

Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative Meeting Notes

Tuesday, November 15, 2022; 2-3:30 p.m.

Conducted by Zoom and in person at the Norm Dicks Government Center Chambers

In attendance (Z-attended via Zoom):

Abigail Stevenson, *Kitsap Mental Health Svcs*
Airen Lydick (Z), *various organizations*
Akueya Karen Vargas, *various organizations*
Alecia Nye, *Olympic College*
Amanda Tjemslund, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Amy White (Z), *Central Kitsap School District*
Annika Turner, *Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Ctr*
Carina Langstraat, *Kitsap Regional Library*
Carolynn Zimmers (Z), *various organizations*
Cristina Roark, *Kitsap Strong*
Darryl Riley, *Up From Slavery Institute*
Dionne Deschenne (Z), *Kitsap Human Rights Cncl*
Dr. Lilian Robertson (Z), *Marvin Williams Center*
Drayton Jackson (Z), *Fdn for Homeless & Pov Mgt*
Erica Whares, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Pastor Frankie Coleman, *Sinclair MBC*
Fletcher Sandbeck (Z), *Kitsap Pride*
Dr. Gib Morrow, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Jessica Guidry, *Kitsap Public Health District*

Jessica Jetter (Z), *Kington Community Adv. Cmttee*
Jewel Shepherd-Sampson (Z), *Kitsap Black Student Union*
Karisha Stanley (Z), *Bremerton Housing Authority*
Dr. Kimberly Riley, *You Are Beautiful PLLC*
Kimi Kinoshita (Z), *various organizations*
Maria Fergus, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Martha Little (Z), *Central Kitsap School District*
Marwan Cameron, *G2 and The Conduit*
Patty Lyman (Z), *Kitsap ERACE Coalition*
Pastor Richmond Johnson, *Mount Zion MBC*
Shannon Schroeder (Z), *Kitsap ERACE Coalition*
Siri Kushner, *Kitsap Public Health District*
Stephen Kutz, *Suquamish Tribe*
Tad Sooter (Z), *Kitsap Public Health District*
Tazsiah Green (Z), *Mount Zion PYA*
Tony Ives, *Kitsap Community Resources*
Tracy Flood (Z), *NAACP*
Wendy Jones, *various organizations*

1. Dr. Gib Morrow, Kitsap Public Health District Health Officer, welcomed attendees.



2. Jessica shared this slide with the Suquamish Tribe and Port Madison S'Klallam Tribe Land Acknowledgements. These were not read, but Jessica acknowledged that we are on Indigenous Land and expressed gratitude to the Suquamish Tribe and Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe.

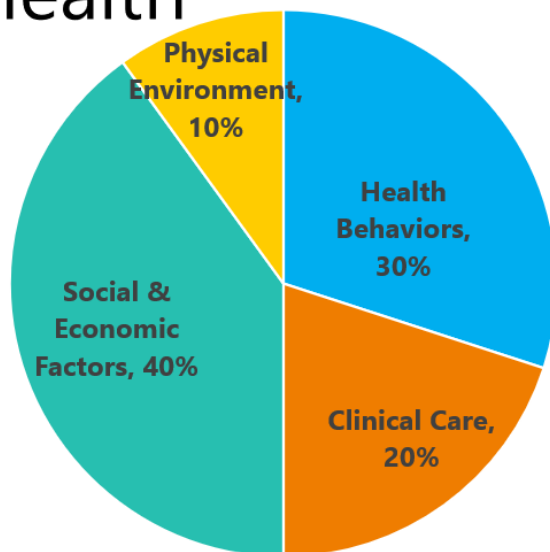
She covered housekeeping items relating to microphones, locations of bathrooms, taking breaks, etc.

Jessica shared the following definition of health: “Health is a state of complete physical, mental, **spiritual**, and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.” Taken from Preamble to the Constitution of the World Health Organization, International Health Conference, New York, 19-22 June 1946. The word spiritual was added based on past community feedback.

