of health care delivery, expanding access, and introducing technologies that bring greater health and wellness to the populous.

The common thread is INNOVATION, and this new **UW Health Innovation Challenge (HIC)** will build on the strengths of the University of Washington to provide a platform for interdisciplinary student teams to work on new solutions to existing problems, new approaches to helping people live healthier lives, new opportunities for care and treatment, new products/services to market. Challenges spark creativity, design thinking, novel solutions, and the potential for new companies. This challenge, much like the Buerk Center’s well-regarded Alaska Airlines Environmental Innovation Challenge, is designed for those students who are passionate about health innovation and are determined to make a difference.

This new Health Innovation Challenge will:

- Launch with **a new class**, ENTRE 579/490 Health Innovation Practicum in fall quarter 2015, which will teach the mechanics of taking a promising healthcare solution from inception to commercialization. Topics will revolve around the big problem areas, biodesign processes, and the health innovation pipeline, including issues related to intellectual property, company formation, healthcare markets and reimbursement, and the medical regulatory process. Instructor: Sam Browd (UW Medicine, Children’s Hospital, serial entrepreneur), with Emer Dooley (Foster School of Business)
- Provide small amounts of **prototype/working model/care pathway funding** to student teams in the challenge. While poster sessions are great for conveying research ideas, designing and building a prototype or working model moves the concept closer to the real world.
- Enlist health industry and product design experts as **coaches and mentors** to the student teams to provide technical expertise and advice.
- Require that teams write a 5- to 7-page **business summary** that delineates the problem, solution, the market potential, competition, the IP landscape, and the initial financials.
- Culminate with the **CHALLENGE in March 2016**, when students pitch their ideas, demo their prototypes, and respond to judge questions.

The Buerk Center is in the process of partnering with the UW College of Engineering, the School of Medicine, the Department of Global Health, Department of Bioengineering, CoMotion, and other departments across campus to promote the challenge to a broad group of students, from undergraduates to PhD students.