

March
2015

Health & Human Services Transformation Update



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Why Transformation?

King County has a well-deserved reputation for its high quality of life, but most measures mask an important story of some of the worst social and health inequities in the nation. We can do better. We are working with partners collectively to make changes in communities and systems that will result in improved health and well-being for all residents in King County.

Read below to see how health and human services transformation is taking shape in King County.

[VISIT OUR WEBSITE](#)

COMMUNITIES OF OPPORTUNITY

\$1.5M invested to confront increasing inequity

King County and [The Seattle Foundation](#) announced more than \$1.5 million in community investments over the next three years to build on community strengths in an effort to reverse increasing health, social, racial and economic inequity in King County.

The three recipients are local community-based organizations that have demonstrated success in creating opportunities in geographic areas that have the greatest inequities in the region.

How it works

Unlike the traditional one-size-fits-all approach to services, these [Communities of Opportunity](#) grants identify the specific needs of local residents and allow grantees to work with the communities to co-design effective programs.

The three communities are SeaTac and Tukwila, through the nonprofit [Global to Local](#); the Rainier Valley in Southeast Seattle through [HomeSight](#); and the White Center/North Highline unincorporated area through the [White Center Community Development Association](#).



Watch this video for an overview of the Communities of Opportunity Initiative

Each organization will receive at least \$150,000 each year for the next three to five years from the Seattle Foundation and King County to implement their strategies to improve local health, housing and economic opportunities. Communities of Opportunity also receives national funding and technical assistance from Living Cities.

In addition, Auburn and Skyway will receive planning grants up to \$75,000 to increase capacity and do local work in those areas.

Why we're focused on these places

Significant portions of the County have been left behind as demographics have shifted. King County now has some of the greatest inequities among U.S. metropolitan areas. For example:

- Average life expectancy can be 10 years shorter in communities that are just a few miles apart.
- Average household income in one ZIP code can be \$100,000 less than one nearby.
- Unemployment among African Americans is twice what it is for whites.
- Smoking rates can range from 5 percent in one community to 20 percent in another.

Communities of Opportunity is designed to maximize positive impact by working with a wide range of public and private partners to drive resources toward underinvested neighborhoods and coordinate and engage local residents to determine the specific needs and co-design solutions with communities.

[Learn more](#) about the grants and profiles of the three initial grant recipients.

ACCOUNTABLE COMMUNITIES OF HEALTH

King County ACH Design Phase to Launch Soon

Accountable Community of Health (ACH) design work for the King County region, building on the foundation laid during the community's 2014 ACH planning phase, will soon get underway with the convening of a cross-sector, interim ACH leadership council that will shape the governance structure and support functions of an eventual ongoing ACH structure for the region. More information will be shared in the near future on the [King County ACH website](#), detailing the leadership council's membership, deliverables, and meetings. In the meantime, learn more about the Accountable Community of Health initiative and King County's approach to 2015 ACH planning with [these slides](#). You can also find information about the statewide ACH initiative on [Healthier](#)

[Washington's Accountable Communities of Health website.](#)

Welcoming Gena Morgan

Gena Morgan has joined King County as a senior program manager for the ACH initiative's design phase. A cross-functional leader, Gena has experience building partnerships and alliances for PATH and Microsoft, and is excited to bring her global health expertise to bear on local health equity issues. Please join us in welcoming Gena to the staff team that will be working to assure a successful ACH design phase in 2015. She is based in Public Health-Seattle & King County and can be reached at Gena.Morgan@kingcounty.gov.

AARTH conference - workshop session

On April 25, at the AARTH ([African Americans Reach and Teach Health](#)) conference, "The Intersection of Faith and Health," a workshop session will focus on Healthier Washington and the ACH initiative. We're looking forward to an interesting panel and group discussion on collaboration opportunities that will include perspectives from Washington State Health Care Authority, the ACH efforts in the Spokane and King County regions, and philanthropy partners. More information and registration link are on the [AARTH Facebook page](#).

New from Healthier Washington

The Washington State *Healthier Washington* team recently hosted a webinar that included an overview of Healthier Washington, including how the ACH initiative fits into the bigger picture of health system transformation; see slides from "[Working Together for a Healthier Washington: Healthier Washington Webinar Series Kickoff](#)." Washington State is also exploring potential opportunities for a global 1115 waiver with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS); see slides from "[Medicaid Transformation: Potential for a Global Waiver](#)."

FAMILIAR FACES

Current State Map to inform Future Vision

The Familiar Faces initiative Design Team recently developed a current state map of the many systems serving adults who have been booked into King County Correctional Facility four or more times in a twelve month period and who also have a mental health and/or substance use condition. The Design Team - made up of over 30 organization/agency members from the health (physical and behavioral health providers and insurers), housing, and criminal justice sectors - utilized the King County principles of Lean improvement to help guide their work. Lean's focus on process and removing inefficiencies is allowing the Design Team participants to identify new opportunities for improvement. Using Lean with such a large and diverse group as the Design Team is unprecedented in King County. The Design Team conducted multiple on-site process walks to observe the actual work as it is being done in various systems and gathered complementary data.



Design Team meeting

A future state vision map will be developed based on this work in April 2015; it will articulate how the systems could work to better achieve key outcomes. [Learn more.](#)

PHYSICAL/BEHAVIORAL HEALTH INTEGRATION

Integrating mental health & substance use disorder treatment ("behavioral health") and primary care services will achieve better health and social outcomes, improved quality and reduced costs for the people we serve. We are committed to moving to this vision of "whole person care" quickly, while *at the same time* ensuring that we get integration right.

