



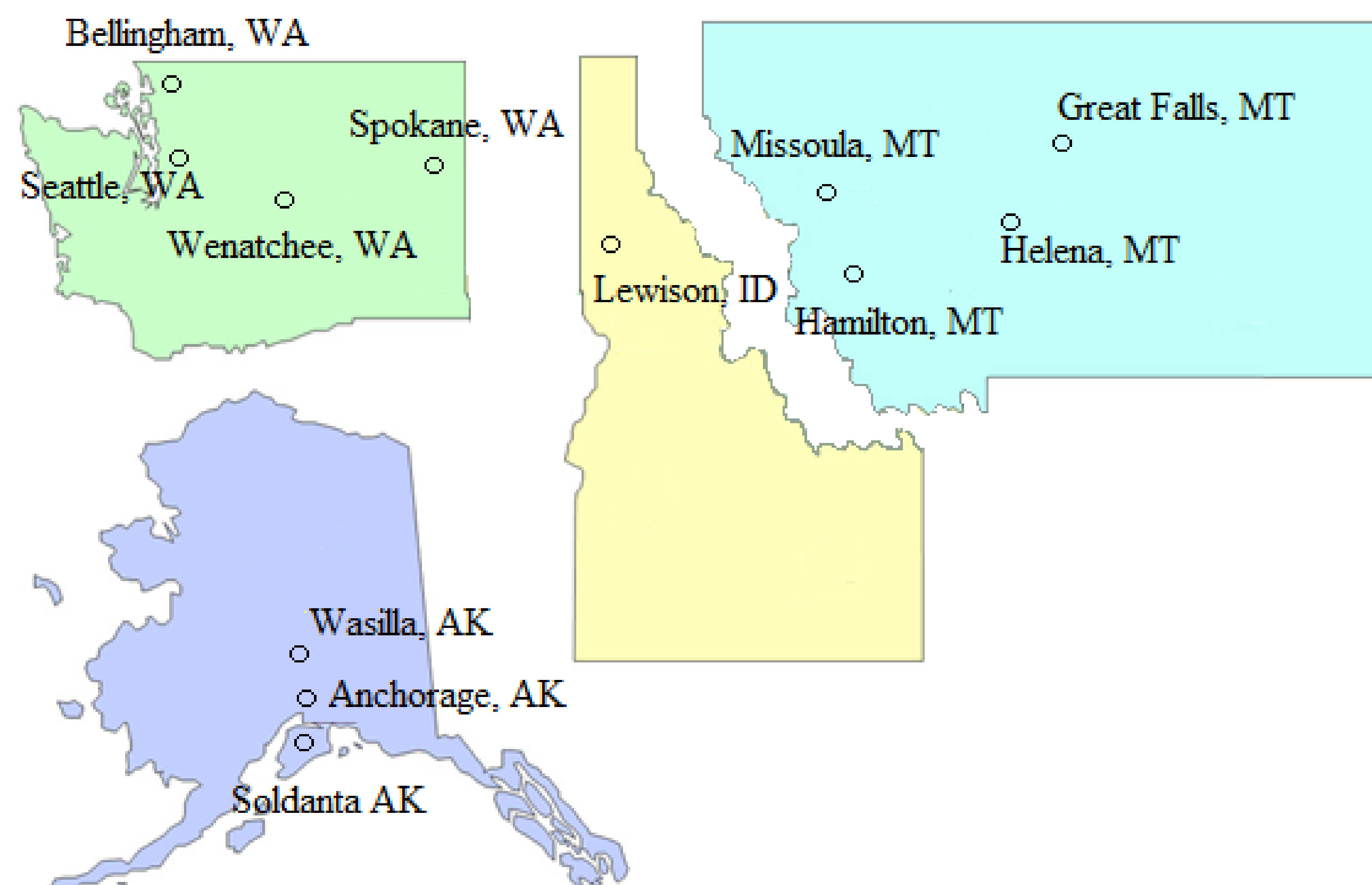
# MS ECHO: Innovative Project to Improve the Capacity of Providers in Underserved Areas to Treat MS



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## Introduction

- People with MS in underserved areas experience problems accessing quality MS care
- The Project ECHO® (*Extension for Community Healthcare Outcomes*) model = improved healthcare outcomes:
  - Weekly case-based tele-learning community for primary care providers
  - Mentoring to build confidence and capacity to treat challenging diseases
  - Improved outcomes for Hep C, HIV/AIDS, chronic pain
  - CME provided
- MS Project ECHO is a collaborative pilot project between the University of Washington (UW) and the National MS Society (Society)
  - Alliance between an academic institution & patient advocacy organization is unique to this ECHO
  - Grant funded by the Medtronic Foundation's Patient-Link Program



## Results

- A unique MS focused curriculum piloted in two 12-week series with >18 participants
- Feedback from Wave I led to an increased emphasis on case-based education in Wave II
- Practice sites included community neurologists, PCPs, physiatrists, internists, and mid-levels
- Participants see between 2 and 50 patients with MS
- 6 participants elected to continue into Wave II
- Participants reported:
  - Valuing interaction around cases
  - Appreciating access to experts
  - Welcoming patient education and professional practice resources from the Society