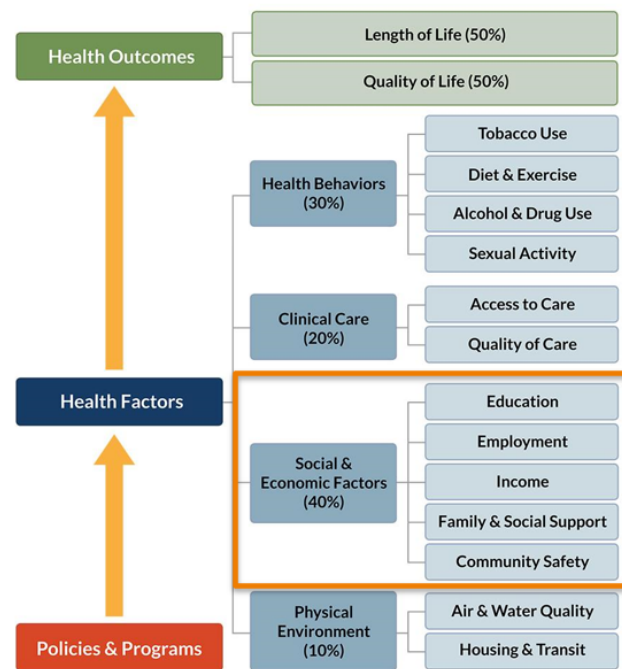
She also shared what KPHD has heard from community about health:

- Health is **holistic** – mind, body, and spirit.
- Health is **interdisciplinary** – includes spirituality, religion, culture, history, and other factors.
- Health is **inclusive** – it is not just Western medicine, but also includes other types of healing and medicine (e.g., prayer, herbs, **community**, etc.)

Determinants of Health



<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/what-is-health>



County Health Rankings model © 2016 UWPHI

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/explore-health-rankings/what-and-why-we-rank>

While the above slide was on the screen, Jessica highlighted that a multitude of factors, such as social & economic, represent the highest percentage of determinants of health.

She then asked, “what is health equity?” and provided the following response: **Health equity exists when all people have a fair and just opportunity to be healthy**, especially individuals who have and currently experience socioeconomic disadvantage, historical injustice, and other systemic inequalities that are often associated with social categories of race, gender, ethnicity, social position, sexual orientation, gender, and disability.

Group discussion:

- People thrive when they have what they need.
- During COVID pandemic, students were given computers, but they did not have internet. We must make sure that solutions look at possible barriers for some.
- Change is hard, especially if change is not supported by the community. What is acceptable for some might not be acceptable to others.
- What does “fair” and “just” opportunity look like? It’s different for everyone. Example of Starbucks-everyone gets to customize their order.

- Words matter. Use the term “people with different abilities” vs “people with disabilities.”
- How far is the district willing to go to address health disparities? Jessica shared that KPHD has a program/team dedicated to health equity and she is able to commit her and Maria’s (her team member) time convening and following through with Collaborative work. Dr. Morrow and Siri (both directors) attended the meeting because they want to hear directly from community.
- What’s acceptable to discuss? What’s not? (To be discussed as a group later)
- What are HEC’s priorities? (To be discussed as a group later)

3. Jessica presented a timeline of KPHD’s equity program and highlighted the Vaccine Equity Collaborative from February 28, 2021, and the launch meeting of the Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative today.

Timeline of Some Health Equity Events

- Kitsap Vaccine Equity Collaborative (2/28/21 – 2/8/22)
- Kitsap Public Health Resolution 2021-01, Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis (May 2021)
- Creation of Kitsap Public Health District’s Equity Program (October 2021)
- Vaccine Equity Collaborative “Debrief” – (6/30/22)
 - HHS Letter in Support of DOH Waiver (7/11/22)
- Kitsap Health Equity Collaborative launch (11/15/22)
- Future meetings (goals, priorities, etc.)

4. Everyone attending was asked to introduce themselves and to share the following: Name, organization or affiliation, what led them to come to today’s meeting and any initiatives, events/updates related to health equity they had to share with the group. Those on zoom introduced themselves first.

- Airen Lydick participates in many organizations and initiatives, including the Health Systems Team under the Kitsap Equity Race and Community Engagement (ERACE) coalition. He is here to prioritize race equity and take back what he hears today to various organizations.
- Amy White is an equity specialist at Central Kitsap School District (CKSD). She is here to learn and partner with HEC. She sees a lot of cross-over to assist and communicate with families.
- Carollynn Zimmers is interested in addressing community mental health and keeping up to date on health equity in our community.
- Dionne Deschenne works for the Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe, is a policy and grant writer, and is the chair of the Kitsap Council for Human Rights Council. She is hopeful about a lot of issues, including that we are having an honest conversation about health disparities and working to resolve them, and the county’s commitment to this work.
- Fletcher Sandbeck is with Kitsap Pride, which celebrates, supports, and unites the LGBTQ+ community.

