



WHATCOM COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH ADVISORY BOARD MEETING SUMMARY

MARCH 5, 2020

Present: Barry Buchanan, Sterling Chick - Vice Chair, Lindsey Karas, Chi-Na Stoane - Chair, Les Seelye, Leah Wainman
Absent: Steve Bennett, Barbara Juarez,

Topic	Discussion/Outcome
Approve Notes From Last Meeting	Moved to adopt the January 9, 2019, meeting summary as submitted. Approved (6 to 0)
Director's Report	<p>Kathleen Roy, Health Department (WCHD) Assistant Director highlighted the following items:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The County Executive is in the decision process between two finalists for our Director position. • Ground Level Response and Coordinated Engagement (GRACE) Case managers are at capacity. Law Enforcement received a federal grant which will assist in their participation. • During the statewide outbreak of Hepatitis A, we had two 2 local cases which are now contained. Since then, approximately 200 people in our community have been immunized at ER or by Health Department staff. • We have held Results Based Accountability (RBA) training sessions and Racial Equity training. The purpose is to be able to involve community in our action plan. We may not have the capacity to hold the March RBA training due to COVID-19. • A small group has convened around homelessness and is using the RBA model to develop an early action plan. • A PHAB member is pleased about doing a gap analysis for Mental Health services. It is important to know where the needs are in the County
Coronaviruses COVID-19	<p>The Health Department has set up Incident Command Structure (ICS) and an Incident Management Team. This situation is unfolding by the hour and we are working to ensure we are providing accurate information to the community and local officials.</p> <p>John Gargett, from the Department of Emergency Management (DEM) is allowing us to use their Operations Facility for stakeholder meetings and to update the press and elected officials. These updates will be recorded by BTV 10 and available for public viewing.</p> <p>Planned stakeholder meetings include: school districts and higher education, Health Board, health care providers: EMS, hospital, childcare facilities, skilled nursing facilities (including assisted living), and our faith based community.</p> <p>Considering the outbreak in the Kirkland facility, we have reached out to skilled nursing facilities and. looped in larger residential living facilities. We will provide remote updates via the GoTo Meeting</p> <p>Childcare providers asked us to push their meeting out to a regularly scheduled director's meeting in mid-March. They do infection control really well as part of their everyday processes.</p> <p>Representatives Rick Larson and Suzan Delbene have been in contact to see what we need.</p>

Representative Larson is planning a visit tomorrow to see how we are doing.

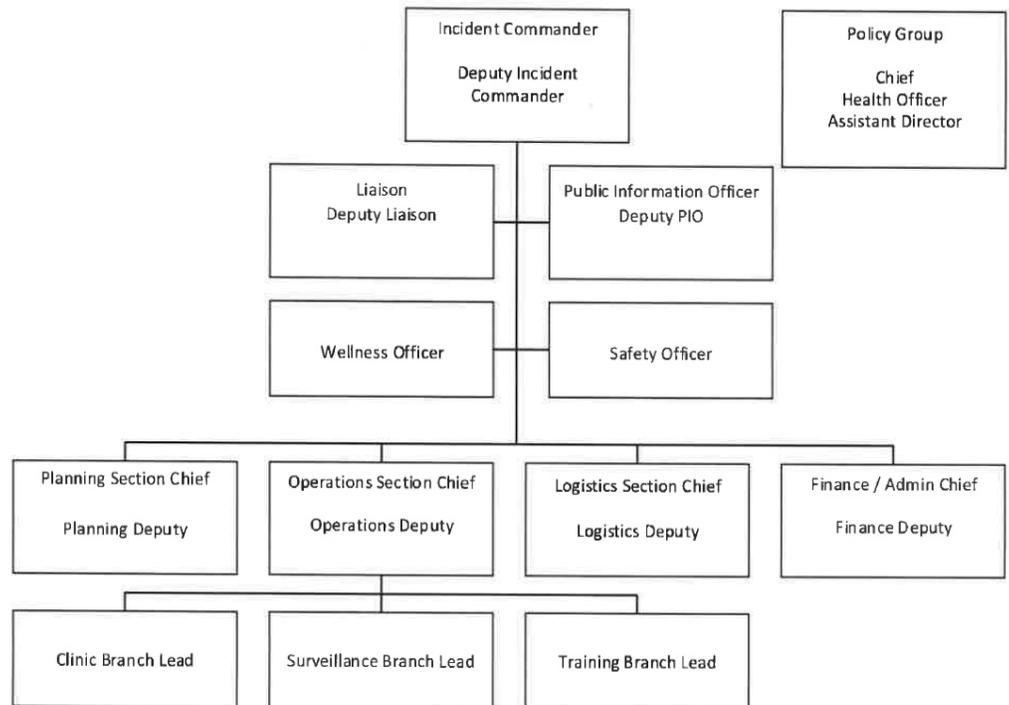
**Coronavirus
COVID-19
continued**

WCHD managers will provide updates at the Department Head / Elected Officials meeting tomorrow morning.

The department is having good conversations with the EMS system about how they will respond to questions and are reaching out to the hospital. Daily coordination calls have been set up with both.

