

Aging Well Whatcom Steering Committee

Wednesday, March 16, 2022

By Zoom call

MINUTES

Attending:

Amy Hockenberry, Whatcom County Health Department
Becky Kirkland, PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health
Chris Orr, Whatcom Council on Aging
Heather Flaherty, Chuckanut Health Foundation
Kenzie Nelson, VibrantUSA
Mary Anderson, Whatcom Transportation Authority
Rosie Crown, Opportunity Council (sitting in for Adrienne Solenberger)
Sarah Lane, Health Ministries Network
Tammy Bennett, YMCA
Tessa Whitlock, Chuckanut Health Foundation

Regrets:

Adrienne Solenberger, Opportunity Council
Chao-ying Wu, Chuckanut Health Foundation Board/Family Care Network
Heidi Bugbee, Generations Early Learning & Family Center
Janet Malley, Whatcom Transportation Authority
Marie Eaton, Palliative Care Institute, WWU
Melinda Herrera, Rosewood Villa
Ryan Blackwell, Northwest Regional Council
Tonja Myers, Christian Health Care Center

Guest: Katie Stanford, Whatcom County Health Department

Welcome

Lara welcomed Steering Committee members, including new member Kenzie Nelson from Vibrant USA. Welcome, Kenzie! Lara also welcomed guest Katie Stanford, from the Health Information and Assessment Team of the Whatcom County Health Department.

Minutes from the February 16, 2022 meeting were approved as written.

Updates

Blueprint Update Process

- The Blueprint Update Committee has scheduled six work sessions, one for each Blueprint pillar. The purpose of the sessions is to discuss what has changed for older adults since 2018, current challenges and opportunities, and recommended revisions to the Blueprint areas.
- Tessa sent out the invitation to the work session on 3/8 to everyone on the AWW mailing list, which includes Summit participants and others who have been added since then.
- Steering Committee members are encouraged to join a session (or more!); RSVPs are requested to help with planning.

Steering Committee New Member Outreach

- Chris reached out to Kenzie Nelson of Vibrant USA, who is here today as the newest Steering Committee member.
- Lara spoke with Barbara Juarez of the NW Indian Health Board. She is interested in joining and is discussing the role with her Board of Directors.

- Sarah reached out to Carol Frazey, who is unable to join the committee.
- Lara reached out to Jenny Weinstein at the Housing Authority, but she no longer works there. Lara followed up with others at the Housing Authority; no one there has capacity to join the Steering Committee at this time.
- Lara is in discussion with Adrienne and others at the Opportunity Council about a possible alternate Opportunity Council representative.

Lara noted we can keep working on outreach/recruitment of new Steering Committee members through the Spring.

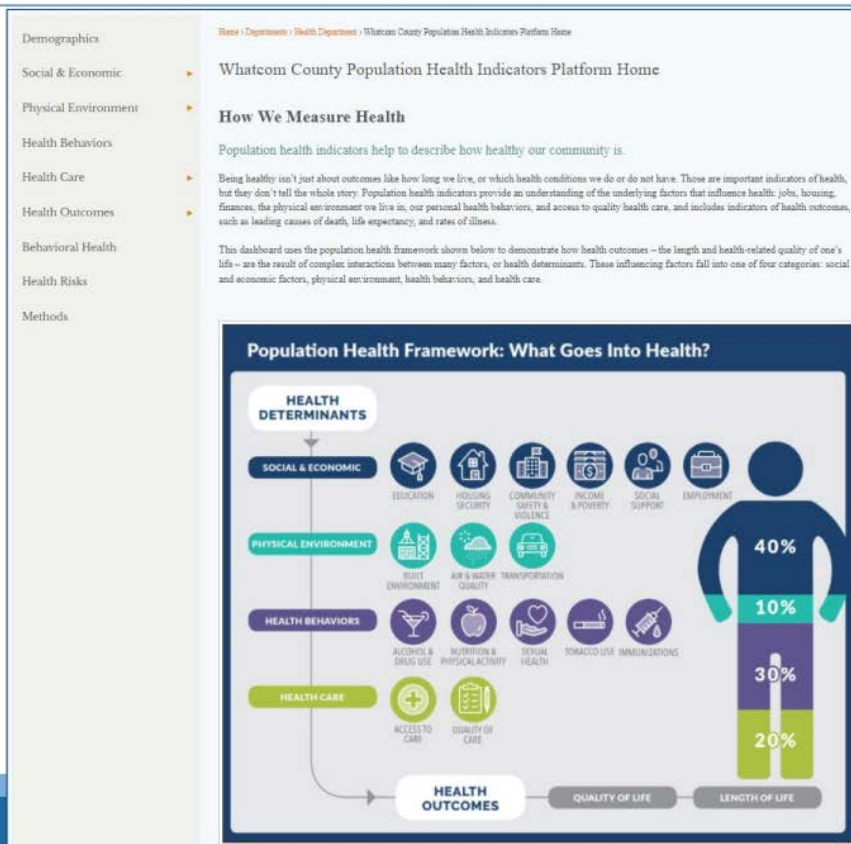
Data on Older Adults

Katie Stanford described the Health Department’s work on a new population health indicators platform. The vision is that the platform will take the place of the periodic health assessment documents that the Health Department has traditionally created. The platform will be a more dynamic presentation of key indicators of community health. It will be a collection of webpages, based on the population health framework which includes a broad set of variables that impact health. The goal is to include data on older adults, when available, as an age group separate from adults in general.