Timeline

After several very productive meetings with the state Health Care Authority and Department of Social and Health Services, we have collectively decided that King County will not pursue the "Early Adopter" option for full integration of physical and behavioral health on the very aggressive timeline of April 1, 2016, as detailed in the 6312 legislation. However, we will continue to pursue fully integrated, whole person care for all the people we serve as quickly as possible while assuring the needs of our most vulnerable clients are met during the transition.

Design Approach

King County has engaged a consultant - Technical Assistance Collaborative, Inc. (TAC) - to assist in determining the optimal role for King County government in full integration, to be completed in May of this year. We will also be convening an Integration Design Committee in late spring. This will be a multi-sector, community-based partnership that will work together over the next year to design the critical components of a fully integrated system of care for the region. The group will be a formal subcommittee of our King County Accountable Communities of Health (ACH). Once the design work is complete, the group will develop key milestones and a timeline for a phased approach to full integration sometime over the next few years (and before 2020).

Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) for King County Region

In the meantime, King County has been working to prepare to become the Behavioral Health Organization (BHO) for the King County region by April 1, 2016. As a BHO, we will be able to further pursue integrated mental health and substance use disorder treatment services under a single managed care contract with the state.

For more information, please contact [Susan McLaughlin](#) or visit our [webpage](#).

BEST STARTS FOR KIDS

Developing the ordinance

Prevention is the most effective, least expensive way to avoid negative outcomes such as mental illness, domestic violence, chemical dependency, obesity, homelessness and incarceration.

Yet, by the time we finish paying for the services needed when there's a negative outcome - law enforcement, courts, jails - there aren't enough funds left to invest in proven strategies.

Best Starts for Kids is an initiative to change that.

Over the past several months, discussions with stakeholders in health and human services, early childhood, community development and others have worked to identify outcomes we all want to see for our community. Outcomes have focused on pregnancy and early childhood; school-age children and youth; and healthy and safe communities. Now, the work continues to identify strategies that will most effectively help us accomplish these outcomes. The ordinance will be transmitted to King County Council later this spring.

[Learn more.](#)

YOUTH ACTION PLAN

Draft report now open for comment

A key piece of what has helped influence the framework for the Best States for Kids Initiative has been the work on the King County Youth Action Plan - work that was led by Councilmember Rod Dembowski and his colleagues from the King County Council. The [draft report](#) was released late last week and public comments are welcomed [here](#) through April 1.

BIRTH-5 SYSTEMS BUILDING

Building and sustaining an Early Learning Community in King County

At the King County Early Learning Symposium on January 7, scientists, local and national leaders, and community-based organizations came together to hear the latest brain science regarding the power of the first five years of life. Investing early, before brain architecture is set, may be the best and most cost effective way to set our children on the right path for a healthy future. You can watch the full video of the symposium [here](#).

Following the symposium, approximately 75 local and state elected officials (mayors, superintendents, city councilmembers and school board members) and staff participated in a working lunch focused on identifying concrete actions for continuing to build the early learning community in King County. This summer, the Bezos Family Foundation and United Way will be reconvening this group with support from the County to further build and sustain the Early Learning Community in King County.

COVERAGE IS HERE KING COUNTY

Special enrollment open through April 17

A [special enrollment period](#) to renew or sign up for low-cost private insurance through Healthplanfinder is open through April 17, 2015 to anyone who misunderstood the tax penalties or had trouble enrolling before February 15. Those who qualify for Washington Apple Health (also called Medicaid) can [sign up any time](#).

King County's enrollment Navigator partners are also assisting with enrolling eligible residents in [ORCA LIFT](#), Metro Transit's reduced fare program.

PARTNERSHIPS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY HEALTH

Local partners funded to improve nutrition, increase physical activity and reduce health disparities

As mentioned in the last update, Public Health - Seattle & King County, Seattle Children's Hospital, and the Healthy King County Coalition received a *Partnerships to Improve Community Health* award to work with communities to increase access to healthy environments where people live, learn, work and play.

Over the next two and a half years, over \$3 million in federal funds will be provided to local agencies to carry out policy and systems changes to improve nutrition, increase physical activity and reduce health disparities. Awardees include school districts, cities in south King County. See the complete list [here](#).

EQUITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

More on advancing equity in King County

King County's commitment to equity continues to advance with the creation of an [Office of Equity and Social Justice](#).

A January 2015 publication, [Determinants of Equity Report](#) shows a baseline of countywide inequities and catalogs community-level indicators and King County data covering 13 [Determinants of Equity](#).

If you want to know more about how to lead meaningful dialogue with your colleagues about how our biases impact our interactions with each other and our communities, see the [Implicit Bias Toolkit](#).

STAFFING

Recent changes to align with Transformation work

As the Transformation efforts continue to grow and expand, we have realigned our staff resources within King County. **Liz Arjun**, who was leading the Familiar Faces work, is now providing some strategic leadership and management toward aligning County initiatives working toward Transformation. **Travis Erickson** and **Jesse Benet** are co-leading the Familiar Faces work. **AJ McClure** has stepped into a new role leading and coordinating Transformation-related community engagement efforts, working closely with Matias Valenzuela and new the Office of Equity and Social Justice.

Website