- Jessica Jetter is an attorney and co-chair of Kingston Citizens Advisory Council (KCAC), which is doing a lot of DEI focused work. She is also helping develop DEI work in her capacity in the Poulsbo Rotary DEI team. She is hopeful about equity work in our county.
- Karisha Stanley is with Bremerton Housing Authority and is here to learn and take information back to her agency for leaders to implement solutions discussed later in this group.
- Kimi Kinoshita is not affiliated with any group but feels related to everyone. She was on the Vaccine Equity Collaborative (VEC) and participated in the debrief of the VEC debrief. She is here to continue citizen's efforts to amplify the voices that are not heard. Health issues are paramount, especially for those with limited, or no, resources. This needs to be faced.
- Dr. Lilian Robertson is executive director of Marvin Williams Center, OBGYN physician, community health advocate, and wants to see an increased interest in helping community, especially people of color, host events that give access to, prevent, and diagnose healthcare issues. She wants to provide specific programs to the community. She is here to learn and contribute.
- Martha Little is an equity specialist at CKSD. She wants to learn, partner and support collaborative's efforts to empower community.
- Patty Lyman is co-lead of the Kitsap ERACE Coalition's Health Systems Team. She is a retired physician's assistant, active with Bainbridge Prepares, and attends KPH board meetings.
- Shannon Schroeder co-leads the Kitsap ERACE Coalition's Health Systems Team. She is here to learn and apply health equity.
- Tad Sooter is the public information officer (PIO) at KPHD. He is here to listen, learn and help in any way that he can.
- Tazjah Green is a health ambassador at Mount Zion Partnering for Youth Achievement (PYA, affiliated with Mount Zion Baptist Church). She's had contact with Jessica (Guidry), represents her organization, and wants to partner to help community however she can.
- Jewel Sampson Shepherd did not have audio. She shared through chat: She's the executive director of Kitsap BSU (Black Student Union) and sits on several boards. She is here because Jessica (Guidry) invited her, and she has a passion to amplify youth voices.

Those at the Norm Dick's Chamber room presented themselves next:

- Kimberly Riley is a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and her practice is You Are Beautiful, PLLC. She is passionate about behaviors that are preventative to increase health for children and youth. She works with students in Head Start, middle school and high school. She holds therapeutic groups that are preventative.
- Dr. Gib Morrow, KPHD health officer, is here to listen, has data regarding health equity initiatives that he is waiting to share.
- Pastor Richmond Johnson is pastor of Mount Zion Baptist Church. He's here collaborating to make health equity a shared value. He spoke about the Health Outreach Prevention and Education "H.O.P.E." program and the national "All of Us" precision medicine initiative, started by the Obama administration to get one million BIPOC in

health database, because right now most of the data for medical research is from white males, and invited HEC attendees to look into these programs and become involved. He also shared that the next Police and Community Together (P.A.C.T.) meeting will be on November 29th at 5pm at the Marvin Williams Center.

