

VISION 2020

UPDATE REPORT

Island County Public Health

Assessment & Healthy Communities



Cama Beach, Camano Island



Deception Pass, N. Whidbey



Earth Sanctuary, S. Whidbey



Spring 2022

BACKGROUND

The Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB), Board of Health, Island County Public Health completed a Community Health Assessment (CHA) in 2015 and 2016 to obtain information needed to identify county priorities. This CHA included:

- 145 data points (indicators),
- Findings from a community-wide health survey (1100 people responded),
- 8 focus group discussions (with community members from specific populations identified as a population with health disparities or a population under-represented in the community-wide survey)

In 2017, using the data findings from the CHA as a basis, the Island County Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) was developed in collaboration with community partners to create a shared vision for addressing important health issues facing Island County residents. Through review of the CHA information, four priorities were identified and put forward in a document entitled Vision 2020. (Figure 1: Health Priorities)

Figure 1: 2018 CHIP Health Priority Areas

Health Priorities



Island County Public Health supported the creation of a Work Group for each health priority. The Work Groups identified specific tasks, strategies, and timelines to address and improve each health priority. This document presents an update on the community activities and the identified metrics for the four priority areas described in the Vision 2020 document. Data sources for this report include metric updates from state and national databases and interviews with workgroup participants and county staff.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Island County is deeply appreciative of the efforts of the CHIP work groups and other community members who have supported CHIP work so far and look forward to deepening those collaborative relationships in the years to come. This work could not have occurred without these community members coming together with the shared goal of improving health and creating a thriving and healthy community for all Island County residents.



Thank You

to our community partners, to members of the Community Health Advisory Board, to the Community Health Improvement Planning Group Members, and to all the community members who supported this work.



FINDINGS

Since 2018, the landscape of health and wellbeing in Island County has changed. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Island County's needs identified in the 2015 CHA, already urgent, have been further exacerbated by this crisis. In consequence to the pandemic, many CHIP plans were put on hold, shifted, or eventually abandoned. During the first two years of CHIP implementation, the four workgroups had varied success. The Interpersonal Abuse workgroup had outcome measures they quickly identified, such as increasing access to community trainings and increasing community awareness. The Housing workgroup quickly identified the following community needs related to housing, increasing local housing stock by re-zoning, development, and in-filling: and increasing service referrals and shelters for individuals experiencing homelessness in the county. But solutions to address these needs are complex and therefore presented challenges for the CHIP workgroup. Yet, the work continues through Island County Human Services staff and their community of housing experts and advocates. The Access to Care workgroup struggled to achieve their goals during the first two years of the planned implementation, mostly due to insufficient resourcing for the work. The Depression and Suicide workgroup outcome measures focused on increasing access to mental health services and community awareness. Seeing the results of mental health will be long term as it requires coordination and lobbying of state entities and insurance companies. This is another area where the COVID-19 pandemic increased need and exacerbated existing disparities.



FINDINGS

Strengths

The CHIP included increased opportunity for cross sector collaboration via the priority specific Work Groups. These work groups continued to meet after establishing the specific CHIP tasks and goals. Each group consisted of key stakeholders, policy makers, representatives from service organizations, and individuals with an interest in the topic either through employment or personal interest or to play a leadership role in the group. Representatives from organizations included Island County Public Health, Island County Human Services, Whidbey Health, Naval Hospital Oak Harbor, South Whidbey Medical Services, Compass Health, Fleet and Family Services, Opportunity Council, Oak Harbor Public Schools, Oak Harbor Family Bible Church, Mayors, Commissioners, Community Health Advisory Board members, and many community members.



Opportunities

In normal times, the most challenging aspect of the CHA/CHIP process is maintaining momentum and implementing action with limited resources. The 2018-2019 CHIP implementation activities suffered delays due to limited access to resources. In March of 2020, identification of the first COVID-19 cases in Island County halted all CHIP implementation work, as staff rerouted to respond. As the pandemic unfolded, community partners came together with Island County to strengthen coordination across systems and silos, to provide information and resources, and to try to contain the disease and mitigate its impact.



ACCESS TO HEALTHCARE

The lack of access to healthcare presents barriers to good health. Access to healthcare encompasses many interlinking factors and should be timely, cost-effective, culturally and socially acceptable, and inclusive and readily available as and when needed. Concerns identified by the Access to Care Work Group during the 2015-16 CHA included, "availability and access to health care information"; "effectiveness of community health outreach programs"; and "opportunities for advance care planning in the community". The Access to Care Work group established the following tasks and goals to address these concerns.

