

Lewis County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) process Review and Updates

As the development for Lewis County's Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) continues a community forum and retreat comprised of local stakeholders were held earlier this fall. The **community forum** was an opportunity to share data collected earlier this year during the Lewis County Community Health Assessment (CHA). The forum also hosted renowned speaker Donna Beegle who addressed issues about generational poverty and the various social determinants that impact health. It was a fitting presentation as economic security has been expressed as a concern among county residents.

The **community retreat** included county leaders as well as other stakeholders whose input has helped to steer the work of the CHIP. There were well over 75 attendees with diverse representation from social service agencies, local government, business owners/operators, and other area organizations. The primary purpose of the retreat was to prioritize local health issues raised in the CHA. Led by the facilitation of Erica Hallock of Empire Health Foundation, three priorities for the county rose to the top during the retreat. Those priorities are: **Increase Economic Opportunities, Improve Educational Opportunities and Job Training, and Improve Awareness of Available (social and health) Services.**

With the guidance of CHIP consultant Stephanie Wood from the Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department, two subsequent meetings of the CHIP core team have taken place in order to refine the aforementioned priorities and define broad goals to address them. The core partners have agreed to the following focus on two strategic issues for the current CHIP and have created goals for each:

- **Strategic Issue I: Improve Economic and Educational Opportunities**
 - **Goal 1: Improve educational and skill training opportunities**
 - **Goal 2: Improve knowledge of employment and/or skill training opportunities within the public, commercial and educational sectors**

- **Strategic Issue II: Improve Access to and Awareness of Available Services**
 - **Goal 1: Improve service provider knowledge of opportunities and gaps in services**
By way of Goal 1, the group hopes to acknowledge and address geographic barriers to services

The **next step** is to create health priorities work groups which will each meet three to four times in February to formulate specific strategies to achieve the goals. The proposed strategies will be shared with the community, and input will be solicited before the final action plan is set in motion.

In the meantime, we encourage you to refer to the Lewis County CHIP Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/LewisCountyCHIP> for updates on the CHIP process, upcoming meetings, and how you can become and/or stay involved.

Please contact Lewis County CHIP Coordinator for additional information at john.abplanalp@lewiscountywa.gov or (360) 740-2787