

OKANOGAN COALITION FOR HEALTH IMPROVEMENT (CHI)

MEETING MINUTES

JUNE 25, 2020

AGENDA:

1. Census Push, Adan Aispuro
2. Okanogan County Public Health, Laurie Jones
3. Covid-19 Communication Plan, Peter Morgan
4. Covid Impact Panel, Bill Snyder, Kathleen Manseau, Elsy Cruz, Nancy Nash-Mendez, Montie Smith, Jimmy Wallace, Roni Holder-Diefenbach

1. Census Push - Adan Aispuro, partnership specialist US Census Bureau

- Folks can still fill out their census response via internet, toll free number or mail, though answers need to be based off of your circumstances on April 1st
- Okanogan County's response rate is 37.3%, the third lowest response rate in our state. The state average is 67%
- Starting August 11th Census workers will be doing non-response door to door work. If you'd like to avoid having people coming to your door it is recommended that you fill out your census prior to August 11th
- People can access census by calling the toll free number, no code or wifi needed
- FHC is planning on doing a phone bank for census...Contact Jesus Hernandez if interested in volunteering
- "Underreported means underrepresented and underfunded" by having a low census response rate we risk losing funding that could be critical in supporting low income and communities of color
- Adan contact info: email: adan.aispuro@2020census.gov phone: 8189633971

2. Okanogan County Public Health - Laurie Jones

- Secretary of health is requiring face coverings starting June 26th

3. Covid-19 Communication Plan - Peter Morgan

- Ok County is positioned well to manage, contain and lower the number of positive covid cases but success depends on our community's understanding of the disease
- The goal of having a strong communication plan is to decrease any confusion or misinformation regarding covid and safety precautions
- The goal is to have a web page up by July 3rd with answers and information about covid-19
- Expect to see a very large surge on messaging starting in early July
- The CHI's role in all of this is to support OK Public Health in their communication strategy development. This includes: reviewing and advising content, contracting and developing media, connecting with communities, gaining a diverse group of stakeholders, and more!

4. Covid Impact Panel

Question 1: Through the lens of healthcare, how has covid impacted the community you work with?

Question 2: How has your organization and those of your peers adapted or adjusted your approach to further community health?

Bill Snyder, Mental Health, OBHC

- Initially saw a large decrease in requests for services when covid started (down 20%)
- We are now needing to increase services while developing new strategies to provide services safely
- OBHC is trying out several new service models and adjusting as they go
- Limiting shared housing, one resident per room
- Clubhouse can no longer have people in there but they have started peer led tele groups

Kathleen Manseau, Substance Use, FHC

- Based on small opinion survey we believe there has been an increase of substance abuse in the last 4 months
- Increase in relapses
- At least 3-4 overdose deaths in the last four months
- How we've adapted our approach:
 - Distance visits
 - NA and Recovery Coalition all meeting by video
 - 15 new recovery coaches - all folks with lived experience

Elsy Cruz, ACEs, DCYF

- Intake calls are lower but we do not believe child abuse/neglect has decreased
- DCYF has created a call intake ad for social media
- We are encouraging mandatory reporters to stay vigilant
- Anticipating an uptake when school is back in session

Nancy Nash-Mendez, Housing, Housing Authority of Okanogan County

- Significant increase in homeless individuals seeking assistance
- Homeless individuals with no/bad rental history are disproportionately affected with fewer rental units available to them
- OHA awarded 98 vouchers to serve non elderly under 62 disabled individuals
- Case management practices have been modified to comply with governors orders
- How we've adapted:
 - Office is closed to public but we continue to serve our clients using social media and phone calls
 - Conducting more landlord advocacy to expand rental opportunities
 - Hired a company to do a needs assessment for homelessness in the community

Montie Smith, Tonasket Food Bank

- Huge spike in clients, from 135 people needing services to 220
- Had to spend 2k reserve funds in March to meet the growing need
- We started applying for grants and received a generous outpouring from community, grants and OCCAC
- We put together self care packages for all clients (soaps, hygiene, sunscreen, brochure)
- Younger folks have stepped up to help with the distribution of food baskets

Jimmy Wallace, Healthcare

- Unable to prevent two community members from dying and 88 from getting the virus
- Our vulnerable populations are becoming more vulnerable
- We are substituting normal care for new methods such as visits outside of the building, testing stations and telehealth

Roni Holder-Diefenbach, Okanogan County Economic Alliance

- Businesses deemed non-essential were significantly impacted by the closures, some are facing bankruptcy and don't have reserve funds
- Okanogan County Economic Alliance has been attending many meetings, partnering with other orgs so that they can communicate to local businesses what resources are available to them
- Every Friday there have been small business roundtable discussions with folks like Laurie Jones and Twispworks in attendance
- We were able to get small business grants out to 51 local businesses - go follow Okanogan County Economic Alliance on facebook to see updates!
- There is a resource page available to the public on the economic alliance webpage that helps businesses prepare for openings

How is this impacting communities of color disproportionately?

- 43% of covid cases in WA State are among the hispanic population, who only make up 13% of our general population
- The Native community makes up 11% of the general population but 26% of MOUD patients at FHC