VISION 2020 PROGRESS MEASURE

Island County adults with a routine medical check-up in the past year

Source: BRFSS, age-adjusted rate, 2012-13; 2014-15; 2019; 2020

Baseline 2013 (95% CI)	2015 (95% CI)	Goal by 2020*	2018 (95% CI)	2019 (95% CI)	2020 (95% CI)
51.7% (40.5-62.8)	64.6% (52.1-75.5)	68.2%	69.9% (57.9-79.7)	75.7% (65.2-83.8)	74.7% (63.9-83.2)

ADDITIONAL DATA

Access to Healthcare- All Health Plans Commercial & Medicaid

Source: WA State Community Checkup, Access to Care Metrics, 2020

Measure	Score	Rate	State
Access to Primary Care	Ages 2-6 years	Worse	71%
	Ages 7-11 years	Worse	82%
	Ages 12-19 years	Average	83%
	Ages 12-24 months	Worse	86%
	Ages 20-44 years	Worse	74%
	Ages 45-64 years	Average	87%
	Ages 65+ years	Better	91%
Post-Partum Care		Average	47%
Timeliness of Prenatal Care		Worse	20%
			34%



ACCESSS TO HEALTHCARE ACTIVITIES

Goal	Objective	Strategy	Community Activities/Programs
1: Promote education and engagement	1.1: By 2020, Island County residents and health care providers will have access to online and in-person support to identify available health care services in Island County.	Island County Public Health will a) create and staff a health care resource center and b) create and sustain an online health care resource directory.	*2019 Island Community Resource Guide *Island Senior Resources, *Aging & Disability Resources *Island County Behavioral Health guide *North Sound 2-1-1
2. Strengthen collaboration and coordination of patient care between providers and agencies	2.1. By 2020, increase the availability of health care options in Island County through medical outreach that delivers services to individuals in the community.	Whidbey Health, Island County EMS, and Camano Fire and Rescue will explore feasibility of health outreach model on community paramedicine or community health workers.	*Community Paramedic program on Camano Island hosted by the Camano Fire and Rescue *WH EMS leader Robert May has expanded trainings for first responders on how to identify and prevent unnecessary emergency department visits
		Naval Hospital Oak Harbor, Whidbey Health, and North Sound Behavioral Health Organization will increase use of telemedicine and telepsychology services and expand locations and hours.	*The Covid-19 pandemic and mitigation measures taken to control the pandemic required expansion and more common use of telemedicine and telepsychology services. Health care providers nation-wide have expanded the use of telemedicine. *Legislation enacted ensuring insurance coverage for telemedicine services
3. Expand availability of health care services, especially for those at greatest risk	3.1 By 2020, implement an advance care planning public information and engagement campaign for Island County residents through a network of community agencies.	Whidbey Health and Island Senior Resources will develop and implement a campaign to promote and support (online and in-person) advance care planning for residents of all ages	*Honoring Choices Pacific Northwest is a joint initiative between Washington Hospital Association and Washington State Medical Foundation for Health Care Improvement that “inspires conversations about the care people want at the end of life.” *Several leaders in senior care services organized a presentation by Honoring Choices to a group of community members in the Spring of 2019.



HOUSING

Housing is related to health, as issues like overcrowding and affordability have been linked to multiple health outcomes, including infectious disease, injuries, and mental disorders. Affordable housing has become a challenge on Whidbey and Camano Islands. Quite a few organizations, including Island County Human Services are making great strides to address this challenge. County commissioners and town mayors are aware of this challenge and are working to remove hurdles for new affordable housing construction and remodeling of existing structures. Support for affordable housing exists at a local community, business, and political level.

VISION 2020 PROGRESS MEASURE

Individuals in Island County reporting sleeping unsheltered the night prior

Source: Island County Point-in-Time Count, Island County Human Services

Baseline 2013	2017	Goal 2020	2020
90	154	124 (20% decrease)	143

ADDITIONAL DATA

Island County Housing Market Report Q1_2017 vs. Q4_2021

Source: UW WA State Housing Market Reports

Report Period	# of Building Permits Issued	Seasonally Adjusted Annual Sales	Housing Affordability Index	Median Sales Price
Q1 2017	54	2290	122.9	\$326,200
Q4 2021	23	2130	89.2	\$538,500

Homeless Management Information System Performance Indicators: Island County

Source: WA Balance of State Equity Dashboard, Dept. Of Commerce, 2018-2021

Year	Median Days Homeless Prior to Program Involvement	Median Days Enrolled before Housing Placement	Exits to Permanent Destinations	Returns to Homelessness
SY 2019	55	50	79%	**
SY 2021	54	73	77%	8%