- Carina Langstraat adult services librarian for Kitsap Regional library (KRL) partnered with Priya Charry at KRL and Jessica Guidry at KPHD for the vaccine equity collaborative.
- Abby Stevenson is here on behalf of someone else at Kitsap Mental Health who had scheduled to be at the HEC. She is excited that she got to be here. “Our systems are failing our children.” We need to work together to make systems work better to reach ALL our children.” She wants to make assessing mental health for children and their families safe, increase outreach and training and needs more ideas on how to do this. “What does community need from me?”
- Annika Turner (Kitsap Immigrant Assistance Center (KIAC)) works with undocumented and mixed status families, especially from Guatemala or Mexico. She helps them address various needs, from financial assistance to health-related needs. She assisted and supported the HHS (Health & Human Services) DOH (Department of Health) waiver for Washington State to expand health coverage.
- Amanda Tjemsland, epidemiologist with Kitsap Public Health District, works with data and created health equity disaggregated data facts.
- Stephen Kutz is the health director of the Suquamish Tribe and is a Cowlitz Tribe member. “The Suquamish tribe was promised healthcare 135 years ago and now they are building their own health clinic.” He works at changing inequalities in health systems and knows that big changes are hard to make. He makes a difference in small ways. Tribes are not adequately represented in a way that would represent tribes as a whole before the NIH (National Institute of Health). If equity work is done too quickly, we run the risk of leaving people out. We can make a difference – it just depends on what we (HEC) decide to do together.
- Wendy Jones works for the Olympic Educational Service District. She is a community member and part of VEC, Kitsap SURJ and ERACE. She is here for equity in and access to healthcare.
- Akuyea Karen Vargas works with Living Life Leadership, Kitsap ERACE Coalition, and Living Arts Cultural Heritage. She works to get systems to see race as an issue, in health, education, and law enforcement. She is diligently moving health equity forward. There was a lot of hate literature in our community, which was an unhealthy thing manifesting in our community. She’s been addressing systemic and historic legacy within educational and government. The work needs to be intentional and collaborative. There’s still a lot of work to do to achieve health equity. Declaring racism, a public health threat was a step forward. Access to health is an issue.
- Alicia Nye is the Olympic College Dean of Allied Health & Nursing. COVID brought a lot of disparities to the forefront. If we don’t collaborate to address them, they will be a detriment to our grandkids. She is here to listen, learn and support.
- Cristina Roark, with Kitsap Strong, focuses on empowerment, equity, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), building inspiration and relationships, helping communities move

from reaction to being proactive, and helping move resources. It's important to know our systems' lens to see people who are left out. Building relationships in time of crisis is too late. "We do have a lot of representation at this meeting, but let's look at who is missing. I don't see our Filipino American or Pacific Islanders at the table."

- Tony Ives, with Kitsap Community Resources (KCR), works with many of those at the meeting. He has been with KCR about a year and a lot has been done and there is more to be done. KCR launched a Community Needs Assessment (in collaboration with other partners) and there have been about 4,500 responses across different demographics. Focus groups have been held in Spanish, with BSU, and one is scheduled with Suquamish Elders. Health and healthcare are the number one issue mentioned in every focus group, from the lack of healthcare to how people are treated by healthcare staff.
- Erica Whares, KPHD injury prevention specialist, is passionate about health equity. She knows we cannot do this work without community input.
- Pastor Frankie Coleman of Sinclair Missionary Baptist Church makes healthcare a priority and wants to partner with others in the community.
- Darryl Riley organized Up from Slavery and is a businessman. He wants the opportunity to engage with people. He serves on various boards, including advisory boards. "If you are poor, your health is poor. We are treated differently based on how much money we have. Having a negative cash balance is not good for your health. We can help people to be in victimhood." Wants KRL to take advantage of GARE membership.
- Maria Fergus KPHD's community engagement specialist. Second position in Equity Program. Here to listen and learn.
- Marwan Cameron is with Gather Together Grow Together (G2) and The Conduit podcast, is a trustee of Kitsap Regional Library (KRL), and participated in the vaccine equity collaborative (VEC). He provides free transportation to severe weather shelters when they are open to anyone calling (360) 337-3706. He is looking for more churches to open severe weather shelters and needs more volunteers. Volunteering as little as four hours/night can keep a shelter open. He also provides eviction assistance and partners with different organizations.
- Siri Kushner, Assistant Director of Community Health, is thrilled to do this work and co-creating solutions together.

Jessica Guidry, Equity Program Manager, is here to listen and collaborate. The health district needs the HEC to be community driven. Driven by those experiencing inequities and those serving them. Kitsap Public Health Board Resolution 2021-01 founded KPHD's Equity Program – though many staff were working through an equity lens since before the resolution. She read excerpts from resolution 2021-01: "The Board and the Kitsap Public Health District commit to work to advance a public health approach in addressing institutional and systemic racism, including [...] partnering with community to co-create solutions to address structural inequities."

5. Jessica also shared the draft purpose of the collaborative: "To work collaboratively to advance health equity in Kitsap County."

