

How KUOW Got This Story:

Million-Dollar Doctors, by John Ryan

According to the latest IRS records, 15 hospital employees in the Seattle area earned at least \$1 million in 2007. Another 36 earned at least \$500,000. KUOW obtained these figures by poring over the informational tax returns (known as 990's) of the area's major nonprofit hospitals. We also filed public records requests to get comparable figures from government-run hospitals in the area.

We examined all non-military hospitals in King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties with at least \$250 million in revenue. The only for-profit hospital that met those criteria, Auburn Regional Medical Center, declined to provide compensation figures.

The figures include hospital salaries, benefits, expense accounts, and payouts of deferred compensation like retirement plans, as reported to the IRS, or as disclosed in public records requests.

All nonprofit groups are required to file 990 tax returns with the IRS. They are also required to make them available to anyone who asks to see them. KUOW obtained data for most of the region's hospitals by going to GuideStar online, www2.guidestar.org. That Website has posted .pdf files of the complete 990 forms for 600,000 charity groups. All are available free to the public.

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