HOUSING ADVOCACY ACTIVITIES

Goal	Objective	Strategy	Community Activities/Programs
1: Increase availability of overnight emergency shelter and support services to individuals seeking shelter	1.1 By 2018, Island County will have a year-round overnight emergency shelter and reduce the number of homeless individuals reporting sleeping unsheltered the night prior by 20%.	Whidbey Homeless Coalition will create and ensure funding for an overnight emergency shelter on Whidbey Island. Housing Work Group will establish, communicate, and obtain the transportation resources necessary to ensure referrals to this shelter occur from the jails and emergency department. Island County Human Services will assess the need for an emergency shelter on Camano Island.	Spin Café (Oak Harbor) The Haven (Oak Harbor) Ryan's House Marjorie's House Whidbey Homeless Coalition Hope House
	1.2 By 2018, homeless individuals and families will have improved referral and access to support services through the overnight emergency shelter.	Island County Public Health will offer referrals for: community and dental providers, mental health and substance use disorder treatment providers to shelter clients. Island County Human Services will offer housing support services through Island County Housing Support Center	*Opportunity Council created a directory of relevant clinical and social support services. *Compass Health offers a range of behavioral health services. They are also helping with referrals to other treatment centers in neighboring counties. *Embedded outreach mental health professional hired to ride with and be present with law enforcement to help resolve conflicts and direct people to available services
2. Preserve existing and increase total number of units of healthy affordable housing.	2.1 By 2020, increase the number of affordable and available housing units per 100 households at/or below 50% of area median income	Island County Human Services will advocate for maintaining current funding for affordable housing development and operation, including recommend removing recording fee sunset and preservation of the State Housing Trust Fund	*CARES Act and ARPA funding received to cover initial development costs for construction of additional affordable housing units. *The county used to maintain contracts with several apartment buildings to hold prices down. These contracts are no longer in place.
3. Increase availability of permanent, supportive housing units	3.1 By 2020, increase the number of affordable and available housing units per 100 households at/or below 50% of area median income	Island County Human Services will complete a cost-benefit analysis for increasing permanent supportive housing units. Island County Human Services will identify a development partner or funding resources to provide support services	A developer has purchased a hotel in Freeland to create 21 new housing units . HB 1590 passed. This makes 1/10 of 1% on sales tax available to support housing programs. HB 1277 passed. This increases document recording fees to support housing programs at a State level.



INTERPERSONAL ABUSE

Violence and abuse are critical health problems throughout the United States, however their effects in rural environments such as Island County are often exacerbated by limited access to support services for victims, transportation barriers, the stigma of abuse, lack of availability of shelters and poverty as a barrier to care. The impact of interpersonal abuse on individuals and their communities has far-ranging implications for those working to improve public health. The group determined that they would pursue the creation of a diverse coalition dedicated to addressing abuse in Island County; and to build engagement among these stakeholders to address the issue from a long-term perspective.

VISION 2020 PROGRESS MEASURE

Total number of client intakes at Citizens Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse (CADA)

Source: CADA Client Intake Reporting, 2013; 2016; 2019

Baseline 2013	2016	Goal 2020	2019	2020 (95% CI)
224	223	245 (10% increase)	272	25.6 (14.8-42.5)

ADDITIONAL DATA

Domestic Violence Crime in Island County, 2017 vs. 2020

Source: WA Association of Sheriffs & Police Chiefs, Annual Reports

Crime	2017 % DV	2020 % DV
Rape	30%	18%
Aggravated Assault	67%	58%
Simple Assault	73%	59%
Intimidation	31%	26%
Kidnapping	78%	60%
Violation of No Contact Order	86%	67%



Percentage of Youth in 10th grade that said they had ever been physically hurt on purpose by an adult

Source: Healthy Youth Survey, 2014; 2016; 2018; 2021

Region	2014	2016	2018	2021
Island County	31.9%	28.0%	22.6%	20.0%
WA State	26.4%	22.0%	25.2%	18.2%

INTERPERSONAL ABUSE PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Goal	Objective	Strategy	Community Activities/Programs
Goal 1: Reduce the likelihood and/or impact of interpersonal abuse among residents of Island County.	1.1: Maintain Community Health Improvement Plan Work Group for implementation of plan initiatives on interpersonal abuse	Island County Public Health will 1) maintain regular meetings for work group members. The Interpersonal Abuse Work Group will also 2) identify service professionals and volunteers countywide to train to recognize and respond to abuse, 3) provide training to help individuals take appropriate next steps, and 4) collaborate with other community efforts to reduce the likelihood or impact of abuse among residents	Work group convened 2018-2020 CADA community wide trainings on anti-bullying, healthy relationships, DV and Assault NAS Whidbey Island Fleet & Family Services
	1.2: By 2020, Island County professionals from at least five community sectors will have enhanced skills to identify harm or risk of harm related to interpersonal abuse.	The Interpersonal Abuse Work Group will develop or adapt existing interpersonal abuse curriculum materials for training community champions	*Human Services intern developed a Train-the-Trainer abuse recognition and prevention curriculum. *A group of clergymen and women underwent an interpersonal abuse recognition and prevention training in 2018
	1.3: By 2020, all persons receiving interpersonal abuse training under this initiative will be able to identify appropriate referral services.	The Interpersonal Abuse Work Group will identify Island County referral services available for individuals and families encountering abuse and distribute this referral material at each training.	*Coalition Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse (CADA) is the primary referral service for those experiencing domestic and sexual abuse. They also utilize Opportunity Council's Island Community Resource Guide. *The NAS Whidbey Island Fleet and Family Services also provides referral services for those experiencing interpersonal abuse.