The WCHD has set up a policy group within ICS. John Wolpers is Incident Commander, and he is backed up by Darin Klein and Mark Raaka. At the moment, our Health Officer is being pulled on from all directions. The ICS structure is currently as follows:

WCHD Expanded COVID-19 Incident Command Structure



There are seven individuals in the PIO section. Though messaging is difficult, they are pushing out information to media, monitoring social media, and managing messaging to keep up with the constant change. Misinformation is difficult to control, but important messaging includes: Go to trusted sources for information. Don't panic. Wash your hands frequently. Avoid touching your face. Don't shake hands. Stay home if you are sick.

	<p>WCHD has set up a system to package and transport specimens to Shoreline for testing in the state.</p> <p>WCHD staff are required to have different levels of ICS training, and approximately 50% of staff are involved in working on the COVID-19 issue. The department is also working with Border Patrol, City of Bellingham and several divisions of the County including the Division of Information Technology, Human Resources, Facilities, and Public Works.</p> <p>Currently in Whatcom County, there are 4 persons under investigation (PUIs) pending test results, and no confirmed cases. During today’s PHAB meeting, the number of PUIs changed to two, with results for the other two coming back as negative.</p> <p>Special Health Board meetings will be held every two weeks for now to provide them with the most current information.</p> <p>If and when a call center is needed, WCHD will coordinate with John Gargett of DEM. Though we have a dedicated COVID email set up, people tend to be calling instead.</p> <p>The University of Washington (UW) has started testing. Technically, this is not a notifiable condition, so providers will work directly with UW, but we won’t know how many tests are pending until after their results are uploaded to the monitoring system.</p> <p>We will make calculated decisions with regards to closing schools and events, should this escalate. We have a template for continuity of operations to assist businesses to keep running.</p> <p><u>Questions:</u></p> <p>What are we doing to provide information in facilities where multiple languages are spoken? A flyer has been translated into Spanish and we are working to add graphics for less word heavy information in other languages This will go on the WCHD website. Mandarin and Korean are small populations, but Punjabi would be helpful. The State Department of Health (DOH) has translated the information into several languages. Our liaison can reach out to King and Snohomish Counties to see which languages they have developed materials for.</p> <p>Is there a way to have a fact check online ? We are pushing out the right info, including posting FAQs.</p> <p>A parent received two communications from Dr. Baker about hand washing. Is there a way to define what “good” hand washing is ? We have some good information we can send out</p> <p>For those who have barriers to getting healthcare services, what are the symptoms indicating they should call? The Emergency Department is the best place for now, but only if they notify ER of their symptoms before they go, wear the masks, and are sick enough for that level of care.</p> <p>What is the recommendation of what to tell people that are symptomatic when they come to clinics? Reschedule and have them call their primary care provider. DOH sent out information on what to do if you think you’ve been exposed, have symptoms, etc.</p> <p>Are we working with jail systems and other vulnerable populations ? The Chief of Corrections is working on this.</p> <p>A concern was raised regarding the 12 first responders from Kirkland Emergency Management Services (EMS), who became ill. Whatcom County EMS is working with individuals, building contingency plans, and they have separated their medic units. They have also added screening questions at the 911 center.</p>
<p>Child and Family Action Plan (CFAP)</p>	<p>The group celebrated completing the task to present a plan to the Health Board by the end of January 2020. The goal today is to review the draft resolution to establish the ordinance. We need to be clear on the purpose of task force and what kind of roles are needed on it.</p> <p>What role does PHAB have in moving this forward? There was a request for clarification on funding for these recommendations and on the role of our partners.</p> <p>There is no specific budget other than that it requires staffing to move the process forward. We</p>

	<p>have to pay someone to do it.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It requires 2 levels of funding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coordination to get it going ○ Staffing the system - We have a structure (SEAS model) to build on. We might not be able to include potential contractors in the planning. A RFP will need to occur to determine who will take it on. • Executive's Office may have some sources we can contract with for the analysis piece, but there will be a cost. Are existing pots of funding being fully utilized? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Executive's Office might not be the best place to have the Office of Child and Family Wellbeing. It should be in a place where it would not be affected by changing administration ○ Add a specific task to develop recommendations to create a funding structure for this • Each item has funding requirements, and it will be a main function of the task force to figure this out • There might be a need for data systems <p>The Health Care Authority provided money for planning and implementation of projects like the GRACE program.</p> <p>Send feedback to Tammy. Include information on partners you think should be involved. To avoid violating the Open Public Meetings Act, be careful not to send to the PHAB group.</p> <p>Task Force - Small groups are more effective, so keep it to no more than 25. They will hold open public meetings. We should refer to Appendix C of the CFAP and give priority to those involved in planning.</p> <p>Astrid will update information and get it out to community partners, so they can weigh in.</p>
HPIF	<p>Though discussion was tabled due to lack of time, an article from the January 24th issue of the Bellingham Herald was distributed with the updated Implementation Plan. Members were asked to review the plan to see if there is anything we should add or action we should take now. All were encouraged to contact those they have relationship with on the list.</p>
Other/Public Comment	<p>None.</p>