Participants shared themes noted during introductions:

Partnership

Collaboration

Listening

Hopeful

While this slide was displayed, Jessica highlighted that KPHD produces a lot of data, disaggregated data, and asked “Are different populations experiencing the same thing?”

Activities

- Information sharing
- Data (numerical and stories/qualitative) review
- Issue/problem identification
- Solution co-creation
- Feedback on initiatives advancing health equity

Other issues raised by attendees:

- The stories of marginalized communities are not included in data.
- Solutions to health disparities need to be co-created.
- We need to identify needs and choose what will be worked on
- Get feedback from community
- Crime is a public health crisis. P.A.C.T. educates community and reminds them that police officers are our neighbors and educates and reminds police officers that community members are their neighbors.
 - We don't meet to guilt or shame
 - We ask: What's working? Where are we stuck? What can we do differently?
- Community events are scheduled at the same time. Collaboration would help know what to prioritize.

Jessica shared this slide and asked for more ideas and the following were shared:

- Can KPHD invite jurisdictions to use GARE resources?
- Public Health Board has representatives from the different cities in Kitsap County
- Can information from HEC be disseminated to those with influence to incorporate what HEC chooses to address?
 - Will there be a feedback loop with insights to change policies and practices?
- Can KPHD push for accountability from other agencies? For example, Bremerton is working on hiring a DEI staff person but has not reached out to the community for input.
 - Jessica can share the health district's journey working with the community to fill her position.

Roles - KPHD

- Meeting coordination/logistics
- Meeting agendas/minutes
- Email list and (if desired) newsletter/listserv
- Support work on at least one priority initiative
- Provide data and other information
- Compensation
- Other?

ANY
MORE
IDEAS?

- We need someone who wants to move health equity forward to be on the board, not someone who is asked to be part of the board. Example of Mason County Sheriff taking upon himself to do equity work as part of his job.
- How are we able to get people (in elected positions) to come to this meeting?
 - District can follow up with elected officials.
 - “Not for us without us”
 - Elected officials need to come to HEC meetings to hear about systemic inequities shared by community
 - Elected officials need to have clear representation in their leadership staff/appointments
- Additional community members identified that need to be at HEC meetings

Virginia Mason CHI Franciscan

Peninsula Community Health Services

Muslim community

LatinX community

Guatemalan community

Pacific Islanders

Planned Parenthood

Islamic Center of Kitsap County

Elected Officials

Jessica discussed items on this slide and asked for more ideas:

- Bremerton REAC – it seems the jurisdiction is having a hard time taking advantage of REAC. Airen will take what he has heard back to elected officials in his capacity of being a REAC member.
- Why don't agencies share policies and procedures in hiring (with DEI lens) so that each agency doesn't have to reinvent the same? For example, Pierce and King Counties have already moved forward on many health equity issues
- Can KPHD work with county and state leaders?
- When we let city leaders opt out from equity work, it is unacceptable and discouraging. For example, Poulsbo and Port Orchard are not responsive to community requests for race equity advisory boards
- What is in the district's improvement plan budget? Because if equity is not in the budget, it is not happening.
- Why are many public policy reviews done without community input?
- Getting training or buy-in to promote equity is crucial.
- What's going on in our community based on data, but also through stories?
- Goals and objectives – we should look at the council and city's goals and objectives, so we don't re-create the same thing.
- Important to build community relationships.

Roles – Other Partners

- Attend meetings as available
- Review minutes and other documents
- Participate in initiatives as available
- Provide feedback to KPHD and others on initiatives
- Other?

ANY
MORE
IDEAS?



- Small group work will help HEC members to get to know each other better.
- A safe space is needed for relationship building

Jessica mentioned that KPHD sees HEC participants as consultants. KPHD will pay HEC participants not being paid by employer or other organization to attend meetings with a \$75 gift card.

Compensation

- \$75 Visa gift card per meeting
- For individuals who are not already being paid for their participation (e.g., by their employer)
- Currently working on acquiring gift cards and procedure; will provide for this meeting

6. As this slide was shared, Jessica asked that HEC attendees let KPHD know who else to invite and asked where the next meeting should be. Community members feel important when meeting in Norm Dick's chamber room. Future meeting frequency and dates will be decided at the next HEC meeting in January 2023.

Future Meetings

- How often shall we meet?
- When shall we meet?
- Focus of next meeting