Katie shared slides showing mock-ups of the platform pages they are developing.

Note regarding red boxes: Lara added these comments regarding points Katie highlighted as she showed the slides.

Sharing Current Population Health Data



Data Examples

Whatcom Homeless Service Center Housing Pool

Provide explanation of what these data points mean and how they differ from annual point-in-time count.

Provide explanation about why the combination of two indicators provide a more complete picture.

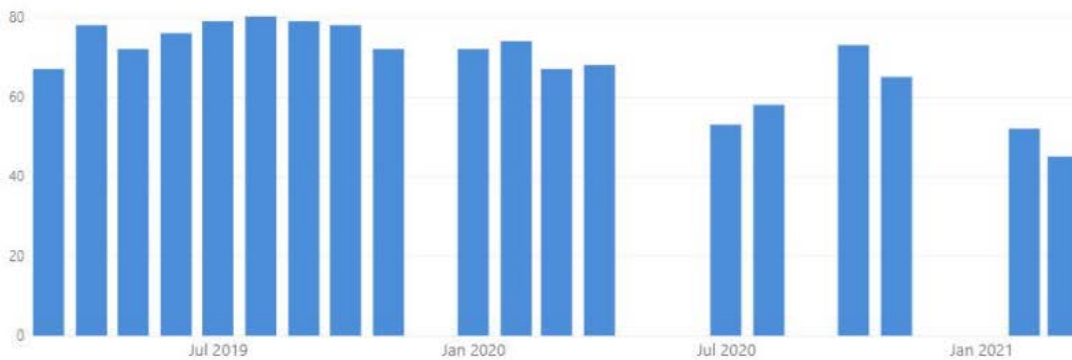
Disaggregated by:

1. Families
2. Single households
3. Older adults (60+ years old)

Example of showing older adult data disaggregated.

Active older adults, 60 years old and older, in the Whatcom Homeless Service Center Housing Pool awaiting placement

Source: Whatcom Homeless Service Center, Opportunity Council



Katie noted that partnerships with local health improvement efforts will be important to the integrity and value of the platform in several ways. Community groups working on specific health issues or with focus populations can help inform what data to include on the platform. Information gathered by community organizations is valuable – it may include more qualitative data and has the advantage of not being collected by a governmental entity, of which some people are distrustful. Partnerships with organizations working in the community will also help put the data in context, and the platform will link to related efforts.

Working with AWW is an example of this kind of partnership.

Katie asked for Steering Committee members' input regarding what data regarding older adults they feel is important.

Comments and discussion:

- Mary would like to know number/portion of older adults without access to a vehicle (ie reliant on other forms of transportation)
- Aging in place
 - Impact on prolonging life and/or reduced costs
 - Social isolation
- How to define social isolation?
 - Some people live alone but don't feel isolated.
 - Isolation vs detrimental isolation. One way to differentiate detrimental isolation would be if a person is not aware of services, programs or supports that are available to them.
- Katie noted that:
 - While local data is generally best, it is not always available. However, state and national can still have value in understanding what's happening locally. The Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), a periodic survey of adults, is a good example: it's only available for WA state, but has relevant data.
 - It's great to have data sources with regular data collection in order to see change over time, but "snapshot" data can also be helpful. During COVID, the Census did PULSE surveys with different questions. This won't continue on regular basis, but still gives insight into important aspects of the pandemic.
- Lara noted that the data that AWW focused on in 2018 didn't include medical or healthcare utilization data (e.g. chronic disease rates, falls, ER visits, etc.). Is it important to have some of these measures?
- Suggestions:
 - Data on dementia prevalence – dementia is linked to social isolation

- EMS data - 911 calls for support for someone struggling with dementia
- Depression scores – PeaceHealth Center for Senior Health screens for depression and a behavioral health social worker just started there this week.
- Older adults in the jail
- Heather pointed out that much of the data we’ve looked at is focused on older adults and deficits. She’d like to see more community measures, such as how many restaurants are age-friendly, how many schools have intergenerational programs? More asset-based and more focused on the community characteristics we know support older adults.
- Possible frameworks to think about or organize data:
 - By Blueprint pillars.
 - By attributes describes in *Blue Zones* – things found to be associated with wellbeing and longevity across numerous countries and societies.

Katie also shared that she will be leaving her position at the Health Department. Amy emphasized that the Health Department is still committed to developing the platform and partnering with AWW, though the work may be delayed while they refill Katie’s position.

Lara suggested having a few Steering Committee members to work more closely with the Health Dept on the data questions. Mary and Becky expressed interest.

Wrap Up and Next Steps

Two quick polls:

1) *Would you like to start meeting in person again?*

Results:

- Even mix of “yes” and “no”; some “not sure” responses.
- Those who responded “not sure” stated it was due to the convenience of Zoom meetings and the additional time it takes to attend an in-person meeting.
- There was a proposal and general support for meeting in-person once a quarter and holding other meetings via Zoom.

2) *Which meeting date and time do you prefer?* (choices: Third Wednesday, 12:30-2:00 PM **OR** First Friday, 10:00-11:30 AM)

Results:

- Majority preferred Friday time
- Many said they could do either

We are revisiting the meeting date question because some have mentioned that meeting on Wednesday is less convenient than the previous Friday time. In addition, Dave (one of the people who suggested moving from Friday) has stepped down from the Steering Committee.

We’ll continue with the Weds meeting time through April. Lara will check in with members who aren’t in attendance about their preferences.

Next meeting: Wednesday, April 20, 12:30-2:00 PM