SUICIDE & DEPRESSION

Mental health is a top concern of the Community Health Needs Assessment data including interviewees and survey respondents. The Depression and Suicide Prevention Work Group began strategy development in 2018. This Work Group focused on education, training, awareness, and advocacy. A 2021 Healthcare Access report indicates substantial gaps in access to local mental health services with significant disparities in access to those individuals with Apple Health/Medicaid health insurance coverage.

VISION 2020 PROGRESS MEASURE

Rate of Death by Suicide (age-adjusted per 100,000) by Island County residents

Source: WA DOH, Center for Health Statistics, Death Certificate Data, 2013; 2015; 2018; 2020

Baseline 2013 (95% CI)	2015 (95% CI)	Goal (2020)	2018 (95% CI)	2020 (95% CI)
23.2 (13.1-38.8)	16.7 (9.0-29.9)	10.2	11.0 (4.4-24.2)	25.6 (14.8-42.5)

ADDITIONAL DATA

Percentage of 10th Grade Students reporting making a suicide plan

Source: Healthy Youth Survey, 2014; 2016; 2018; 2021

Region	2014	2016	2018	2021
Island County	19.7%	17.0%	18.9%	20.5%
WA State	16.4%	17.0%	17.9%	15.6%

Proportion of Island County residents who take medication for mental illness (age-adjusted per 100,000)

Source: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS), 2013; 2015; 2018; 2020

Baseline 2013 (95% CI)	2015 (95% CI)	2018 (95% CI)	2020 (95% CI)	2021
13.6 (6.3-26.9)	17.6 (9.1-31.1)	11.6 (7.8-17.0)	13.3 (6.9-24.2)	20.5%



SUICIDE & DEPRESSION PREVENTION ACTIVITIES

Goal	Objective	Strategy	Community Activities/Programs
Goal 1: To educate the public about the signs and symptoms of depression and suicide and inform them about the resources available for those at risk	1.1: Explore creating a community coalition to develop how to implement strategies:	Use the “access to care navigation system” to explore the resources that address depression and suicide	*Funding through a State proviso to support youth mental health. A committee has been established that includes representatives from Big Brothers, Big Sisters and local pediatricians
		Educate the public about the signs and symptoms of depression and suicide using existing media and new information sources	*Facilitated the organization and delivery of at least two community trainings related to mental health literacy/peer support (i.e. Mental Health First Aid) *September is Suicide Prevention Month. The Work Group advocated for depression and suicide prevention through addressing the county commissioners during September. *Online social media campaigns were created and posted during Mental Health Awareness Month (May) and Suicide Awareness Month (September)
		Address the community's interests and needs to ensure this educational information and awareness activities meet these needs.	*Organized two awareness campaign events via Sno-Isle Library *The Commissioner's proclamations support Mental Health Awareness and Suicide Prevention months. *Safer Homes, Suicide Aware (Safer Homes, Suicide Aware (saferhomescoalition.org)) is a training program created by the Safer Homes Coalition. The objective of the training is to reduce access to lethal means and reduce deaths by suicide and encourages the use of lock boxes for firearms and medications. The Work Group organized this training for the Board of Health and County Commissioners.



NEXT STEPS

In 2023, the Island County Health Department will embark on a new community health assessment to evaluate the current health status of Island County residents. The next cycle will be structured to address the real challenges in integrating health equity data into Community Health Assessments (CHAs). Workgroup members will work to build a strong foundation to ensure there is a common understanding, mission, and vision for the collaborative CHA/CHIP process. Public Health will then work to develop a comprehensive report of findings that includes community voice, quantitative data, and identified community themes.

DATA SOURCES

Behavior Risk-Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS, 2012-13; 2014-15; 2018; 2020)

WA Health Care Authority, Healthier Washington Dashboard, 2022

Island County Point-in-Time Count, Island County Human Services Department (2013; 2017; 2020)

UW WA State Housing Market Reports, 2017 & 2021

WA Balance of State Equity Dashboard, Dept. Of Commerce, 2018-2021

Citizens Against Domestic and Sexual Abuse (CADA). CADA Client Intake Reporting, Oak Harbor, WA, (2013; 2016; 2019)

Healthy Youth Survey (2014-16; 2021)

Washington Sheriffs & Police Chiefs Annual Crime Report (2017, 2020)

WA DOH, Center for Health Statistics, Death Certificate Data (2013; 2015; 2020)

WA Health Alliance, Community Checkup, 2022