## Objectives

- Develop curriculum for MS Project ECHO
- Identify recruitment strategies and assess interest in participation
- Evaluate feasibility, sustainability and possible replicability of MS Project ECHO
- ID potential healthcare related outcomes which may be associated with MS Project ECHO

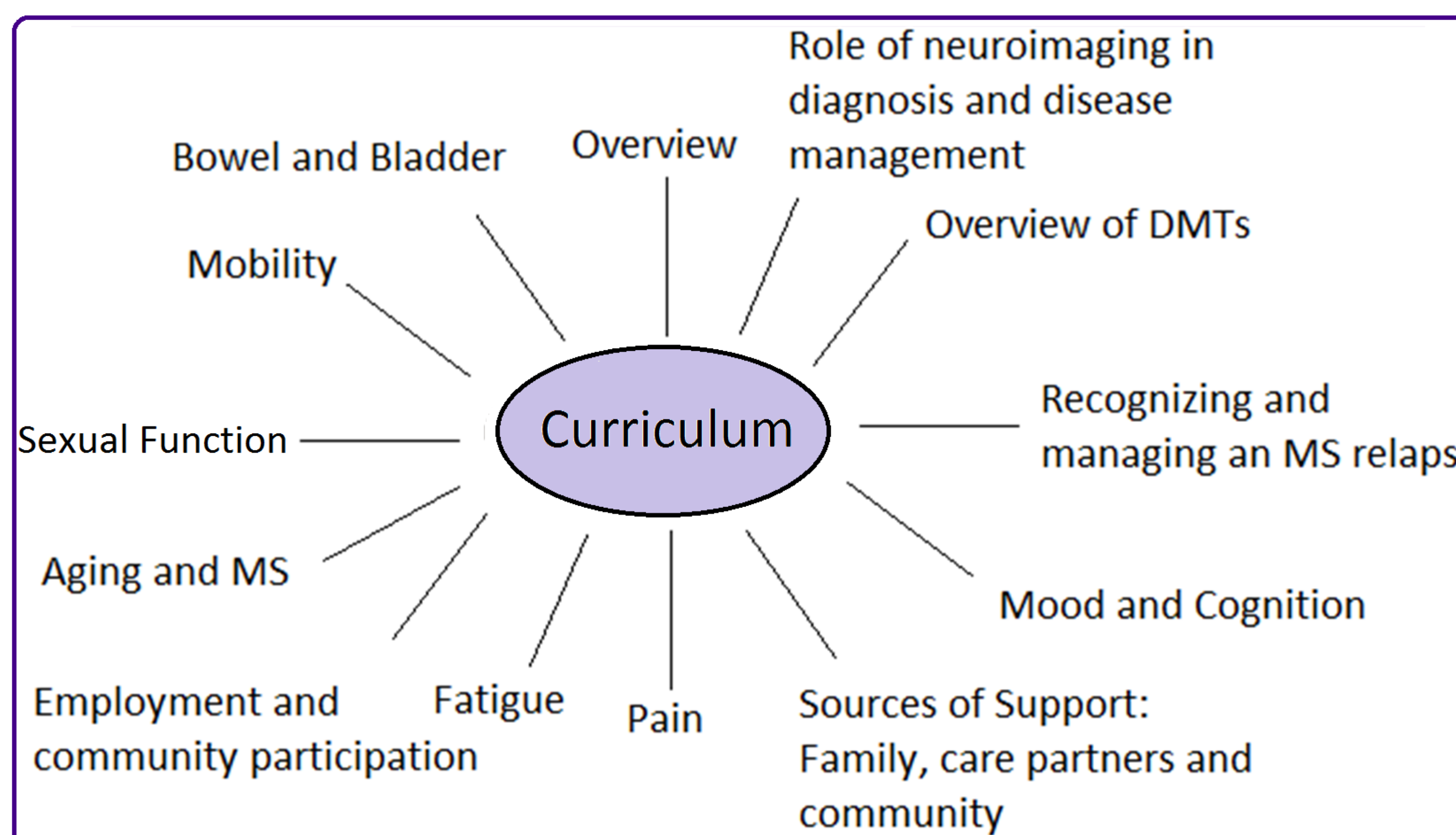


## Conclusion

- The feasibility of the Project ECHO model for MS was demonstrated
- Recruitment most successful among community neurologists, although PCPs, physiatrists, internists, and mid-levels participated
- Level of participation indicated strong interest by participants in learning strategies to enhance care for people with MS
- Replication of this model and long-term follow-up are needed to determine how broadly it can be applied to improve the quality of MS care and outcomes for underserved MS populations

## Methods

- Established curriculum team: neurology, physiatry, primary care, psychology, rehabilitation counseling, National MS Society staff
- Recruited from Alaska, Idaho, Montana and Washington:
  - Society referral database, HRSA newsletter, UW contacts
  - Mentor relationships initiated with visits and video set up
- Deployed MS Project ECHO:
  - Brief practical didactic on topic of the week
  - Case studies submitted by participants for collaborative consultation
  - Relevant resources from the Society
  - Written case consultation recommendations from team
- Assessed program and feedback after 12 weeks, modified, launched second wave:
  - Added additional topics and increased interaction with participants



## Next Steps

- Determine a more direct measure of patient outcomes and utilization of resources by patients seen by participating providers
- Seek funding to sustain the program
- Assess impact on managing patient care and connecting patients to resources at six months
- Stay connected with us:

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