![King County logo]

King County

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King County, City of Seattle, Renton and Auburn Heroin and Opiate Addiction Task Force
Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) Charge

The following is the charge developed and adopted by the Task Force. This ESJ charge is in conjunction with three other charges focusing on prevention, treatment and person health services.   This is in line with King County's ESJ Strategic Plan (http://www.kingcounty.gov/elected/executive/equity-social-justice.aspx).

The King County Heroin and Opiate Addiction Task Force will apply an Equity and Social Justice (ESJ) lens to all of its work. We acknowledge that the "War on Drugs" has disproportionately adversely impacted some communities of color, and it is important that supportive interventions now not inadvertently replicate that pattern. Interventions to address the King County heroin and opiate problem will or could affect the health and safety of diverse communities, directly and indirectly (through re-allocation of resources). Measures recommended by the Task Force to enhance the health and well-being of heroin and opiate users or to prevent heroin and opiate addiction must be intentionally planned to ensure that they serve marginalized individuals and communities. At the same time, the response to heroin and opiate use must not exacerbate inequities in the care and response provided among users of various drugs.

All recommendations by the Taskforce will be reviewed using a racial impact statement framework. The Task Force will not seek to advance recommendations that can be expected to widen racial or ethnic disparities in health, healthcare, other services and support, income, or justice system involvement. Whenever possible, these concerns should lead to broadening the recommendations of the Task Force, rather than leaving behind interventions that are predicted to enhance the health and well-being of heroin and opiate users.